A portrait of Pope Benedict XIV, wearing a red papal hat and ornate red and gold vestments. The background is dark.

# BENEDICT XIV and the ENLIGHTENMENT

Art, Science, and Spirituality

Edited by Rebecca Messbarger,  
Christopher M.S. Johns, and Philip Gavitt

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*Art, Science, and Spirituality*

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Philip Gavitt

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**Kristina Kleutghen** (Washington University in Saint Louis). Kristina Kleutghen is David W. Mesker Career Development Professor of Art History at Washington University in Saint Louis. Focusing on early-modern, modern, and contemporary Chinese art, particularly of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), her research investigates the imperial court, foreign contact, and connections to science and mathematics. Her first book, *Imperial Illusions: Crossing Pictorial Boundaries in the Qing Palaces* (2015), considered the phenomenon of monumental illusionistic and perspectival painting at the eighteenth-century Chinese court. Now in progress, her second monograph project examines the visual, social, and scientific relationships between optical devices and late imperial Chinese art.

**Tommaso Manfredi** (University of Reggio Calabria). Manfredi has published widely on subjects in architectural history, the history of the city, and urbanism in Rome, Italy, and extending to the larger European context. He has regularly collaborated with the Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana and with the Archivio del Moderno dell'Accademia di Architettura dell'Università della Svizzera Italiana in Mendrisio. He is the author of three monographs: *I Virtuosi al Pantheon. 1750–1758* (1998; together with G. Bonaccorso); *La costruzione dell'architetto. Maderno,*

*Borromini, i Fontana e la formazione degli architetti ticinesi a Roma* (2008); and *Filippo Juvarra: Gli anni giovanili* (2010). Together with G. Simoncini and others he curated the catalogue of drawings at the Centro di Studi di Storia dell'Architettura. He is also the author of numerous articles, published in both Italian and international journals, on topics such as Borromini and Ticinese architects in Italy, the architecture of Filippo Juvarra, European architects in Rome in the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries, the urban history of Rome, and architectural treatises of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.

**Rebecca Messbarger** (Washington University in Saint Louis) Co-Editor. Messbarger's major research interests centre on Italian Enlightenment culture, in particular the place and purpose of women in civic, academic, and social life, and the intersection of art and anatomy during the age. Her most recent book *The Lady Anatomist: The Life and Work of Anna Morandi Manzolini* (2010), traces Morandi's intellectual trajectory from provincial artist to internationally renowned anatomical wax modeller for the University of Bologna's famous medical school. This book was a finalist for the Charles Rufus Morey Book Award, College Art Association of America. She is also the author of *The Century of Women: The Representation of Women in Eighteenth-Century Italian Public Discourse* (2002); and with Paula Findlen she edited and translated *The Contest for Knowledge: Debates over Women's Learning in Enlightenment Italy* (2005). Her articles have appeared in such venues as *Configurations*, *Eighteenth-Century Studies* and *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*. Her article "The Re-Birth of Venus in Florence's Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History" (May 2012) in the *Oxford Journal for the History of Collections* was awarded the 2012–13 James L. Clifford Prize from the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies and the Percy Adams Prize of the Southeastern American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies. Messbarger is the recipient of fellowships from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Philosophical Society, and Washington University's Center for the Humanities.

**Carole Paul** (University of California, Santa Barbara). Paul is a scholar of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century art and architecture in Italy and has received fellowships from the Kress Foundation, the American Academy in Rome, the Getty Research Institute, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Her current work concerns the history



of museums and collections in the early modern period, especially in Rome, and the related significance of the city as an international artistic centre in the age of the Grand Tour. Her various publications include *Making a Prince's Museum: Drawings for the Late-Eighteenth-Century Redecoration of the Villa Borghese* (2000) and *The Borghese Collections and the Display of Art in the Age of the Grand Tour* (2008), in which she examines the relationship between exhibition strategies, discursive practices, and social performance as it orchestrated the experience of art for early modern viewers. A recent volume that she edited, *The First Modern Museums of Art: The Birth of an Institution in 18th- and Early-19th-Century Europe* (2012), studies the formative history of fifteen major institutions – from the Capitoline Museum in Rome, opened in 1734, to the Alte Pinakothek in Munich, opened in 1836 – both individually and collectively. These early museums played a critical role in transforming the way people related to art and contributed to the newly emergent sense of public cultural space that we associate with the Enlightenment. She is now writing a book on the Capitoline Museum.

**Gianna Pomata** (Johns Hopkins University). Pomata's research interests include the social and cultural history of European medicine in the early modern period, women's and gender history, and the history of historiography. She has worked on the history of epistemic categories, genres, and practices in early modern medicine, with particular attention to medical empiricism and its role in the history of scientific observation. She has also studied concepts and rules of evidence as they developed at the intersection of early modern medicine and religion. She has contributed to women's history, gender history, and the history of the body with various essays on women healers and women patients, the history of menstruation and lactation, the cult of holy bodies and relics, the understanding of sexual difference in early modern medicine, and the impact of medical thought on early modern proto-feminism. A recent contribution to this field is her critical edition and translation of Oliva Sabuco's *The True Medicine* (2010), one of the very few medical books published under a woman's name in early modern Europe. Among her previous works are the volumes *Contracting a Cure: Patients, Healers, and the Law in Early Modern Bologna* (1998); *The Faces of Nature in Enlightenment Europe* (2003, co-edited with Lorraine Daston); *Historia: Empiricism and Erudition in Early Modern Europe* (2005, co-edited with Nancy Siraisi); and *I monasteri femminili come*

*centri di cultura fra Rinascimento e Barocco* (2005, co-edited with Gabriella Zarri). She is currently writing a book on the history of the medical case narrative, for which she received a grant from the National Library of Medicine. With her Hopkins colleague Marta Hanson, a specialist in early modern Chinese medicine, she has started a collaborative study of *Specimen Medicinae Sinicae* (1682), the first book that introduced a translation of Chinese pulse medicine, with related pharmaceutical recipes, to European Latin readers. A cross-cultural approach to the history of medical genres and epistemologies is a central feature of her current work.

**Roberto Rusconi** (University of Roma Tre). Rusconi is a specialist in Italian religious history from the end of the Middle Ages to the beginning of modern times. He has published widely on the regular orders and their pastoral activities, such as preaching in the vernacular and hearing confessions. Many of his books and articles also concern apocalypticism, eschatology, and prophecy, and he serves as a member of the international committee for the edition of the works of Joachim of Fiore. He is also interested in the study of religious iconography and is editor of the journal *Iconographica*. Rusconi directs a major research project devoted to the books, libraries, and culture of the regular orders in early modern Italy. Select recent publications include *L'ordine dei peccati: La confessione tra Medioevo ed età moderna* (2002); *Il cristianesimo. Grande atlante*, directed by Giuseppe Alberigo, Giuseppe Ruggieri, and Roberto Rusconi: vol. I; *Dalle origini alle chiese contemporanee*, ed. Roberto Rusconi (2006); *Libri, biblioteche e cultura degli Ordini regolari nell'Italia moderna attraverso la documentazione della Congregazione dell'Indice*, ed. Rosa Marisa Borraccini and Roberto Rusconi (2006); *Francis of Assisi in the Sources and Writings* (2008); and *Santo Padre: La santità del papa da san Pietro a Giovanni Paolo II* (2010).

**Fernando Vidal** (Universitat Autònoma, Barcelona). Fernando Vidal has worked on various topics in the history of the human sciences, including early-modern and Enlightenment psychology, miracles and science, sexuality in the eighteenth century, the longue-durée history of the body and personal identity, psychoanalysis and psychiatry in the early twentieth century, the progressive education movement in the interwar years, and the rise of “neurocultures” since the mid-twentieth century. His books include *Piaget Before Piaget* (1994); *Piaget neuchâtelois* (1996); and *The Sciences of the Soul: The Early Modern*

*Origins of Psychology* (2011; French 2006). He has also edited a collection of Jean Starobinski's writings on the history of the body (*Las razones del cuerpo*, 1999); *The Moral Authority of Nature* (with Lorraine Daston, 2004); *Believing Nature, Knowing God* (with Bernhard Kleeberg, 2007); *Neurocultures: Glimpses into an Expanding Universe* (with Francisco Ortega, 2011), and *Endangerment, Biodiversity and Culture* (with Nelia Días, 2015). His book *Being Brains* will be published in 2016. After over a decade as Research Scholar at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (Berlin), Fernando Vidal moved in the fall of 2012 to Barcelona as Research Professor of the Catalan Institution for Research and Advanced Studies (ICREA) at the Center for the History of Science (CEHIC) of the Universitat Autònoma.

# Preface: Interpreting a Papacy, Revising an Age

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REBECCA MESSBARGER

From 30 April to 2 May 2012, the first conference in the United States devoted to the religious, cultural, scientific, and political influence of Pope Benedict XIV was held at Washington University in Saint Louis, Saint Louis University, and the Missouri History Museum. Drawing scholars from across Europe and the United States, the conference organized by Rebecca Messbarger (Romance Languages and History, Washington University in Saint Louis), and co-chaired by Messbarger, Philip Gavitt (History, Saint Louis University), and Christopher M.S. Johns (History of Art, Vanderbilt University), featured sixteen papers by a distinguished and extraordinarily interdisciplinary cadre of scholars specializing in the history of science (anatomy, medicine, physics and astronomy), museology, women's studies, religious studies, the history of art and architecture, and the institutional papacy.

The event opened with scenes played from the 1954 film *Cardinal Lambertini*, a historical comedy set in Bologna in 1739, the last year before Lambertini was elected Pope Benedict XIV. It recounts the cardinal archbishop's local crusade to oust foreign occupiers from his hometown, to establish progressive civil and religious reforms and clean up rampant political corruption, all while personally intervening to protect the star-crossed but socially unequal lovers: Carlo, son of the archbishop's servant, and Maria, stepdaughter of the Countess of Roccasibalda. In the first scene, the learned cardinal dispatches from his book-lined apartment a letter to Montesquieu, the French Enlightenment philosopher to whom Lambertini laments about the assault on Bologna's civil liberties by the Spanish force that controls his city. The private library designates the academic orientation of the scholar cleric, and the letter to Montesquieu his embrace of Enlightenment ideals. Although myriad

intertwined crises face the gutsy cardinal, it is a comedy, so all ends well – triply well, in fact – with the Spaniards’ expulsion, the lovers’ marriage by the archbishop, and Lambertini’s ascent to Saint Peter’s throne.

Commercial films about cardinals and popes are far from commonplace. It is even more remarkable that a popular film was produced about Pope Lambertini, whose early ecclesiastical career made him neither an obvious idol nor an obvious pope. It took six months and 255 votes over the course of the hot Roman summer of 1740 for the College of Cardinals finally to elect him bishop of Rome. The extreme foot-dragging of his fellow cardinals has been linked by some historians to suspicion of Lambertini’s erudition and conciliatory character, which would later earn him the moniker by some of *The Protestant Pope*. Yet the story of Pope Benedict XIV Lambertini’s life and papacy, as this volume aims to demonstrate, offers local to global political, religious, cultural, and social drama worthy of intensive scholarly discussion, if not the big screen.

The eighteenth century witnessed an intensive campaign across the Italian peninsula, from Naples to Milan, Venice to Rome, to re-establish Italian cultural and intellectual standing after an extended period of decline, the infamous nadir of which was the trial and condemnation of Galileo Galilei in 1633.<sup>1</sup> Through the founding of journals, scientific and literary academies, museums, and libraries, native intellectuals endeavoured to organize themselves into what Modenese cleric Ludovico Antonio Muratori called in his 1703 tract of the same name a “*repubblica letteraria d’Italia*” (“Literary Republic of Italy”) and to claim their place in the vibrant contemporary exchange of new texts and ideas taking place across Europe. Pope Benedict XIV was a driving force of the burgeoning Italian Enlightenment. His avid campaign to reconcile faith and empirical science, his determination to renew a dialogue between the Church and the European intellectual community, and his munificent patronage of the arts and modern sciences powerfully shaped Italy’s cultural regeneration and helped to re-establish to a considerable degree Italy’s former prestige among European nations as a leading centre of intellectual and artistic innovation.

Yet Benedict XIV’s expansive influence during the eighteenth century as pope and patron and his pivotal role in the development of what has been called the Catholic Enlightenment as well as his impact on broader European culture and intellectual exchange have been little studied by English-speaking scholars and discussed by only a restricted number of

Italian specialists as well. That neglect is undoubtedly due in part to the fact that Benedict reigned during the Settecento, which Eric Cochrane designated one of Italy's "forgotten centuries" and Paula Findlen has described as "the least studied period of Italian history."<sup>2</sup> Only in the last two decades has a growing community of academics on both sides of the Atlantic and in various fields within the arts and sciences begun to shed light on his reformist papacy and his engagement with chief thinkers and ideals of the age, even as he avidly defended Church authority both against internal dissolution and external attack from an ever more radically anti-clerical Republic of Letters. Contributors to this volume represent leading voices in the reconsideration of Lambertini's papacy during and beyond the eighteenth century. There is consensus among the volume's authors on Benedict's critical significance for understanding primary questions for eighteenth-century studies such as the economic, geopolitical, and religious transformations in Europe during the age; colonialism; the implications of post-Tridentine ecclesiastical reforms and enlightened Catholicism; advancements in science, especially medical science, in Italy; the Grand Tour; the singular institutional authority and public presence of women in Italy compared with previous periods and other European countries; and papal patronage of the arts and development of public art museums. Yet, as the essays in this volume also demonstrate, scholars diverge on exactly what Benedict's role was, what it meant during his age and what it means today. In contention are not only the principal aspirations and outcomes of his papacy, but the mode, extent and, in some cases, authenticity of Benedict's commitment to Enlightenment ideals.<sup>3</sup> The spectrum of conclusions about his papacy represented by the eighteen contributors is what makes this volume an especially fertile study not solely of a pope but of an age.

It is the hope of the editors of *Benedict XIV and the Enlightenment: Art, Science, and Spirituality* that the plurivalent analyses and diverse assessments in the volume will generate both increased and revised understanding of the European Enlightenment, of the history of the Church and, more specifically, of Pope Benedict XIV's critical influence on a transformative moment in western cultural history. Anticipated outcomes of this collaborative scholarly endeavour are new inquiries, both academic and more broadly accessible, into defining issues of Benedict XIV's papacy that remain relevant today, such as the compatibility of faith and science, the role of women in the circulation of new knowledge, civic art and architecture projects as agents of the public good,

and the role of the Church in the advancement of social and cultural reforms. We also anticipate the development of expanded curricula in eighteenth-century studies that will lead to increased student interest in the Enlightenment.

## NOTES

- 1 On the intellectual climate in Italy at the dawn of the eighteenth century, see Franco Venturi, *Italy and the Enlightenment: Studies in a Cosmopolitan Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1972); Vincenzo Ferrone, *The Intellectual Roots of the Italian Enlightenment: Newtonian Science, Religion, and Politics in the Early Eighteenth Century*, trans. Sue Brotherton (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1995); and Marta Cavazza, *Settecento inquieto: Alle origini dell'Istituto delle Scienze di Bologna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990).
- 2 Eric Cochrane, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries, 1527–1800: A History of Florence and the Florentines in the Age of the Grand Dukes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973); Paula Findlen, *Italy's Eighteenth Century: Gender and Culture in the Age of the Grand Tour* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 13.
- 3 In addition to questions about Benedict XIV's status as an Enlightenment reformer raised in some articles in this volume, challenges are also found in recent scholarship such as Marina Caffiero's *Forced Baptisms: Histories of Jews, Christians, and Converts in Papal Rome*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2011), and Gaetano Greco, *Benedetto XIV. Un canone per la chiesa* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2011).

# BENEDICT XIV AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT



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# Introduction: The Scholars' Pope: Benedict XIV and the Catholic Enlightenment

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CHRISTOPHER M.S. JOHNS

When Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755), characterized Pope Benedict XIV Lambertini (reigned 1740–58) as “the scholars’ pope,” it is unlikely he had any idea his compliment would become one of the most frequently used sobriquets associated with the pontiff who was, without question, the most remarkable occupant of the throne of Peter during the eighteenth century (Plate 1). As a progressive scholar, writer, and literary figure, Montesquieu enjoyed an international reputation for learning. As author of *Persian Letters* (1721) and *Spirit of the Laws* (1748), he was widely viewed as a forward-thinking advocate inspired by logic and reason for the reform of European institutions, including the papacy. Conservatives and champions of tradition considered many of the *philosophe’s* ideas to be pernicious. Benedict XIV, however, not only admired Montesquieu, but also initially shielded the controversial *Spirit of the Laws* from censorship by the Holy Office of the Inquisition, the papal bureau in charge of maintaining Catholic orthodoxy and supervising the *Index of Forbidden Books*. Lambertini hoped the author would modify some of the views espoused in the text, above all those addressing the alleged sloth and uselessness of monks, and up to a point the French savant was willing to cooperate. Unfortunately, as opinions hardened on both sides of the issue, the pope agreed to have the publication put on the *Index of Forbidden Books*, an action more symbolic than inhibiting, since many ignored the ban and it was easy enough to get a licence to read such publications. Indeed, a copy of *Spirit of the Laws* and most of Montesquieu’s other texts are listed in the catalogue of Lambertini’s own library, now preserved in Bologna, the city of his birth. While Montesquieu was disappointed in and frustrated with the censorship process and felt that

many of his positions had been misrepresented as irreligious, he did not blame the pope personally, understanding that the pressure exerted by conservatives wanting to censor the book had finally become too intense for Lambertini to resist.

Benedict XIV's support for and encouragement of Montesquieu, especially in the first decade of his pontificate, are indicative of the optimism of the era that permeated the upper echelons of the Church as it attempted to come to terms with new ideas and modern realities. Progressive Catholics embraced many aspects of the general European Enlightenment as a way to engage a rapidly secularizing world while remaining relevant and true to the Church's spiritual mission. Although Lambertini assumed a more conservative stance in the last years of his reign, worn down by the cynicism of the Catholic dynasts, who took full advantage of his attempts at conciliation and compromise, his pontificate nonetheless was the high-water mark of enlightened Catholicism. Many scholars seriously underestimate the progressive nature of Benedict's reign, judging it by post-Napoleonic pontificates that utterly rejected the premises on which enlightened Catholicism was based. This point will be addressed in greater detail in due course. The eighteen essays in this volume should do much to refocus scholarly attention on the Lambertini papacy by examining it on its own terms and in a specific historical context that is still in the process of being recovered by modern scholarship. The interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary approaches seen to advantage here are good indications of the remarkable breadth of Benedict XIV's intellectual interests and the scope of his initiatives, which made a profound impression on many of his contemporaries. They also reveal the limitations of papal engagement with Enlightenment ideology and help to unpack the apparent paradox of an institution based on divine revelation, miracle, and textual authority attempting to redefine its position in contemporary society through science, the public promotion of select learned women, and partial accommodation with non-Catholic learning and cultural reform. All things considered, perhaps the best characterization of Pope Lambertini's historical achievement is "moderately modern." As a lifelong advocate of pragmatism over dogmatism and peaceful compromise over protracted, embittered polemics, especially among the Catholic orders, Benedict XIV was truly moderate in every sense of the word. The theme of moderation and compromise with recognized realities permeates almost all the essays in the present volume.

Benedict XIV was admired by many contemporaries not only as a proponent of moderation, but as a pope who wished to enhance the spiritual mission of the Church by trumpeting its social utility rather than its traditional pretensions vis-à-vis the Catholic powers. At the highest levels of the Roman Curia and encouraged by the pope, greater emphasis was placed on nursing, teaching, and poor relief at the expense of older traditions of monastic mysticism and attempting to increase influence at the Catholic courts, notions increasingly associated with the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) as the century progressed. This development is seen with considerable clarity in the candidates for sainthood and beatification accepted by the pope, who valued “heroic virtue” over mystical experience in almost all cases. It may be argued that Lambertini had uneven success in his attempts to redirect the papacy towards social responsibilities and away from power politics, but even attempting to deploy such a strategy was a remarkable innovation.

Benedict XIV’s reputation as a progressive gained him the enthusiastic and somewhat embarrassing attentions of François-Marie Arouet (1694–1778), better known by his nom de plume, Voltaire, one of the most celebrated sceptics of the Enlightenment era. On 17 August 1745, Voltaire wrote a highly flattering letter to the pope asking him to accept the dedication of his new play *Mahomet the Prophet, or Fanaticism*. Despite its title, the play is an oblique critique of Christian intolerance towards Jews and Protestants, and it is likely the author’s praise of Lambertini was directed towards the latter’s efforts to mitigate ecclesiastical penalties against supporters of Jansenism, a Catholic heterodoxy that was tearing the French Church apart and undermining the authority of the bishops. The pope’s tireless efforts to promote social utility and charity among the faithful must also have appealed to the French celebrity. Voltaire was rarely above currying favour with the powerful and seldom refrained from witty mockery while so doing, but Benedict XIV could do little for him other than protecting the play from the Holy Office’s censors; in any event, placing *Mahomet* on the *Index* would likely have made it even more popular among progressives, Protestants, and anticlericals. Thus, it may be argued that Voltaire’s letter to the pope may well have a certain authenticity:

Your Holiness will pardon the liberty taken by one of the lowest of the faithful, though a zealous admirer of virtue, of submitting to the head of the true religion this performance, written in opposition to the founder of

a false and barbarous sect. To whom could I with more propriety inscribe a satire on the cruelty and errors of a false prophet, than to the vicar and representative of a God of truth and mercy? Your Holiness will therefore give me leave to lay at your feet both the piece and the author of it, and humbly to request your protection of the one, and your benediction on the other; in hopes of which, with the most profound reverence, I kiss your sacred feet.<sup>1</sup>

It may also be true, however, that the letter is not wholly sincere, since Voltaire actually admired certain aspects of Islam, above all its relative lack of mystery and miracles in comparison with Christianity. Benedict XIV's strenuous efforts to discount miracles contrary to nature in cases of canonization and beatification were well known, as was his keen interest in contemporary medical literature as it related to the miracles required by canon law for sanctification, whether penned by a Catholic or Protestant savant. Thus, since "proof" of at least three miracles was necessary for beatification and canonization according to Church law, the pope had no choice but to insist that they be as "reasonable" as possible and affirmed only after the strictest investigation. The wildcat devotion to a German nun, who, it was claimed, never had bowel movements because she was too pure, is a visceral case in point. Lambertini simply asked if she ever ate. When the promoters of her cause answered in the affirmative, he dismissed it out of hand, saying it was against nature that such a thing could happen and certainly for that reason could not have been a divinely inspired miracle. His opinion reveals his belief that even an omnipotent God acted according to the laws of nature He created, and human assertions to the contrary were necessarily without foundation. Such common sense in the cause of rationality could not have failed to appeal to Voltaire and many of the era's intellectuals. Even the cantankerous British "Grand Tourist," Sir Horace Walpole (1717–97), praised Benedict XIV to the skies, penning a famous dedication to the pontiff:

Prospero Lambertini/Bishop of Rome / By the name of Benedict XIV / Who, though an absolute Prince / reigned as harmlessly / as a Doge of Venice. / He restored the luster of the Tiara / by those arts alone / by which He attained it, / his Virtues. / Beloved by Papists / esteemed by Protestants: / a priest without insolence or interest; / a Prince without favourites, / a Pope without nepotism; / an author without vanity; / in short a Man / whom neither Wit nor Power / could spoil. / The Son of a favourite Minister, / but One who never courted a Prince / nor worshipped

a Churchman, / offers in this free Protestant Country / This deserved  
Incense / to the Best of the Roman Pontiffs.<sup>2</sup>

Written in 1757, the year before Lambertini's death, this often quoted tribute should be taken seriously as an indicator of Benedict XIV's international reputation. Walpole's praise of him for neither having favourites nor indulging in nepotism is especially noteworthy. These papal virtues were two of the most important reasons for the favourable opinion of Benedict among European progressives.

Shortly after his election to the throne of Peter in 1740, Lambertini wrote to his only nephew Egano in Bologna that he and his family were to remain there until he summoned them to Rome. The call never came. Ever since the promulgation of the bull *Romanum decet Pontificem* by Innocent XII Pignatelli (reigned 1691–1700) in 1692, nepotism waned dramatically as a factor in pontifical government. Penned largely by Cardinal Gianfrancesco Albani, the future Pope Clement XI (reigned 1700–21), the bull was intended to address mounting criticism of the papacy for financial corruption and placing familial aggrandizement over the Church's spiritual mission. Elimination of at least the most egregious abuses forever altered the pontifical office. Settecento popes, with the notable exception of Pius VI, exercised considerable restraint in helping their families at the Church's expense. Benedict's immediate predecessor, Clement XII Corsini (reigned 1730–40), was notoriously stingy with his nephews, especially Cardinal Neri Corsini, who constantly complained about his papal uncle's refusal to help the family financially in the construction of their imposing new residence, Palazzo Corsini. The cardinal turned to King John V of Portugal (reigned 1706–50), offering to represent Lisbon's interests at the papal court in return for a princely annual stipend. Lambertini was even more stringent than Pope Clement, accepting gifts only to pass them on to museums, churches, and other religious and cultural institutions. He rarely kept anything except books, and these he presented to the University of Bologna near the end of his life. The pope even actively attempted to discourage gifts to his nephew, telling the donors it would avail them nothing in terms of influence on his government. In sum, Benedict's determined stand against nepotism was a vital part of his commitment to use the papal office to glorify the institution, not to enrich his family. He was always more concerned with promoting pastoral care and assuring the healthy functioning of the Church at the parish level than he was with the pomp and splendour of the position he

occupied. It is no surprise that his attitude earned him great praise from contemporaries.

One of the most salient features of Lambertini's anti-nepotism was his frequent presentation of antiquities, Old Master paintings, and other works of art to Rome's new museums. Many notable antique statues were presented to the Capitoline Museums established by Clement XII. These pontifical gifts included works purchased from the pope's privy purse for a specific acquisition, such as the world-famous *Dying Gaul* (Figure 0.1), or objects found in papal excavations, such as *Boy Struggling with a Goose*. So firm was his faith in the efficacy of museums as display spaces for the public benefit and as institutions vital to the preservation of the Roman cultural patrimony, that he established the Pinacoteca Capitolina to exhibit Old Master paintings as aesthetic complements to the antiquities in the Palazzo Nuovo on the other side of the Piazza del Campidoglio. His action was partly motivated by a



Figure 0.1 Hellenistic Greek, *The Dying Gaul*, ca. 150 BCE. Rome: Musei Capitolini.

pious desire to continue a project of Clement XII, who had spent a small fortune to refit the Palazzo Nuovo on the Capitoline Hill to display the antiquities collection of Cardinal Alessandro Albani, purchased to prevent them from being sold to foreign collectors and forever alienated from Rome. There was a similar impetus for establishing the Pinacoteca – the potential sale of the paintings belonging to the Sacchetti family and those inherited by the heirs of Cardinal Pio da Carpi. Renaissance and baroque pontiffs would have been much more inclined to use government money to purchase such objects for their private family galleries. These two collections of Old Masters are still the core of the Capitoline Pinacoteca's holdings and are especially rich in works of the Venetian Renaissance and the Bolognese baroque. The establishment and promotion of public museums were major features of enlightened Catholic thinking about the responsibilities of government to the governed.

The instruction of students of painting, sculpture, and architecture was also encouraged by Benedict in the Capitoline setting when he founded the Accademia del Nudo, a large studio designed by the painter Gianpaolo Panini and constructed beneath the picture galleries where aspiring artists from all nations could draw the posed male nude without charge. Instruction was carried out under the auspices of the leading papal cultural institution, the Accademia di San Luca. The study of plaster casts of important antiquities in many Roman collections was also encouraged, and the pope even helped provide a suite of such exemplars of classical perfection for students in his native Bologna. Such actions in favour of art and culture provided examples that were being followed all over Europe by the end of the eighteenth century, fuelled by the enthusiasm of elite Grand Tourists who flocked to Rome to see the new cultural spectacles under the papal aegis. Several essays in the present volume address various aspects of Lambertini's promotion of Roman art, architecture, and visual culture as an imperative of progressive government.

In addition to his ardent efforts on behalf of Roman museums, the national patrimony, and artistic education, Benedict XIV wanted to increase the profile of scholars in his dominions in the international Republic of Letters. He particularly wished to integrate the discipline of ecclesiastical history into a broader European context and to this end founded an academy dedicated to the subject. Although many contemporary rulers encouraged scholarship, Lambertini was unique in his recognition of the intellectual qualities and professional potential of exceptional women. He famously nominated Laura Bassi to a chair



in natural science at the University of Bologna, which she accepted, and he had one offered to the mathematician Maria Gaetana Agnesi of Milan, who declined the honour in order to concentrate on charitable work in her native city. The pope greatly encouraged the anatomist and wax sculptor Anna Morandi Manzolini, approving a lectureship for her at the University of Bologna after the death of her husband in 1755. Benedict's support for Bassi, Agnesi, and Morandi Manzolini indicates a liberality of thinking that could accommodate women of truly exceptional abilities in fields traditionalists believed should be exclusively male. The present volume addresses Benedict XIV's relationship to learned women and his attitudes about the role of women in society generally. What emerges from such investigations is how extraordinary his attitudes were for a contemporary ruler and how he likely viewed his support for exceptional women as part of a broader strategy to reposition Italy, above all Bologna, in a leadership role in European scientific, literary, and intellectual culture.

The progressive nature of the Lambertini papacy is seen to advantage in his championship of Bassi, Agnesi, and Morandi Manzolini, but its limits are made obvious in his involvement with attempts to have Galileo's heliocentric publications removed from the Holy Office of the Inquisition's *Index of Forbidden Books*. Like the vast majority of learned Europeans in the middle decades of the eighteenth century, Benedict accepted the idea of a heliocentric solar system, but the question was how to remove the strictures against Galileo's publications, above all *Dialogo sopra i due Massimi sistemi del mondo* (*Dialogue concerning the Two Chief World Systems*) originally published in 1632 and still widely admired in the Settecento, despite its having been on the *Index* since 1633. Removing the condemnation was the reasonable thing to do, but it would also have admitted that the Church during the pontificate of Urban VIII Barberini (reigned 1623–44) had been mistaken in its evaluation of the text and in its imposition of house arrest for life on its author. As a number of essays in the present volume demonstrate, Benedict was determined to reform the way books were condemned by the Holy Office and to restructure the official list along more rational lines, but he did not wish to cede the papal prerogative to monitor publications and prohibit them when they were clearly heretical, religiously subversive, or dangerous to the social order. In the "Galileo affair," he compromised by removing the ban on all the astronomer's publications except the original, uncorrected version of *Dialogue*. It was a solution that showed an astute awareness of his dual responsibilities – to the

papal office, which compelled him to honour decisions made by his predecessors, and a determination to bring the Church into sync with the modern world. The Church still struggles with the “Galileo affair.” Indeed, it was only in the middle of the nineteenth century that the Church formally accepted heliocentrism and removed heliocentric publications from the *Index*, and only in 1979 that John Paul II Wojtyła (reigned 1978–2005) officially vindicated Galileo and his publications. Nevertheless, in 2008 Pope Benedict XVI Ratzinger (reigned from 2006; abdicated 2013) was asked to cancel a lecture in honour of Galileo at La Sapienza University in Rome because earlier he had tacitly approved a statement by a Catholic cleric that the Holy Office’s decision in 1633 had been correct.

Benedict XIV’s support for progressive Catholic scholarship, museums, academies, art instruction, the restoration of Roman churches and monuments, the decoration of sacred spaces, and attempts to liberalize the *Index of Forbidden Books* gained him considerable approval, both in Italy and throughout Europe. The pope’s contributions to Roman visual culture and museology were noted by many of the thousands of pilgrims and tourists who poured into the papal capital during the Holy Year of 1750. It may be argued, however, that this busy pontiff’s most lasting contribution to the Church was his reform of the procedures for beatification and canonization, attempts to make uniform the celebration of Holy Mass, increased support for the pastoral role of bishops, and a profound commitment to compromise with the Catholic monarchs on issues that did not infringe on doctrinal orthodoxy, a domain he reserved exclusively to himself. Several essays in the present volume address various aspects of Benedict’s engagement with the processes that introduced the blessed and the saints into the general communion of the Church and also his various texts on ecclesiological issues. The sanctification procedures outlined by Pope Benedict are still in use today, and provide a vivid picture of a pontiff obsessed with rationalizing processes while insisting on the decorous performance of religious rites and ceremonies. Benedict recognized the performative nature of Catholic ritual and its impact on the faithful, and such recognition led him to issue encyclicals (papal letters sent to all bishops) to the bishops in the States of the Church exhorting them to provision their cathedrals and the parish churches in their dioceses with appropriate furnishings, from altarpieces to chalices. He saw such oversight as an episcopal responsibility and never failed, even as pope, to send annual gifts of splendid ecclesiastical objects to the cathedral chapters in Ancona and

Bologna, where he had served as bishop and archbishop, respectively, before becoming pope.

One of the most important influences on Benedict's views of the role of the Church in the modern world were the writings of Ludovico Antonio Muratori (1672–1750), one of the major scholarly figures of enlightened Catholicism. His studies of the Italian Middle Ages, Church history, and Christian archaeology are still important and relevant to modern scholarship. His most significant contribution to Catholic thinking, however, was *Della regolata divozione de' Cristiani* (*Concerning a Regulated Christian Devotion*), a short book published in Venice in 1747, less than three years before his death. This widely influential text argued for a more reasonable religion based on charity and good works rather than mysticism, Mariolatry, and overemphasis on the communion of the saints in Catholic devotion, above all at the popular level. He argued in favour of the diminution of the number of hagiographical feast days of holy obligation, because they deprived labourers of income to support their families, and he actively discouraged many of the more folkloric religious practices such as ringing church bells to ward off plagues and thunderstorms. Benedict XIV had great respect for Muratori, and the latter's "regulated devotion" served as one of the fundamental texts for those who wanted to see a more progressive and relevant Catholicism emerge from the broader European Enlightenment.

Lambertini's priorities as supreme pontiff clearly indicate the fact that he considered his role as spiritual father of the world's Catholics and guardian of Church dogma to be much more important than his secular position as the absolute ruler of the States of the Church guiding his dominions through the minefields and quagmires of European dynastic politics. In the political climate of eighteenth-century Europe, however, he was forced to pay more attention to his role as a sovereign than he would have done in less parlous times. Concessions to the kings of Naples, Spain, Portugal, and France on a variety of issues connected to traditional papal prerogatives and historical pretensions were carefully negotiated to the advantage of the secular authorities. Benedict XIV's guiding principle was that it was better to concede things that were only of material interest to the Church and that would likely be lost in the long run anyway. He hoped that such accommodation would make it easier for the papacy to preserve its spiritual authority in the interests of the faithful while maintaining absolute control over Catholic doctrine.

One of the major areas of conflict between the Church and the secular powers concerned the former's ambitious missionary activities in Catholic Europe's global colonies. Generally speaking, Benedict favoured missionary orders that attempted not only to convert people, but also to make their lives better. In Europe, he enthusiastically promoted the activities of the Lazarists and the Redemptorists, orders that specialized in teaching missions to rural and underserved places that only rarely saw a priest. The secular authorities were often deeply suspicious of such activities, above all in the kingdom of Naples and in Portugal, because they feared popular agitation and the presentation of a message over which they had little control. More serious problems emerged in the colonies of Catholic nations in the New World and in imperial China, where Qing rulers, especially the Yongzheng (1723–35) and the Qianlong (reigned 1735–96) emperors, kept strict control over Catholic missionaries, limiting them to scientific and artistic activities at the court in Beijing and forbidding them to evangelize in the wider empire. Two essays in this volume address issues of Church-State conflict in the missionary context. The limits of papal authority are seen in the inability to regularize conventual practices in Mexico without the support of the Spanish administration there and the papacy's inability to reconcile Christian conversion practices with venerable local traditions of ancestor worship in China, the so-called Chinese Rites. In both instances, Benedict's sense of responsibility to his office led him to attempt to impose Church discipline on remote places that he little understood, which resulted in serious problems for Catholic evangelization. The Catholic mission in China was definitively crippled with the promulgation of Benedict's bull *Ex quo singulari* in 1742, a decree that forbade tolerance of the Chinese Rites for the empire's Christian converts and ordered silence on the controversy. Lambertini's ruling backed up bulls against the Rites issued by Clement XI in 1704 and 1715. Evangelization among the Chinese did not resume until the second half of the nineteenth century.

Modern scholarship until recently has either ignored or dismissed the papacy's contributions to the era of the Enlightenment, viewing it retrospectively through the lens of repressive obscurantism and anti-modernism that characterized the institution after the collapse of the Bonapartist empire in 1815. Indeed, many traditionalists believed that the liberalizing current of papal policies in the middle decades of the Settecento, above all during the pontificates of Benedict XIV and Clement XIV Ganganelli (reigned 1769–74), was largely responsible for

the anticlerical mayhem that engulfed Europe in the wake of the Jacobins and Napoleon. There has also been a strong tendency in eighteenth-century scholarship on the Enlightenment to deny that a spiritual institution like the papacy has any place in the discussion. Simply put, in this view religion and reason cannot be reconciled. More nuanced investigations, however, reveal that contemporaries did not consider the two to be mutually exclusive, and many of the leading proponents of progressive thought and the application of reason in the modern world remained Christians. The present volume presents essays that interrogate received scholarly wisdom that the Enlightenment was wholly secular and that Roman Catholicism and religion generally had no role to play, unless it was to condemn it. Instead, many of the scholars included here posit the idea that it was possible for revealed religion and reason to find common ground. We hope that scholarly investigation of the moderately modern, enlightened Catholicism of Benedict XIV will spur further research and reposition spirituality in a development from which it has been excluded for far too long.

#### NOTES

- 1 Voltaire, "Letter to Pope Benedict XIV," written in Paris and dated 17 August 1745.
- 2 Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford, *The Works of Horatio Walpole, Earl of Orford*, 3 vols (London: G.G. and J. Robinson and J. Edwards, 1798), 1: 218.

## **PART I**

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# **Benedict XIV, Women, and Progressive Catholicism**

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# 1 Benedict's Patronage of Learned Women

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MARTA CAVAZZA

This chapter addresses Pope Benedict XIV's support and sponsorship of a handful of learned women who excelled in fields that at the time were considered to be male occupations, such as natural philosophy, mathematics, and anatomy. This aspect of the historical figure has been largely ignored by historians, who have instead focused on his personality, as well as his work as pastor, ruler of the Papal States, and scholar. For instance, a recent in-depth publication on Pope Lambertini does not address this topic.<sup>1</sup> Those who have investigated the objectives and the reasons for his favourable attitude towards cultivated women are instead scholars who study the evolution of science in Italy in the eighteenth century with an eye to cultural history and also, therefore, gender.

Scholars such as Paula Findlen, Rebecca Messbarger, and Massimo Mazzotti, as well as others, not only indicate that the issues of education and the social role of women were central to this period, but also teach us about the numerous women who were active in the cultural life of various Italian cities. These scholars have focused particularly on a handful of women who received public recognition in eighteenth-century Italy, especially in Bologna, for their philosophical, mathematical, and anatomical knowledge. The instigator and director of these events was in most cases Benedict XIV. Therefore, an interesting historical question arises regarding the relationship between such a phenomenon and Catholic Enlightenment culture, especially that promoted in Italy in the first half of the eighteenth century by those whom we now refer to as enlightened Catholics. Prospero Lambertini was very close to the main intellectual leaders of Catholic reformism, Ludovico Antonio Muratori and Celestino Galiani. Therefore, the discussion regarding his



rationale and objectives in supporting women literati and philosophers is appropriately framed in the context of the Enlightenment.<sup>2</sup>

In the limited space of this chapter, I first intend to describe the main cases in which Cardinal Lambertini, as archbishop and later as pope, used his moral authority and his sovereign power to encourage and reward women who excelled in the fields of philosophy and medicine, helping them obtain public honours and academic positions that were reserved for men during that era. I would then like to propose a few hypotheses that serve to explain Benedict's actions. In my opinion it would be unsound to speak of a specific strategy aimed at enhancing feminine knowledge. Instead, we must attempt to understand how these episodes were linked to his view of society and culture and whether they represent an aspect of a larger renovation project inspired by the ideas and values of the multifaceted world of enlightened Catholicism. It seems to me that this is the position that Mazzotti, Findlen, and Messbarger support with differing analyses.<sup>3</sup>

I will discuss the cases of the natural philosopher Laura Bassi (Bologna, 1711–78), the mathematician Maria Gaetana Agnesi (Milan, 1718–99), and the wax modeller and anatomist Anna Morandi (Bologna 1714–74). Seeing as these women might not be known to all readers, I will offer some biographical information as well as details of the shared context in which the events that interest us took place.

The common context in all three cases is Bologna, which was the second-largest city of the Papal States and was ruled by a mixed government, formed by a legate (usually a cardinal), who represented the sovereign authority of the pope, and a senate of forty members from the aristocratic citizen oligarchy.<sup>4</sup> Bologna was also the native city of Benedict XIV, who was born in 1675 to a noble family, at the time impoverished. After a long and difficult career in the Roman Curia, where he had particularly shown his expertise in the field of canon law, Lambertini was made cardinal by Pope Benedict XIII in 1726; he became archbishop of Ancona in 1727 and in 1731 returned to his hometown as archbishop (Plate 3). He remained there until 1740, when he was elected pope.<sup>5</sup> Afterwards he never again set foot in Bologna, but retained the post of archbishop, keeping an eye not only on the pastoral activities of his replacement, but also on those of the public cultural institutions of the city – the old university and the new Institute of Sciences, founded in 1711.<sup>6</sup> The main object of his hopes and fears was the latter institution. In fact, Lambertini sustained with all of his might its program of modern experimental science dissemination, particularly

Newtonian physics. He sought, as well, to direct the research and teaching activities of the Institute towards branches of knowledge that might be useful for society, by introducing and supporting new disciplines, such as anatomy, surgery, and obstetrics.<sup>7</sup>

Let us return to the examples of scholarly women. The pioneer was Laura Bassi, a girl from a middle-class family who, after being secretly trained by a doctor who was also a university lecturer, was the first woman awarded a degree by the University of Bologna. Her degree in philosophy was bestowed in 1732. The cardinal legate and then-Archbishop Lambertini also attended the lavish graduation ceremony (Plate 2). A few months later the Senate gave the twenty-one year old Bassi a philosophy lectureship, which was paid, but considered "honorary." In fact, the young lecturer, "because of her sex," could lecture only on special occasions and on her superiors' orders.<sup>8</sup>

All Senate decisions were recorded in very detailed registers kept in the State Archive of Bologna.<sup>9</sup> To my knowledge, none of them indicates that pressure was exerted by Cardinal Lambertini, who at the time represented a religious as opposed to a political authority. However, we learn through unofficial sources that from his arrival in Bologna the year before the archbishop had listened to and questioned the young Bassi. In a private diary of the time we find a critical remark on the role of the archbishop in the matter, probably echoing a widespread sentiment in some city's circles. The author of the diary, Giovanni Giacomo Amadei, was a local priest decidedly hostile to the archbishop and the changes he was making in the diocese of Bologna.<sup>10</sup> He is, in any case, to be considered a credible source as to the aforementioned facts. His diary gives us two interesting pieces of information: first, it was the cardinal who encouraged the girl prodigy to seek a philosophy degree (*laurea*), and second, he himself had "ordered" the College of the Doctors of Philosophy to grant her this degree (which of course was not part of his jurisdiction). Amadei adds that he is dubious as to the validity of a woman's degree. In a different passage of his diary we find another critical remark regarding the lectureship granted the young graduate, in his opinion unfair because it interfered with young male doctors' aspirations to similar positions.<sup>11</sup>

We lack direct documentation regarding the reasons that induced Cardinal Lambertini to inspire and support choices that were so unpopular with a significant section of Bolognese lay and religious society. There was, in fact, an underground opposition to such granting of a lectureship to a woman. It is disconcerting to note that one of the leaders

of this opposition was the marchioness Laura Bentivoglio Davia, a very cultured woman as well as an advocate of Cartesian philosophy.<sup>12</sup> A hypothesis that I share with other scholars is that the cardinal saw an opportunity to attract the attention of the European Republic of Letters to Bologna and its cultural institutions by honouring a woman of intelligence and culture exceptional among her sex. As Gabriella Berti Logan has observed, “he proposed her as a symbol of the moral value of the education. Bassi’s accomplishments would enhance the prestige of the town and of the university, as had the accomplishments of other women in the past.”<sup>13</sup> The partly legendary tradition regarding the existence from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries of women who had occasionally taught law or philosophy in the university and/or received degrees had been revived just ten years before Bassi’s *laurea* and in 1732 became a rhetorical leitmotif in every speech delivered during the public events involving the *dottoressa*.<sup>14</sup>

In the beginning, Lambertini’s intention was likely to present the young *filosofessa* Bassi as a sort of living allegory of learned Bologna, with only an ornamental role – a sort of rhetorical homage to the aforementioned tradition of women’s learning in Bologna so popular among his fellow citizens. Probably in later years, he became convinced that women who excelled in intellectual pursuits and technical skills were to be evaluated and rewarded according to their achievements and the actual prestige they could bestow on the university and the Institute of Sciences. This evolution would become clear after 1740, when his new role as pope would allow him to influence the Senate of Bologna’s decisions not only through covert pressures, but also through sovereign orders.

It was Benedict’s awareness of Laura Bassi’s competence that convinced him to take this step towards legitimizing positions filled by women intellectuals. In the years following 1732, the young scholar increased her knowledge of modern physics and mathematics. The pope followed her studies, as well as her battle to obtain the authorization to teach publicly at the university, through the Bolognese ambassador in Rome, Flaminio Scarselli.<sup>15</sup> He was also aware of her desire to be included among the members of a new class of stipendiary academics that he himself was about to create in order to increase the scientific production of the Academy of Sciences of the Institute. In his *Motu proprio* of 28 November 1745, which established the Benedictine academic order, the pope added an extra twenty-fifth position to the planned personnel of twenty-four, specifically for “Dr. Laura Bassi,

public lecturer and academic of the institute." The explanation given for her assignment was a direct reflection of Bassi's communication that she already had "material ready for several Dissertations."<sup>16</sup> This is interesting, because one of the new Benedictine academic's obligations would be to present at least one original dissertation a year. According to Benedict, therefore, Bassi's right to be inserted in this class of academics stemmed from the assessment, independent of any gender distinction, of the scientific contribution she would make to the Academy and the Institute. Yet in any case it is true that by assigning her a position outside the staff, the pope to some extent capitulated to the misogynist discrimination of male academics, who were not willing to lose one of the twenty-four original positions to a woman.<sup>17</sup>

Benedict's appreciation of women's knowledge, in terms of its intrinsic value and public utility, is also documented through the letters he exchanged with Maria Gaetana Agnesi and the Senate of Bologna between 1749 and 1750. Agnesi was a young Milanese philosopher and mathematician very famous in her own time. She has been re-evaluated thanks to a handful of sagacious scholars who have studied her life and work from original perspectives.<sup>18</sup> In 1748 her two-volume textbook *Istituzioni analitiche ad uso della gioventù italiana* (*Analytical Institutions for Use by Italian Youth*) was sent to press. It was a manual of analytical geometry and differential and integral calculus, innovative in its structure and much appreciated by the most influential mathematicians of the time.<sup>19</sup> On 21 June 1749, after receiving the book and reading it carefully, Pope Lambertini wrote a kind letter to the author. In this letter he said that Agnesi was "without a doubt numbered among the leading professors of Analysis," and that her textbook would be "very useful" and would contribute "to the scholarly reputation of Italy and our Academy of Sciences of Bologna," of which she was already a member, to his "great satisfaction." The judgment of Benedict XIV regarding the merits of Agnesi and her book were based on his own competence in mathematics, dating to his study of analysis undertaken "in the first flower of our youth" but then abandoned for "those studies, which belong to that state for which Divine Providence selected us." The mathematical knowledge acquired in his youth allowed him to understand Agnesi's work "by glancing at the tables of chapters and especially reading some chapters of the analysis of finite quantities" and therefore to recognize the importance of analysis and valid teachers of this discipline as indicators of the high or low standard of the Italian universities (Figure 1.1).<sup>20</sup>



# INSTITUZIONI ANALITICHE LIBRO PRIMO

*Dell'Analisi delle Quantità finite.*



L'Analisi delle quantità finite, che comunemente chiamasi Algebra Cartesiana, è un metodo, con cui trattando quantità finite si sciolgono i Problemi; cioè da certe quantità, e condizioni date e cognite, si viene in cognizione d'altre incognite, e che si cercano, per mezzo di alcune operazioni, e metodi, che parte a parte mi propongo di spiegarne ne' seguenti Capi.

A

CAPO

Figure 1.1 Maria Gaetana Agnesi, *Instituzioni Analitiche per uso della Gioventù Italiana*, Milan, 1748, first page of the first book (*Primo libro*) on the analysis of the finite quantities. Engravings by Marc' Antonio Dalrè, Università di Bologna, Biblioteca del Dipartimento di Matematica.

A year later the pope decided to make his appreciation public and ordered the Bolognese Senate to assign Agnesi an honorary lectureship in mathematics at the university. His request was communicated to the senators through their colleague, Marquis Paolo Magnani, Lambertini's close friend and assiduous correspondent, who in the Senate sitting of 4 July 1750 read "a kind message from Our Lord," dated 24 June.<sup>21</sup> Following the recommendation of the pope, in the sitting of 7 July the Senate decided by a unanimous vote to award "the renowned Maria Gaetana Agnesi from Milan" an honorary chair of mathematics at the University of Bologna and ordered that her name should be "immediately inserted in the rolls (*Rotuli*) of the professors, according to the sovereign requests of Our Lord."<sup>22</sup> In a 12 September letter to the Senate, Agnesi expressed her gratitude for the received honour, which had been communicated to her through a letter from the cardinal secretary of state, Silvio Valenti Gonzaga, dated 29 August. She confessed that she was "overwhelmed by such a striking spontaneous nomination from Our Lord," and that "I feel the greatness of this recognition, to which I would never have dared aspire, and feel it even more strongly knowing perfectly well that I do not merit it."<sup>23</sup> The senators answered her letter on 8 October, writing that, even though their decision was initially moved by "the sovereign solicitude of His Beatitude, inspired by your merits," they were very pleased to have taken it and that they now had "good reason to believe that the reputation of our university would be increased thanks to your assiduous studies."<sup>24</sup>

The words of the Senate as well as those of Agnesi therefore converge in attributing to Benedict XIV the origin of the appointment of the university readership to her. However, the same message with which the pope ordered his "beloved sons, noble men" to proceed with the appointment reveals that it was the same Agnesi, who "by means of our Cardinal Secretary of State [...] indicated her desire to obtain an honorary lectureship in the subject of her profession in our celebrated University of Bologna."<sup>25</sup> Her request, however, followed a path that had already been paved. In fact, in his message to the Senate, Benedict strengthens his legal argument by referring to the recent example of Laura Bassi as well as to the medieval precedents at the University of Bologna of female graduates and faculty. He states: "Being well informed about ancient and recent examples, we know that it is not contrary to the custom of the University to offer this remarkable sign of our honorable esteem even to women when they achieve that eminent degree of knowledge that Agnesi has achieved."<sup>26</sup> According to

Findlen, this document corroborates her hypothesis that “gaining the pope’s attention” was the main strategic objective in widely distributing Agnesi’s *Analytical Institutions* in Italy and Europe. The strategy was implemented by the same Agnesi and her father, with the help of an extensive circle of enlightened Catholic intellectuals, including mathematicians and physicists active in Bologna and the Veneto, beyond those in Milan.<sup>27</sup>

Agnesi’s name, as Honorary Lecturer of Analytic Geometry, remained in the rolls of university professors until 1796, but she never went to Bologna, despite the invitations received from authoritative intellectual figures. For instance, the president of the Institute of Science, Jacopo Bartolomeo Beccari, encouraged her to accept the appointment and thereby continue the tradition of female professors so dear to the pope: “Since the most ancient times, Bologna has listened to people of your sex from its public university chairs. It is your turn to maintain this tradition in the possession of this honor. Indeed, you could render it even more extraordinary.”<sup>28</sup>

The decision not to accept the invitations from Bologna was actually a consequence of radical changes in Agnesi’s life following the death of her father in 1752. The abandonment of mathematical studies in order to dedicate herself both to religious meditation and to helping the poor and the sick in Milan was, in fact, a crucial aspect of this change.<sup>29</sup> It does not appear that the pope, despite potential channels of communication between the two, was consulted or even informed by Agnesi of her decision. It would be interesting to know his reaction. Despite the fact that in his messages he indicates the limits imposed on a female professorship, such as the fact that it was an “honorary” as opposed to a regular appointment, he never failed to emphasize the criterion of merit. In the collection of letters and documents relating to the professorship given to the Milanese mathematician two values stand out that were certainly essential to Pope Lambertini: personal merit (considered independent of gender), and public utility as a criterion for scientific work. In a letter from Pope Benedict XIV to Agnesi, after her official appointment as lecturer, we find a clear formulation of the reasons that prompted him to promote the Senate’s decision to grant her a chair in mathematics. In this *breve*, addressed to “Dearest daughter Maria Gaetana Agnesi, of Milan,” he writes: “We love and greatly respect our University of Bologna, which persuaded us to procure all possible honors for it. From these principles came the line of thought that the well-known mathematics chair should be conferred on you, and thus

it follows that You should not thank us, but We must thank you, which We do, conferring the Apostolic Benediction on you again."<sup>30</sup>

According to Mazzotti, Agnesi's life as a female intellectual must be read in the light of the ideas and values of the Catholic Enlightenment. For reasons of both a social and a philosophical order, enlightened Catholics emphasized the role of women and supported female education. Women were, in fact, "one of the social groups that the Church was now willing to mobilize within its institutional networks." To this purpose, education "was considered necessary for young women to shape their devotion and prepare their future participation in the religious life of the community."<sup>31</sup> This novel approach to the feminine role contributed, therefore, to the creation of a milieu favourable to the emergence of the phenomenon of female intellectual visibility in the middle decades of the eighteenth century (roughly the period of Lambertini's papacy).<sup>32</sup> Accordingly, Benedict XIV's public recognition of Agnesi, Bassi, and other learned women, may be seen as part of a larger strategy to enhance the role of women in education. Mazzotti also points out that "during the same period, Benedict XIV modified canon law so that women as well as men could produce evidence during the processes of beatification and canonization, thus providing them with an unprecedented social and epistemological legitimacy."<sup>33</sup> This can also be contextualized as a Catholic reformist response to the secular Enlightenment's criticisms regarding the backwardness and misogyny of the Church.<sup>34</sup>

In the third case that I examine, in my opinion these values may also be seen to have informed Benedict's choice to reward with a public position the anatomical expertise and the technical skills of a woman. I am referring to Anna Morandi, whose life and works have been so richly described and analysed by Rebecca Messbarger.<sup>35</sup> Morandi learned anatomy and wax modelling from her husband, Giovanni Manzolini. He was the brilliant assistant of Ercole Lelli, the creator of the Institute of the Sciences' spectacular anatomical statues, specifically at the pope's request.<sup>36</sup> After the death of her husband in 1755, Morandi, whose skill as an anatomist and artist was already well known, was able to continue her work, despite her status as a woman and a widow, thanks to a resolution of the Senate in February 1756. This resolution stipulated that Morandi would receive an annual salary of 300 lire, on condition that she continue her work as an anatomical wax modeller, did not leave town, and, above all, hold public demonstrations in the place and time established by the university regents. The senators specified that this



task was assigned to her both “as a reward for her art in dissection and preparation of the finer parts of the body,” as well as “in compliance with the most clement recommendation of our Lord reigning.”<sup>37</sup> Once again, the pope was behind the Senate decision in favour of a woman who excelled in intellectual activities considered useful for the city and the university. Already in 1755, Benedict had responded to Morandi’s plea by assigning her an annual salary enabling her to overcome her difficult family situation and “to continue her work as a scholar with greater courage,” as well as by sending the members of the Senate “a special letter” in which he recommended that they assign her a teaching position.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, resistance in the Senate and the university was not lacking. In fact, despite the recommendations of the pope and the success of her anatomical demonstrations, Morandi’s name never appeared in the rolls of the university professors. It is no surprise that seven years after the death of Benedict XIV, in 1765, the Senate refused Anna Morandi’s request for a raise in salary.<sup>39</sup>

The role of Pope Lambertini in promoting the new method of teaching through dissection and wax models in the Institute is heavily stressed by Rebecca Messbarger.<sup>40</sup> The precision and elegance of Morandi’s anatomical models became famous, and she received orders for them from all over Italy and Europe, even from the Russian empress Catherine the Great.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, as Messbarger points out, her fellow citizens continued to consider her a gifted dilettante. Only in 1777, three years after her death, was her anatomical collection acquired by the Senate and placed in the Institute of Sciences. Its first curator was Luigi Galvani, who in his inaugural oration celebrated not only the elegance and originality of Morandi’s living anatomies, but also their didactic utility. That the scientific value of her waxworks was a product not simply of artisanal skill, but also of a profound knowledge of the structure and functions of the parts and organs of the human body, was eventually recognized, providing posthumous satisfaction to her desire to be considered a professional anatomist first of all (see Plate 11).<sup>42</sup>

Pope Lambertini displayed kindness and high regard towards women who were engaged in scientific and literary studies in minor cases beyond the three I mention in this chapter.<sup>43</sup> Such behaviour was certainly in tune with the spread in the Catholic world of a favourable attitude towards female education. It is possible that the pope wanted to promote a new model of the Catholic woman that would live up to the times.<sup>44</sup> In any case, I believe that Benedict’s support of Bassi, Agnesi, and Morandi goes beyond mere advocacy for female education

upheld by some of the most determined Catholic supporters of intellectual equality between genders. In particular I am referring to Giovanni N. Bandiera, a Cartesian priest who in his *Treatise on Women's Studies* (1740), partly inspired by Poullain de la Barre's famous book, *On the Equality of the Sexes* (1673), maintains that men and women are intellectually equal, and that girls should therefore be educated. Bandiera speaks with admiration for Laura Bassi and other learned women. However, in opposition to his own model, which states that all the careers should be open to women, including scientific ones, he argues that education should primarily help women better fulfil their familial duties, the first of which consists in obedience to their husbands and certainly not to becoming public intellectuals.<sup>45</sup> Benedict XIV's attempts to institutionally reward women philosophers have, in my opinion, a disruptive nature that goes well beyond the limits of the reforms proposed by Bandiera, who was nonetheless a religious figure very close to the pope and an exponent of the enlightened Catholic movement.<sup>46</sup> I think, in fact, that in order to explain Benedict's actions – namely public acknowledgment of women as natural philosophers, mathematicians, and anatomists – we must also connect them to his enthusiastic interest in modern experimental science, especially the possible social applications of scientific discoveries.

Faith in education and science as necessary factors for social progress and the "common good" are two key Enlightenment ideas, particularly in the Catholic version that developed in Italy. These ideas had deep roots in Lambertini's own intellectual and religious development. Born in 1675, he was a contemporary of the historian and philosopher Ludovico Antonio Muratori, born in 1672. Both grew up in the milieu particular to the late seventeenth-century Emilian Catholicism, which has been called "Galilean Catholicism."<sup>47</sup> The members, mostly men of the Church with close relationships with men of science, hoped to offer a way out of the impasse in the relations between modern science and the Catholic Church produced in the previous century by Galileo's trial and the condemnation of Copernican cosmology. In addition to their support of the Galilean experimental method in the natural sciences, they also proposed to advance the rational historical method founded on facts, even regarding the history of the Church, as opposed to the traditional, uncritical transmission of stories, often legendary, if not completely false, about miracles, saints, or the origin of religious orders. They also sought to apply the same rational critique to civil and canonic law.<sup>48</sup> The Galilean lesson was combined with that of the

innovators of the sacred erudition, the French Jean Mabillon (1632–1707), Benedictine of the congregation of St Maur, and the Belgian Jesuit Daniel Papenbroek (1682–1714). In Italy the leading figure was the Benedictine Father Benedetto Bacchini, the founder of the *Giornale de' Letterati* issued first at Parma (1686–90), then at Modena (1692–97).<sup>49</sup> In the eighteenth century, the Bacchini pupil Muratori was certainly the most influential *maître à penser* to emerge from this milieu. His historical and philosophical works would continue to inspire two generations of intellectual Catholic reformers. In 1742, Muratori dedicated his book *On the Defects of Law* to Lambertini. In the dedication “To his Holiness Benedict XIV P.M.,” Muratori states that he admires the pope’s “enlightened” mind and his exclusive interest in the promotion of the “public good of the holy Church and of its temporal states.”<sup>50</sup> The term “public good” is repeated three times in the two pages of the text and is always linked to the pope, as if the author wants to attribute to him original authorship of the concept that in 1749 would become the main subject of Muratori’s last book, entitled *On Public Happiness*.<sup>51</sup> The two works, according to Franco Venturi, represent “the most mature expression of all reformist thought in Italy during the War of the Austrian Succession” (1741–8).<sup>52</sup> The Muratorian reform program, although much behind developments in Italian and French Enlightenment thought in the years that followed, was certainly too bold for the Roman Curia and the pope himself, who distanced himself from the reformist ideas of the great thinker, causing Muratori great pain and disappointment in the last years of his life.<sup>53</sup>

Lambertini’s long association and collaboration with another even more radical Catholic reformist, Monsignor Celestino Galiani, also influenced his more enlightened positions.<sup>54</sup> Both shared a passion for modern science, particularly the idea of introducing Newtonian physics into Italian colleges and universities. However, Lambertini did not approve of his friend’s positive attitude towards Locke’s empiricist epistemology. They shared an urgent commitment to reform the organization of the Church, even if after becoming pope Lambertini implicitly distanced himself from Galiani’s ideas and, for example, avoided naming him cardinal. The fact that many of the individuals close to both Galiani and Lambertini came from the same Emilian religious and scientific background is likewise significant. Among them the most important were the doctor Antonio Leprotti, who became archiater (chief physician) to Benedict XIV; the astronomer Eustachio Manfredi; and Cardinal Giovanantonio Davia, who was also a passionate scientific

amateur, secret Copernican, and dangerously close to the Jansenist heresy.<sup>55</sup> In addition, I would like to mention that Cardinal Silvio Valenti Gonzaga, Pope Lambertini's trusted secretary of state, had been a former pupil of Galvani.<sup>56</sup>

The letters from Benedict XIV to Senator Magnani, published by Paolo Prodi and Maria Teresa Fattori, like those addressed to other Bolognese who enjoyed his confidence, bear witness to his passionate commitment to the promotion of the scientific institutions of his city.<sup>57</sup> In particular, as I have mentioned, he worked tirelessly to provide public and financial support to Bologna's Institute of Sciences, to which, among other things, he donated his extensive personal library. All measures taken by Pope Lambertini in favour of the Institute were aimed at increasing the quantity and quality of scientific research and teaching at the Institute, in order to bring them up to the highest European standard. He was convinced that, thanks to his help, the Institute was "in a position to make our country renowned, as in other times the university was famous."<sup>58</sup> But he was also convinced that to reach this goal it was first important to increase the quality of researchers and teachers, introducing the criteria of merit and scientific productivity into their careers. The aforementioned establishment of an order of salaried academics, significantly named *Benedettini*, worked in this direction. Many of his letters to his correspondents in Bologna, in particular Magnani, are dedicated to the long and complex matter of obtaining the necessary funds for this project. The goal was achieved through the allocation of funds away from the Pannolini College for disadvantaged students that the pope himself had attended in his teens; hence, closing it was in a certain sense a personal sacrifice for him.<sup>59</sup> This biographical detail could suggest that it was perhaps his personal life experience as a student without means or influential patrons, first in Bologna, then in Rome, that led him not only to abhor the nepotism on which the ecclesiastical careers in the Roman curia were grounded, but also to worry about the risk that the scientific excellence and the European reputation of the Bolognese Institute could be jeopardized by the prevalence of criteria based not on merit but on local client relationships in the awarding of academic posts.

His letters indicate, in fact, a paradoxical aspect of his tireless patronage, namely, a mistrust that borders on contempt for the disinterest in books, culture, and the proper functioning of the relative institutions of most of his Bolognese compatriots, particularly the clergy. With his famed sharp wit, the pope, for example, commented on the forthcoming opening of the library he had donated to the Institute, saying that "the

books will be very lucky because in Bologna they will enjoy a perfect vacation and will not be picked up, such as they used to have been in Rome."<sup>60</sup>

Is it surprising, then, to note the esteem and consideration the pope showed a woman like the Newtonian Laura Bassi, who elevated the name of Bologna in Europe, thanks to her research and European network of correspondents, and who instructed students in the most advanced scientific disciplines? Or is it surprising to note his respect for a woman like Anna Morandi, who with her artistic creations and anatomical demonstrations advanced the knowledge of young medical students and at the same time aroused the admiration of powerful foreign rulers such as Catherine of Russia and Emperor Joseph II? Finally, can we wonder at his admiration of the devotee Maria Gaetana Agnesi, who put her knowledge at the service of young Italian students in modern mathematics with a book praised and recommended by members of the prestigious Academy of Sciences in Paris?

In conclusion, I would like to suggest that perhaps the fact that Agnesi, Morandi, and Bassi were women and therefore disadvantaged from the start with respect to their male contemporaries only increased the women's merit in the eyes of the pope, who in a meritocratic spirit, wished to present them as examples for everyone, not just for women. They became a "symbol of the successes of the Bolognese science" chiefly thanks to Benedict XIV's patronage.<sup>61</sup> The connection between the promotion of modern science and not only the recognition of the intellectual dignity of women, but also the legitimation of a role for them within cultural institutions (almost) equal to that of men, was undoubtedly one of the most original and progressive features of Pope Lambertini's reformist engagement, an engagement carried on in the context of the brief season of the Catholic Enlightenment, not by chance coincident with his pontificate.

## NOTES

- 1 Greco, *Benedetto XIV*.
- 2 For a deeper exploration of the relations between Catholic Enlightenment, scientific modernization, and social reformism in the early eighteenth-century Italy, see Ferrone, *Scienza, natura, religione*. For a discussion of the influence of Catholic Enlightenment on the representation of women in religious art, see Johns, "Gender and Genre in the Religious Art of the Catholic Enlightenment."
- 3 Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*; Findlen, "Calculations of Faith"; Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*.

- 4 On the history and structure of Bologna's political government, see De Benedictis, "Il governo misto."
- 5 Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 36–7.
- 6 On the Institute of Sciences and its relations with the university, see Cavazza, "Innovazione e compromesso."
- 7 *Ibid.*, 340–5.
- 8 Archivio di Stato di Bologna (hereafter ASB), Senato, Partiti, f. 49–50, 29 October 1732, n.39, "Lectura Doctrici Laurae Mariae Catharinae de Bassij." On Laura Bassi, her graduation, and career, see the following articles by Paula Findlen: "Science as a Career in Enlightenment Italy"; "The Scientist's Body"; "Tra uomini." See also Berti Logan, "The Desire to Contribute"; Ceranski, "Und sie fürchtet sich vor niemanden"; Cavazza, "Laura Bassi e il suo gabinetto di fisica sperimentale," "Dottrici' e lettrici," "Una donna nella Repubblica degli scienziati," "Laura Bassi and Giuseppe Veratti," and "Il laboratorio di casa Bassi Veratti."
- 9 ASB, Fondo *Senato*, serie *Diari*, serie *Partiti*, serie *Vacchettoni*; Fondo *Assunteria di Studio*, serie *Atti*; serie *Requisiti dei Lettori*, Fondo *Studio*, *Il libro segreto di Filosofia (1712–1780)*.
- 10 Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio Bologna (hereafter BCAB), Ms. B 517, Giovanni Giacomo Amadei, *Libro delle cose che vanno accadendo in Bologna e principalmente quelle che spettano al governo sì civile sì ecclesiastico* (years 1732–43). This detailed document represents the main source of the more thorough reconstruction of the difficult relations between the archbishop and his city, in particular the clergy: Mario Fanti, "Prospero Lambertini arcivescovo di Bologna (1731–1740)," in *Prospero Lambertini pastore della sua città, pontefice della cristianità*, ed. Andrea Zanotti (Bologna: Minerva Edizioni, 2004), 35–72.
- 11 BCAB, Ms. B 517, cc. 4r–4v.
- 12 Findlen, "Women on the Verge of Science," 265–70; Cavazza, "Una donna nella Repubblica degli scienziati," 65–6.
- 13 Berti Logan, "The Desire to Contribute," 791.
- 14 Macchiavelli, *Bethisia Gozzadina seu de mulierum doctoratu*. In reality the author of the work was the abbot Carlo Antonio's brother, the lawyer Alessandro. On this episode see Cavazza, "Dottrici e lettrici," 109–10. On A. Macchiavelli's biography and on his role in the eighteenth-century revival of the memory of medieval learned women, see the corresponding entry by Cavazza in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*.
- 15 Scarselli was a close friend and an assiduous correspondent of Bassi; see Cenerelli, *Lettere inedite alla celebre Laura Bassi*, for the letters addressed to her, and see Melli, "Epistolario di Laura Bassi Verati," for the letters written

- by her. The correspondence evidences the role of intermediary between Bassi and the pope played by Scarselli.
- 16 The text of the *Motu proprio* is reproduced in Angelini, *Anatomie accademiche III*; the references to Bassi are on p. 534.
  - 17 Cavazza, "Una donna nella Repubblica degli scienziati," 69–70.
  - 18 Minonzio, *Chiarezza e metodo*; Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*; Cupillari, *A Biography of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*; and, last but not least, Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," an essay review of the previous books transformed into a rich and innovative article.
  - 19 Agnesi, *Istituzioni analitiche ad uso della gioventù italiana*. The work was partially translated into French by Silvestre François Lacroix with the title *Traité élémentaire de calcul différentiel et de calcul intégral* and into English (by John Colson) as *Analytical Institutions*. For the positive reception of the book, not only in Italy, see Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, 119–23, and Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," 260–70.
  - 20 For the full text of the letter, taken from the copy kept in Archivio Segreto Vaticano (ASV), *Segr. Stato, Principi*, 240, f. 329r–v), see Maria Antonietta De Angelis, ed., *Prospero Lambertini (Benedetto XIV). Un profilo attraverso le lettere* (Vatican City: Archivio Segreto Vaticano, 2008), 309. I quote from the English version by Findlen ("Calculations of Faith," 264), based on the copy kept in Biblioteca Ambrosiana di Milano (Ambr.), Ms. O.202 sup., c. 2.
  - 21 Biblioteca Universitaria, Bologna (hereafter BUB), Ms. 279, n 32, *Benedict XIV to the Senato of Bologna*, 24 June 1750. Paula Findlen has recently rediscovered this document. An extract in English can be found in Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," 269–70. For the full text of the Senate letter of 4 July to the pope, see Grossi, *Maria Gaetana Agnesi*. The appella-tive "Nostro Signore" (Our Lord) and the abbreviation NS, referring to the pope, were usual in eighteenth-century letters and documents.
  - 22 *Partito del Senato di Bologna*, 7 July 1750: see the full text in Grossi, *Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, document III.
  - 23 Letter of M.G Agnesi to the Senate of Bologna: see the full Italian text in Grossi, *Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, document V; the English translation used is that of Findlen in "Calculations of Faith," 270.
  - 24 Letter of the Senate to Agnesi; see Grossi, *Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, document VI.
  - 25 BUB, Ms. 279, n.32, *Benedict XIV to the Senate of Bologna*, 24 June 1750, cit. in Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," 269–70.
  - 26 Quoted in Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," 269–70.
  - 27 *Ibid.*, 260–70.
  - 28 Ambr. O.201 sup., Beccari to Agnesi, Bologna, 8 July 1750; quoted in Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," 270.

- 29 On Agnesi's religious and philanthropic motivations regarding her life change, see the chapter entitled "Choices" in Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, 67–92, and the paragraph entitled "Giving Up Science" in Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," 271–4.
- 30 Ambr. O. 202 sup., c. 8 (Benedict XIV to Agnesi, Rome, 26 September 1750): this is the original source for the partial quotation in Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," 270–1. The copy of this letter from which I have taken this complete quotation is in ASB, *Archivio Pallavicini*, serie III, Carteggi, busta 12, n.2. The Bolognese Count Gian Luca Pallavicini in the 1750s was the governor of Milan and captain general of Lombardy.
- 31 Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, 139–40.
- 32 Besides Mazzotti, see also Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," and Marta Cavazza, "The Other Enlightenment of a Catholic Mathematician," *Metascience* (2011), a review of Mazzotti's book.
- 33 Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, 140.
- 34 On the relationship between gender and culture in eighteenth-century Italy, see Guerci, *La sposa obbediente*, and *La discussione sulla donna nell'Italia del Settecento*; Messbarger, *The Century of Women*; Findlen, "Introduction: Gender and Culture in Eighteenth-century Italy." On Bassi, Agnesi, and the rise of new female identities, see Cavazza, "Between Modesty and Spectacle"; Messbarger, "The Italian Enlightenment Reform of the Querelle des Femmes."
- 35 Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*. For other recent works on Morandi, see Focaccia, Introduction to *Anna Morandi Manzolini*; Dacome, "Women, Wax and Anatomy."
- 36 On Lelli, his achievements and his stormy relationship with Manzolini, see Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*, 28–50.
- 37 ASB, Senato, Partiti, 39 (1756–61), *Assignatio stipendi Annae Morandae Manzoliniae*; see the reproduction in Focaccia, Introduction, 8n34. A copy of this Latin document is also in BCAB, Ms. B 120, c. 86.
- 38 ASB, Assunteria d'Istituto, *Diversorum*, busta 10, *Camere e materiale scientifico*, n.3; cit. in Focaccia, "Introduction," 8–9.
- 39 BCAB, Ms. B 133, Marcello Oretti, *Notizie de' Professori dell'arte del disegno*, vol. XII, c.135.
- 40 Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*, 6–10, 20–40.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 163–7.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 171–3.
- 43 See, for instance, Cavazza, "Les femmes à l'Académie," on French writer Anne Marie du Boccage (made an honorary member of the Bologna Academy in 1757, thanks to Lambertini's recommendation),



- and the contribution of Paula Findlen on Janet Squire and the pope to this volume.
- 44 On the new attention for girls' education of some religious teaching congregations active in Milan, such as the Somaschan fathers, the Piarists, or the Congregation of the School of Christian Doctrine, see Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, 23, 74, 138.
- 45 Bandiera, *Trattato degli studi delle donne*.
- 46 On Bandiera, see Guerci, *La discussione sulla donna*, 155–62; Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, 136–8; Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," 263. On the influence of Poullain de la Barre's famous book *De l'égalité de deux sexes* (Paris: Jean du Puis, 1673; Fayard, 1984) on Bandiera, see Guerci, *La discussione sulla donna*, 157–60.
- 47 The label "Galilean Catholicism" was introduced by Raimondi, *Scienza e letteratura*, 83; on it and its usefulness for the historical comprehension of the cultural dynamics in this part of Italy between seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Cavazza, *Settecento inquieto*, 79–117.
- 48 The fruitfulness of this tradition for both the scientific studies and those of sacred history and ecclesiastic erudition was acknowledged by Cardinal Lambertini in the preface of his *Annotazioni sopra le Feste di Nostro Signore e della Beatissima Vergine*, xxxvi–xxxviii, xl, liii; see Cavazza, *Settecento inquieto*, 114–17. On his erudite treatises, see Maria Teresa Fattori, ed., *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV. Origine ed evoluzione dei trattati di Prospero Lambertini* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2011).
- 49 On Bacchini, see the corresponding entry, by Momigliano, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani V*; on his *Giornale de' letterati*, see Capucci, Cremante, and Gronda, *La Biblioteca periodica*, 45–248.
- 50 Muratori, *Dei difetti della giurisprudenza*, 13–15.
- 51 Muratori, *Della pubblica felicità*.
- 52 Venturi, *Settecento riformatore*, 161; pp. 161–86 are entirely devoted to these two works of Muratori.
- 53 Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 278–82. On the limits of Lambertini's openness to the ideas of the Enlightenment and the reconsideration of his reformism in the more recent historiography, see Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al marchese Paolo Magnani*, nn57, 58, 59.
- 54 On Galiani and modern science, see Ferrone, *Scienza, natura, religione*, a work that almost completely focuses on his figure and the battles for the renewal of the Church, science, and the university.
- 55 On the close relationship between Galiani and Lambertini, see Nicolini, *Tre amici bolognesi di Mons.*

- 56 See Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione*, 322, 644. Among Galiani's former pupils and correspondents Gianluca Pallavicini was another authoritative figure from Bologna and close to Lambertini and Muratori; see *ibid.*, 322, 360, 645. On Cardinal Valenti Gonzaga (1753–6), see Donato, "Profilo intellettuale di Silvio Valenti Gonzaga."
- 57 Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al marchese Paolo Magnani*. For the other collections of letters to Bolognese correspondents, see Kraus, *Lettere di Benedetto XIV al canonico Pier Francesco Peggi*; Irene Folli Ventura and Laura Miani, eds, *Due carteggi inediti di Benedetto XIV* (Bologna: Analisi, 1987), a *regesto*, that is, a description, of the letters contained in the Mss. 4330 and 4331 of the Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna and addressed mostly to Giovanni Lambertini (Prospero's brother) and Filippo Maria Mazzi, administrator of the Lambertini family. The *regesto* is introduced by an interesting essay on the anti-nepotism policy of Benedict XIV and his difficult relations with his own family: Casanova, "L'antinepotismo di un papa riformatore." A selection of Lambertini's letters to his relatives and to Mazzi is now published in De Angelis, *Prospero Lambertini (Benedetto XIV)*.
- 58 Benedict XIV to Magnani, 2 September 1744. On the projects and the measures of the pope in favour of the Institute, see Prodi, "Papa Lambertini nelle lettere al marchese Paolo Magnani."
- 59 See Fattori, "Prospero Lambertini nella storiografia e nelle lettere al marchese Magnani," liii. On the Collegio Pannolini and Benedict XIV, see Delneri, "Il Papa in Collegio."
- 60 Letter to Peggi of 3 September 1755 in Kraus, *Lettere di Benedetto XIV al canonico Pier Francesco Peggi*, 116. On the donation of Lambertini's personal library to the Bologna Institute, see Di Carlo, *Il libro in Benedetto XIV*, 109–90.
- 61 The quotation is taken from Giacomelli, "La storia di Bologna dal 1650 al 1796: un racconto e una cronologia"; the author refers only to Bassi.

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## 2 The Pope and the Englishwoman: Benedict XIV, Jane Squire, the Bologna Academy, and the Problem of Longitude

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PAULA FINDLEN

In the autumn of 1743, three years into his papacy, Benedict XIV received a most unusual letter from an Englishwoman requesting his assistance. She had been working on her solution to the problem of longitude for over a decade without getting the British astronomical and mathematical community to take her seriously. The Longitude Board, established via an Act of Parliament in 1714 to review proposed solutions and award hefty prizes to proposals judged successful, had yet to judge the merits of her work.<sup>1</sup> Frustrated by their collective silence and infuriated by the individual responses she had received from members of the Royal Society and Longitude Board commissioners, Jane Squire (1686–1743) determined that her best recourse was to write to the pope.

With this letter, Dame Squire enclosed her recent publication, *A Proposal for Discovering Our Longitude* (1742). This bilingual edition of her solution, written in English and French to reach a broader European audience, greatly amplified the method she proposed in her original pamphlet of 1731. An idea summarized briefly in eleven pages had metamorphosed into a hefty book demonstrating how her wholesale remapping of the heavens provided sailors not versed in mathematics with an easy-to-memorize guide – an astral clock whose meridian ran through Bethlehem – charting longitude as they sailed from one point to another (Figure 2.1). The first page of the enlarged version clearly advertised its intent to create a new science with the tools of faith, since it proclaimed in large letters: *GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis*.<sup>2</sup> A solution to longitude beginning with the birth of Christ was bound to be of interest to an enlightened pope.

A  
P R O P O S A L  
For DISCOVERING our  
L O N G I T U D E.  
BY  
*JANE SQUIRE.*

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P R O P O S I T I O N  
Pour la DECOUVERTE de notre  
L O N G I T U D E.  
PAR  
*JEANNE SQUIRE.*

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L O N D O N :

Printed for the AUTHOR, and sold by P. VAILLANT, opposite  
*Southampton-Street* in the Strand, and F. NEEDHAM, over-against  
*Gray's-Inn-Gate* in Holborn. 1742.

Figure 2.1 Jane Squire's *A Proposal for Discovering Our Longitude*, 1742.



Benedict XIV was intrigued. A good son of his native city of Bologna even though he had spent the majority of his life in Rome, Lambertini had studied mathematics, anatomy, and natural philosophy in his youth. He believed in the enlightened project of his contemporary Ludovico Antonio Muratori of integrating modern knowledge with theology, law, and humanistic learning.<sup>3</sup> Well before his appointment as archbishop of Bologna in 1731, he demonstrated a strong interest in the fate of the Bologna Academy of Sciences, housed within the Institute for Sciences, which was a teaching as well as a research facility. Founded by Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli in 1711, the Institute combined attributes of the Royal Society of London and the Paris Academy of Sciences – a society of scientific researchers – with a renewed vision of education that established professorships in subjects not sufficiently covered by the traditional university curriculum (Figure 2.2). In 1726 Lambertini mediated vitriolic disputes between the founder, the city, and the academicians that almost disbanded the entire enterprise. He considered it his personal mission to make this academy the glory of Italian intellectual life.<sup>4</sup> The culmination of this ambition was the creation in 1745 of a permanent endowment from the defunct Collegio Panolini to support the Institute, its professors, and its academicians and the formation of a new elite group of researchers known as the Benedictines.

Not long after he became pope, Benedict XIV reminded the Bolognese that they had an important role to play in securing the reputation of his papacy. Invoking his “special love for our city of Bologna of which we retain the archbishopric,” he signalled his intent to make Bologna’s intellectual rejuvenation an important facet of his domestic policy in the Papal States, writing of his plan “to promote the prerogatives and distinction particularly in the category of the sciences that is the most luminous characteristic of that city of the Pope.”<sup>5</sup> Benedict XIV expressed pleasure in the role of the Institute in realizing this goal. “Many foreigners pass through Bologna with the sole purpose of seeing a work that distinguishes our state and all of Italy,” he declared in his *motu proprio* of 22 June 1743, “and here they stay with great satisfaction, and the best scholars of foreign academies enjoy association with those admitted to the Institute.”<sup>6</sup> In every possible respect, he was a man of science and faith in an age of Enlightenment.

On 6 November 1743 Benedict XIV was in the midst of corresponding with Senator Marchese Paolo Magnani about various improvements being made to the Bologna Academy. Squire’s book and letter were on his desk, and his thoughts turned naturally to the Institute.

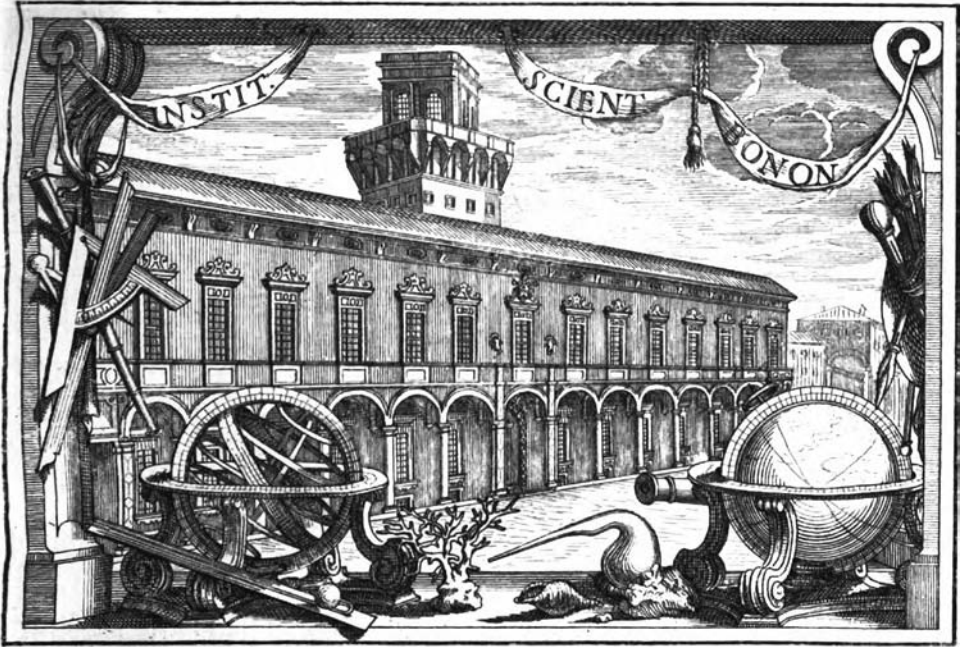


Figure 2.2 The Bologna Academy of Sciences in Palazzo Poggi.

He outlined his wishes to his friend: "A certain Madame Squire, unknown to us as you can imagine, wrote us the attached letter that we are sending to you with the translation that we have had made. She also sent us her book that we transmit to you as well. Since she, claiming to have made a new discovery about longitude, invites us to have it examined by anyone whatsoever, we do not know who would be able to undertake such a task with the certainty of a correct judgment better than these Institute professors." Benedict XIV asked Magnani to have the Bologna academicians assess her proposal. Anticipating the possibility of a glorious discovery of yet another learned woman who might enjoy his patronage, he promised that if their opinion were meritorious, he would "have it printed, if they wish, after having translated it into good French."<sup>7</sup> He was pleased with this opportunity to showcase the expertise of his scientists.

On the whole, 1743 was not a happy year in Benedict XIV's papacy. The war between the Austrians and the Spaniards was devastating the

Papal States, laying waste to the Bolognese countryside and straining the pope's neutrality. England was still a Protestant nation, while the papacy bankrolled the cost of maintaining the Stuarts in Rome. Benedict XIV confronted ever increasing French demands for autonomy from Rome as an expression of their Gallican liberties and worried that the Prussian king, Frederick the Great, would weaken faith in Catholic Germany.<sup>8</sup> Plague had arrived in Messina and crossed the straits to Calabria, leading the pope to fear it might reach the Eternal City. There were cracks in the dome of St Peter's, and even the best architects and physicists had yet to reassure the pope that the large nave of the most important cathedral in Christendom would not suddenly collapse.<sup>9</sup> The Bolognese were characteristically displaying a churlish ingratitude towards the favours the pope showered upon his native city.<sup>10</sup> The intriguing letter from Jane Squire was a welcome respite from the wearisome cares of Benedict XIV's papacy. As he confessed to his schoolboy friend, the distinguished Veronese antiquary Scipione Maffei, he loved nothing more than finding time to read a new book.<sup>11</sup>

The pope was in a great good humour about this project because it fit so well with his plans for making his native city an internationally renowned centre of scientific learning. He lamented the steady decline of Bologna's reputation in contrast to its prior glory as the seat of Europe's oldest university. "Once even sovereigns, not to mention scholars, appealed to Bologna for legal decisions. Today this no longer happens, and here is the reason why they don't. I am comforted by the thought that mathematical subjects have replaced legal ones, since it is sufficient that there be distinction in some genre and especially in one as respectable as mathematics."<sup>12</sup> Benedict XIV recognized the importance of investing in the new sciences of the eighteenth century in the hope that this would shake Bologna out of its intellectual doldrums by encouraging the most talented professors and researchers to rise to the challenge of restoring the city's intellectual reputation.

Under the tenure of Eustachio Manfredi, the Institute's first astronomy professor (1711–39), there was great hope that the Institute observatory, built in Palazzo Poggi and finally completed in 1726, would rejuvenate Bologna's distinguished tradition of celestial observation that began with Gian Domenico Cassini's installation of a meridian in San Petronio in 1655.<sup>13</sup> In 1743 Manfredi's young assistant Eustachio Zanotti had assumed responsibility for the upkeep of the observatory and its research program. Zanotti had a strong desire to realize Manfredi's unfulfilled ambition to make the observatory one of the best in

Europe and shared his frustration that progress had been so slow. Benedict XIV encouraged this ambition, building on the efforts of his predecessor, Clement XIII, to provide the Institute with funding for new instruments. The prospect of bringing the merits of Bolognese science to the world's attention through the discovery of another unheralded woman of science, especially one who had repeatedly tried and failed to gain the attention of English astronomers and the Board of Longitude with an intriguing solution to one of the world's greatest scientific and practical problems, was just the opportunity the pope sought. He forwarded her book and the translation of her letter to the Institute professors.

### The Papal States and Women of Science

When Squire appealed to Benedict XIV for a learned opinion of her work, it had been twelve years since the Bologna Academy made Laura Bassi its first female member in 1732, accompanied soon thereafter by a professorship at the University of Bologna. Bassi became one of the best physics teachers of her generation and a noted experimenter. Awards and honours accrued throughout her long career. Archbishop Lambertini, newly arrived in the city, played a key role in these events, and his support made Bassi one of the most well-known women of science in eighteenth-century Europe.<sup>14</sup> However, astronomy was never one of her interests, unlike Manfredi's sisters, Maddalena and Teresa, who lived with their brother and helped him to calculate the astronomical tables for his *Ephemerides motuum coelestium* (1715–25). Manfredi warmly thanked his sister Maddalena for creating “the table of longitudes and latitudes” in a book that justly earned him admission to the Royal Society and Paris Academy of Sciences.<sup>15</sup> The pope knew and admired the Manfredi sisters.

Mathematical women capable of applying their knowledge to useful scientific problems enjoyed special favour among the Bologna academicians and their patron Lambertini. A letter attributed to Benedict XIV presented the pope as a man who enjoyed books by women. “I assure you that, in browsing through libraries, I would take great delight in finding there, next to our learned doctors, worthy women who enshrined their knowledge in modesty. This,” he supposedly declared, exercising his famous wit, “would be the way for women to inhabit the Palace of the Pope.”<sup>16</sup> As a former custodian of the Vatican Library (1712–26), Benedict XIV built an impressive personal library;

its donation to the Institute for Sciences in 1754 formed the nucleus of a public library that opened two years later.<sup>17</sup> There is no question that Benedict XIV admired women who expressed their learning in print. Francesco Algarotti's Parisian friend Anne-Marie du Boccage later dedicated her *Columbiade* (1756), an epic poem on Columbus, to the pope who supported her admission to the Bologna Academy of Sciences.

In 1743 it had been eleven years since the Bologna Academy of Sciences admitted a second woman in their ranks because of her publication record. In November 1732 Faustina Pignatelli, Princess of Colubrano, joined Bassi as an honorary member at the recommendation of the De Martini brothers, who tutored her in mathematics. Soon after being admitted, Pignatelli anonymously published her solutions to several mathematical problems in the *Acta Eruditorum*.<sup>18</sup> The Bologna academicians felt obliged to admit Pignatelli because of this virtuoso display of erudition, "having the most certain testimonials of this lady's great and marvelous worth in mathematics, and especially algebra," but they did so grudgingly, swearing to each other that they would "not accept any other woman into the academy."<sup>19</sup> In such statements we see the paradox of the project of Catholic Enlightenment that treated scientific women much like their living saints: worth recognizing when capable of performing intellectual miracles as long as too many of them were not celebrated at the same time. Critics of this project worried that Bologna might become a city filled with learned women. The admission of two female members to the Bologna Academy satisfied the desire to recognize talented women with scientific accomplishments to their name, without raising any concerns about the possibility of admitting women in general.<sup>20</sup> Archbishop Lambertini saw no reason to pursue the matter further, nor did any other women immediately present themselves as potential candidates.

A decade later, times had changed. The elevation of Lambertini to the papal throne renewed his desire to make Bologna into a city of science, second to none. Under Benedict XIV's papacy, gifts of books, instruments, and specimens filled the rooms of the Academy of Sciences. "We are doing and, always and forever, will do as much as we can for the Institute," he declared in April 1743.<sup>21</sup> The academicians profusely thanked him for his generosity, expressing the hope that the Institute would increase "the magnificence of our Highest Pontiff and the singular love that he professes towards lovers of good philosophy." They readily acquiesced to Benedict XIV's desire to admit more foreign members, increasing the fame of the Academy abroad.<sup>22</sup> When they

received news of the pope's interest in Squire's book, they were obliged to respond. If Benedict XIV discovered another woman worthy of their consideration, they stood ready to cast aside their earlier reservations about acknowledging too many women at the same time.

For all of these reasons, Squire's proposed solution to the problem of longitude arrived at an opportune moment. The evaluation of her book was a test, but of what kind? Should they take her solution seriously and publicize their opinion of her work? Would this lead to her admission to the Academy? Certainly, the arrival of Squire's *A Proposal for Discovering Our Longitude* provided the Institute professors with an opportunity to engage in an international scientific debate.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps Benedict XIV anticipated a fruitful scientific dialogue between the Bologna astronomer Zanotti and his counterpart at the Greenwich Observatory.

The Institute had every reason to be proud of the observational research program. During the 1730s Manfredi and Zanotti successfully lobbied for financial support from Rome to improve the quality of their instruments. With the assistance of Sir Thomas Dereham, the English Catholic resident in Rome who facilitated communication between Italian scientists and the Royal Society, in 1738 they commissioned renowned scientific instrument-maker and Royal Society member George Graham and his assistant Jonathan Sisson to make a mural quadrant, a moveable quadrant, and Graham's celebrated transit telescope that, when properly mounted, could be directed to observe celestial bodies crossing a meridian.<sup>24</sup> After numerous delays and escalating costs, the instruments finally arrived in May 1741. Zanotti took special care setting up the meridian room, where he installed the transit telescope in August 1742, and spent another year calibrating the instruments.<sup>25</sup> Squire's book arrived just as the renovation of La Specola concluded and Zanotti was about to embark on an ambitious program of new observations that produced his star catalogue, appended to a second edition of Manfredi's *Ephemerides* (1750), and an impressive recalculation of Bologna's famous meridian.

It is easy to discern the motivations of the Institute professors in accepting the pope's request to review Squire's book, but what exactly motivated Lambertini's special affection for scientific women? Deeply learned himself, Benedict XIV admired anyone who took learning seriously and put it to good use. A woman of faith served God and her community through her acts of piety, but a woman of science contributed to the betterment of society in other ways by

advancing the project of knowledge as an overall social good and an ethical imperative.<sup>26</sup> Benedict XIV respected women of learning because they contributed to the renewal of Catholic society in the Age of Enlightenment.

During the first year of his papacy the pope's friend Giovan Niccolò Bandiera anonymously published the most extensive manifesto in favour of women's education to appear in Italian. In 1733 Bandiera met Bassi when he travelled to Bologna to act as her confessor.<sup>27</sup> This encounter inspired his writing about women's education. Bandiera's *Treatise on Women's Studies* (1740) described the lineage of virtuous and learned Italian women since antiquity while reserving special praise for women of his own time. Bandiera praised the accomplishments of Venetian, Milanese, and especially Neapolitan women, and reminded Italian readers that other countries had also produced their share of learned women, but he reserved his affection for the Bolognese women of science. He proudly advertised his acquaintance with the Manfredi sisters, due to his friendship with their brothers, and celebrated their skill in "suppositions of analysis, the meridian line, and ephemerides."<sup>28</sup>

In his program of education for an ideal enlightened Catholic woman, Bandiera did not encourage most women to become deeply learned or scientific, let alone "learn geometry perfectly."<sup>29</sup> Instead he believed that elevating the general level of women's education, including basic knowledge of mathematics and natural philosophy, offered women better skills to fulfil their role in society. Bandiera made the Cartesian argument that reason was a universal human trait for everyone to cultivate to the best of their circumstances and abilities. His detailed account of the role of science in women's education helped to inaugurate a papacy that rewarded women of talent and ambition whose accomplishments added lustre to the project of Catholic Enlightenment. It also caught the attention of a number of learned Englishwomen. "I think I must get this book," Catherine Talbot told Elizabeth Carter after reading a review.<sup>30</sup>

### **An English Projector in Search of a Patron**

What did the pope discover upon paging through this Englishwoman's book? The enlarged edition of Squire's *A Proposal to Determine Our Longitude* was filled with material designed to intrigue a pope who admired hardworking, learned women. Squire rightfully observed that

while astronomy flourished in England, it had yet to provide a feasible solution to the problem of longitude. She offered a “simple easy Method” that she believed anyone could use.<sup>31</sup> Advertising her solution as a system designed to teach ordinary sailors, with no sophisticated understanding of mathematics, how to navigate effectively from one point to another, Squire divided the heavens into 1,440 “Cloves of Longitude” (each equivalent to one minute) bisected by 720 parallel “Rings of Latitude.” Her remapping of the heavens created 1,036,800 segments or “cards,” as she called them, measuring one-quarter of one degree of latitude and longitude.<sup>32</sup> Each card contained a constellation of stars with its own zenith point to allow sailors to take an exact reading with a yet to be invented astral clock as they moved from one place to another. Squire felt that the average English schoolboy could learn the rudiments of navigation with a watch, a pack of playing cards, her longitude tables, and an orange to model the terrestrial globe.

Once the meridian was reset at Bethlehem, Squire assured her readers that no “Astronomical Observations” were needed to know precisely where one was. Ships navigating from a known longitude and latitude that stayed true to their course could be piloted simply by turning over the cards to find the one that corresponded with the changing skies above, using a character-based system that reduced description to the bare minimum. These cartographic pictograms did not require a knowledge of instruments or an ability to calculate the distance between the sun and the moon to correct for one’s position on a ship that was not at the centre of the earth and to make a variety of other subtle adjustments between the ideal state of an observer of the heavens and messy realities of one’s actual location in unpredictable waters.<sup>33</sup> Squire understood that ordinary sailors did not have the benefit of mathematical education. She also expressed doubts about an entirely heliocentric universe, favouring instead the Tychonic system that had been the mainstay of Catholic astronomy since the age of Galileo while assuring readers that it did not matter which explanation of the movement of heavenly bodies one preferred, since her method for determining longitude worked for all but the most obdurate Ptolemaic mind.<sup>34</sup>

Squire’s system relied upon two important developments. The almost 3,000 stars catalogued in the astronomer royal Flamsteed’s posthumous *Historia Coelestis Britannica* (1725), when combined with the content of his *Atlas Coelestis* (1729), provided Squire with a wealth of data to fill her cards. She also laid plans for correcting the difference between apparent and mean solar time. Squire aspired to see “our Geography



rectify'd by a Degree parallel to the Celestial one," with the assistance of an "Astral Clock" that one of London's talented instrument-makers would create from her design.<sup>35</sup> Unlike her fellow Yorkshireman John Harrison, who received a subvention from Graham to build his first marine chronometer around 1730, Squire never specified what her ingenious device was. Yet she assured Sir George Byng, first lord of the Admiralty, that her goal was "Astral or absolute Time," which positioned London 41.5 degrees from Bethlehem.<sup>36</sup>

Shortly after the initial publication of her pamphlet, Squire further advertised the merits of her system in a dense but informative chart that handily condensed time, space, and language into a singularly fascinating guide to her vision of the heavens. In the tradition of astrological prognostication, she published her summary on Christmas Eve 1732, presenting it as a horoscope for a new age (Figure 2.3). Inspired by early Royal Society artificial language projects, she encouraged sailors to use a language of her own invention to create an abbreviated guide to navigate over 1 million data cards. In the spirit of the biblical Adam, Squire renamed every star and even devised new units of measurement. She assured readers that her goal was to create a "more expressive, and more concise" astronomical language for ordinary people.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to synchronizing time with the aid of speaking trumpets proclaiming the hours from every church steeple, Squire planned to recalibrate the measurement of the earth from the Bethlehem meridian. She proposed many ways to collect this information, inspired by the Paris Academy of Sciences' expedition to determine the shape of the earth as well as the exploits of British navigators charting the terrain of an expanding empire.<sup>38</sup> Her most ingenious solution was the creation of an artificial remora, a fabled sea creature known to stop ships dead in their tracks in the middle of the ocean. Squire envisioned a sea filled with artificial remorae from which one might string cables across the ocean, creating a series of floating buoys at a uniform distance from each other on which each of her artificial characters might be written. This literal mapping of the oceans provided sailors with physical markers to assist their use of her cards.<sup>39</sup>

Squire was no fool. She was reasonably well versed in the scientific, technical, and practical difficulties faced by navigators charting a course, though this was not the focal point of her endeavour. She did not write for learned astronomers but for godly men in need of Christian guidance on stormy seas. "Let all astral Clocks and Watches, have, in the Middle of their Dial-Plates; a Representation of our Infant Lord:

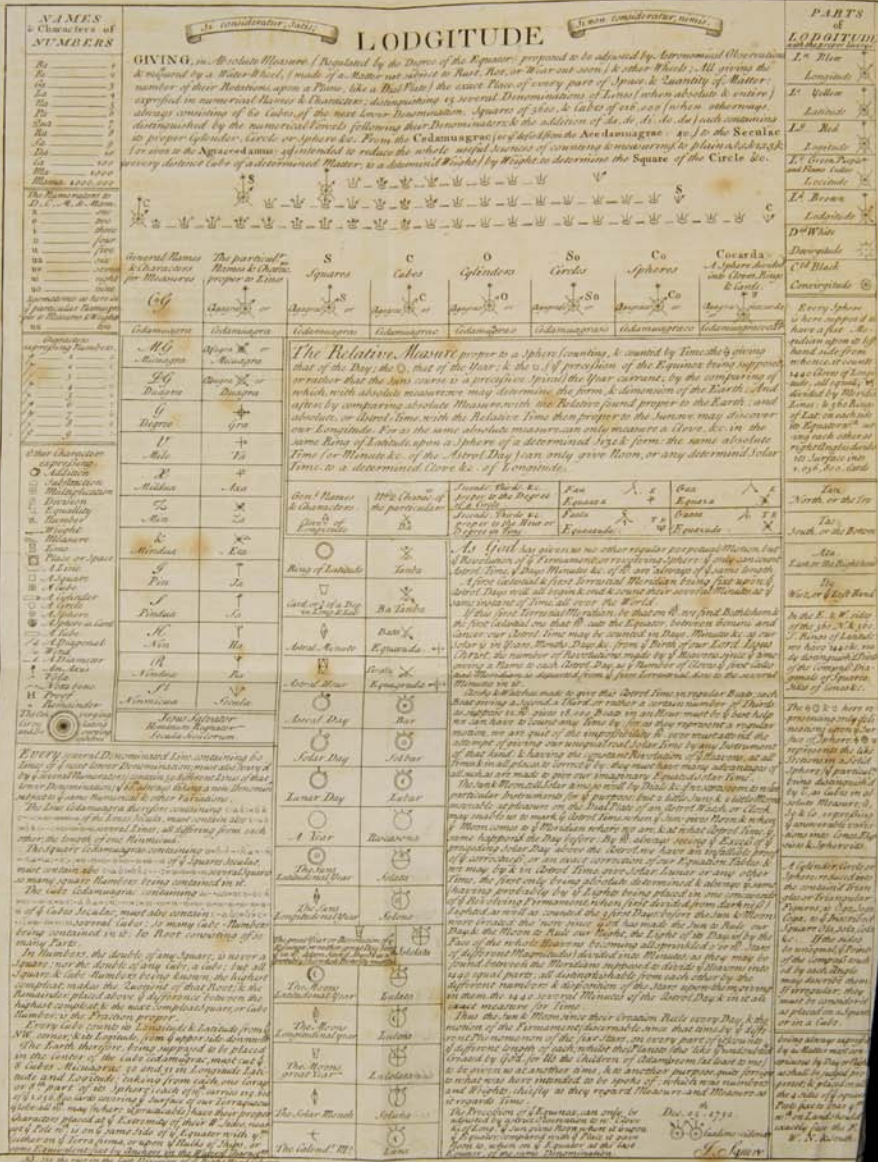


Figure 2.3 Jane Squire's system for accurately measuring longitude, 1732.

with his blessed Mother, and St. *Joseph*, in the Stable of Bethlehem," she declared.<sup>40</sup> If all the nations of the earth accepted her system, she predicted that humanity would regain the universal brotherhood lost in the confusion of Babel. "May not, an easy Method to determine our Longitude; and an easy language, whereby all Mankind may understand each other; recounting the Mercies of GOD, and the glory of his Kingdom; be sought in a View of hastening the Coming of that Kingdom?"<sup>41</sup> In short, Squire's proposal was complex, fascinatingly comprehensive, deeply religious, and thoroughly impractical. Her solution – a Christian portolan combining perfect mensuration with the dream of a common language after Babel – recalled the apocalyptic and prophetic fervour that had engulfed England in civil and religious wars in the previous century and ultimately led to the ousting of the Catholic James II in 1688.<sup>42</sup>

Before writing to the pope, Squire engaged in a vigorous correspondence with the men appointed to the Board of Longitude, which was an institution more in name than fact, as she soon discovered. Between 1731 and 1742, she wrote to the eight commissioners, whose membership included the astronomer royal, Edmund Halley, and president of the Royal Society, Hans Sloane, accosting some of them at social events in London. Halley never deigned to reply, which increasingly led her to suspect his motives. Unable to convince them to discuss her proposal, Squire asked the attorney general, Sir Philip Yorke, to examine the Longitude Act of 1714 to see if she might compel the board to fulfil their commission. This again yielded nothing more than silence. The Huguenot astronomer Abraham De Moivre took her seriously enough to respond, however, offering the opinion that her remapping of the heavens assumed that each ship would have an exact course of a known length. This kind of precision struck him as impractical and utopian. "Consult any book of Navigation," he tartly recommended.<sup>43</sup>

Dame Squire was not easily dissuaded. She dismissed De Moivre's critique as a sign of his limited understanding of "those celestial Signs, God has appointed to be visible to us from every Place." She promptly wrote to Sloane, enclosing her exchange with De Moivre for his consideration and urging him "to get Doc.<sup>r</sup> Halley Oppinion, wheather what I have proposed, merits your Consideration of your Comitioners or no."<sup>44</sup> However, Squire was sceptical that they would appreciate her solution because it rendered invalid the "Theory of the Moon" prized by Newton and other astronomers.<sup>45</sup> In a twist of irony, Squire engaged the president of the Royal Society at the very moment when Bassi became the

first female member of the Bologna Academy of Sciences and was on the verge of being appointed a university professor.

As the years passed with no response, Squire became convinced that the commissioners avoided meeting specifically to deny her the prize. She began to suspect Halley and others of plotting to steal her idea. "It is not new to owe great Discoveries to those we could least expect them from," she informed Admiral Torrington in March 1732.<sup>46</sup> Squire was personally affronted by the handful of responses she received suggesting that she be automatically disqualified from consideration because "Mathematicks are not the proper Study of Women."<sup>47</sup> She pointedly responded to this criticism in an exchange of letters with Sir Thomas Hanmer, who had been speaker of the House of Commons when the act of Parliament passed. She considered the silence of the commissioners an affront to her sex. Even if they considered her solution "trifling, ridiculous, or otherwise," Squire firmly believed that she deserved an official response.<sup>48</sup>

Squire began her defence by asserting the universality of natural reason: "to count, to measure, &c. which are now generally suppos'd to be included in [Mathematics]; are so naturally the Properties of every reasonable Creature that it is impossible to renounce them." In the era in which *The Ladies Diary* routinely proposed mathematical problems for its readers to solve, such a statement was hardly without its supporters.<sup>49</sup> Squire argued: "my being a Woman, excludes me not from the Blessing of being a Christian; a Character that determines the Business of the reasonable Creature; by a Determination made by its Creator, which consequently, must be agreeable to its Capacity." Having established the Christian basis of her right to exercise her mind, Squire characterized herself as someone naturally drawn to mathematical problems as a pleasing pastime: "to study the Law of God Day and Night, is my proper Business; Philosophy, my Amusement; and Mathematicks, my Play-things ... I see not therefore, why I should confine myself to Needles, Cards, and Dice." This passage, in particular, must have been of great interest to Benedict XIV. "I am not attempting to act above my proper Sphere," Squire declared.<sup>50</sup> Her reasons for defending women's education mirrored the project of women's Catholic Enlightenment outlined by Bandiera, encouraged by Muratori, and supported by the pope.

Benedict XIV appreciated the paradox of an enlightened world in which progressive and forward-thinking Protestant Britain offered less opportunity for women's advancement than tradition-bound Catholic

Italy. During the very years that Bassi became one of the most celebrated women of science in Europe, Squire was getting nowhere with the English –yet she potentially offered a solution to one of the most pressing practical and theoretical problems of the age of navigation. The more closely the pope read her correspondence with Hanmer, who sympathetically encouraged Squire to improve and publish her solution, the more he wondered if the English had missed an opportunity. Even Hanmer acknowledged in 1741 that Squire should “expect to lye under some Prejudice upon account of your Sex. Man, arrogant Man, assumes to himself the Prerogative of Science, and when a Woman offers to teach them in any of the abstruse Parts of it they are apt to turn a disdainful Ear.” Of course, Hanmer also reminded her that the Board of Longitude would not meet until a proposal had been subjected to “the Scrutiny of all the great Professors of the sciences of Astronomy and Navigation” and stood “the Test of Practice.”<sup>51</sup> It is little wonder that the pope decided to give this English projector a fair hearing after reading about her struggles for recognition in Hanoverian England.

In 1743 Squire reached the pinnacle of her frustration. The previous year she had found a clockmaker to execute her designs for “Instruments, Clocks and Watches to give the Astral or absolute Time” only to discover that he was also working for Graham.<sup>52</sup> Squire submitted new longitude tables to demonstrate the efficacy of her solution with nary a response. By now she was certain that the commission had purloined her ideas, offering them to Halley, Graham, and others. To add insult to injury, Squire was aware of the commission’s interest in Harrison’s design for a “sea clock.” The Board of Longitude met for the first time in its history on 30 June 1737 to discuss Harrison’s chronometer, with the encouragement of Graham, Halley, and other Royal Society members. They agreed to fund an improved version. After the Royal Society tested this second version, another meeting of the Board of Longitude on 16 January 1742 produced additional funding for a third prototype. This episode especially infuriated England’s most vocal female projector.

Upon hearing in February 1742 that the board would not discuss her proposal, Squire declared their actions “unworthy of Gentlemen, and *Englishmen*.”<sup>53</sup> She saw Harrison’s marine chronometer as a necessary element of a successful solution, but she could not imagine an instrument being efficacious without her system. Even the news of Halley’s death did not mollify Dame Squire.

Thus, in the early years of Benedict XIV's papacy, Squire reluctantly concluded that she would never get a fair hearing from her fellow Englishmen. But why did she think Italy would be different? News of Bassi's unheralded accomplishments travelled across the channel shortly after 1732. The English fascination with Italy as a paradise for learned women increased on the eve of Benedict XIV's papacy, reaching its peak during his pontificate. In her 1739 translation of Francesco Algarotti's *Newtonianism for Ladies* (1737), Elizabeth Carter included a footnote explaining who Bassi was<sup>54</sup> (Figure 2.4). Squire may well have read this book, which was reprinted several times. Or perhaps she picked a copy of a pamphlet attributed to "Sophia," believed by many to be the work of the prominent English writer, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. *Woman Not Inferior to Man* (1739) described Bassi's degree as "living proof that we are as capable, as any of the Men, of the highest eminencies in the sphere of learning, if we had justice done to us."<sup>55</sup> The flamboyant Wortley Montagu, who left England for Italy in the summer of 1739, later observed, "The character of a learned lady is far from being ridiculous in this country."<sup>56</sup> Squire had evidently absorbed this image of Italy.

However, yet another puzzle remains. How did Squire know of the pope's role in Bassi's career? In 1743 Benedict XIV had not yet showered honours upon the Milanese mathematician Agnesi for the publication of her *Analytical Institutions for the Use of Italian Youth* (1748), which led to her honorary professorship in 1750. He had not yet approved the Bologna Academy's decision to admit more women, beginning with the aristocratic mathematician, Leibnizian philosopher, and eventual translator of Newton, Châtelet in 1746, followed shortly thereafter by Agnesi in 1747. What did she really know of this Bolognese pope?

The most important thing Squire would have known, perhaps in some detail at this particular time, was his support of the Catholic Stuarts. "We dearly love the Stuarts," exclaimed Benedict XIV in 1746, speaking warmly of the "Old Pretender" James III and his sons, then resident in Rome.<sup>57</sup> The 1740s was the last decade in which anyone seriously entertained the prospect of a Stuart restoration. Around the time that Squire reached the pinnacle of her frustration with the Board of Longitude, the pope oversaw the completion of a lavish funerary monument to the deceased Queen Clementina in St Peter's and financed the renovation of the English royal residence in Albano. He lent his trusted personal physician, Antonio Leprotti, who tended to the ailments of the

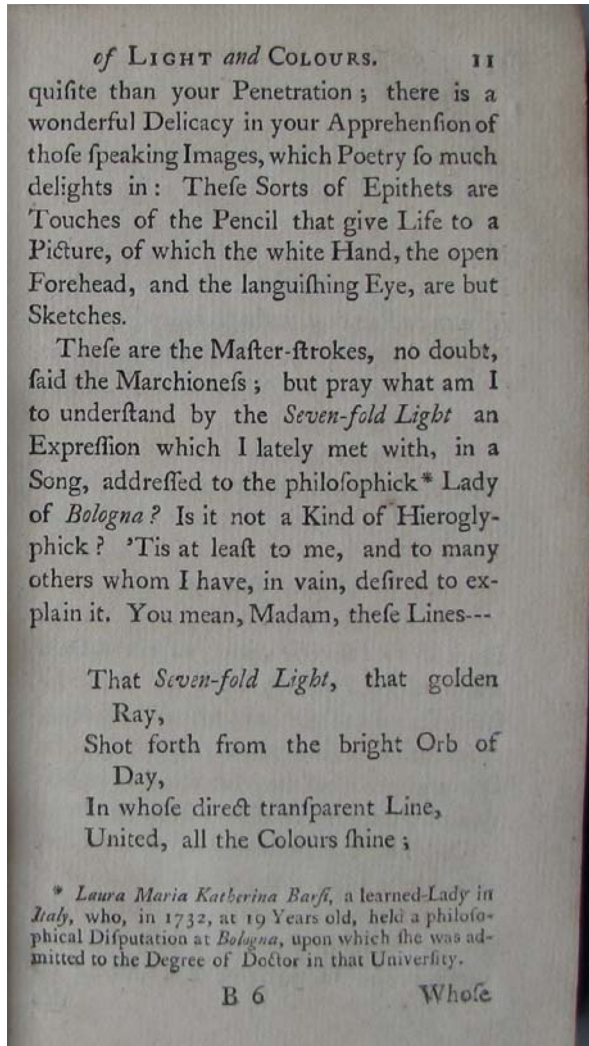


Figure 2.4 Elizabeth Carter's footnote on Laura Bassi for English readers of her translation of Algarotti, 1739.

exiled Stuarts and much of the English community in Rome. The pope and his ministers colluded with the French on the possibility of a Jacobite uprising that failed miserably in 1745–6. In every respect, Benedict XIV generously fulfilled his duties as spiritual father and moral leader of English Catholics, at home and abroad.

The Jacobite network between England and Rome, which included Dereham and the Royal Society vice-president Martin Folkes, was an active conduit of news, rumour, and favours. James III and his sons were passionate about astronomy. The Old Pretender eagerly supported the installation of a meridian in Santa Maria degli Angeli in 1702 and helped measure the longitude of Rome and Urbino. He supplied the Roman scientific community with the latest instruments from London, encouraging Dereham and Folkes to assist Leprotti in ordering new instruments for the Bologna observatory in May 1738. The papal physician Leprotti tutored the young Stuart princes in mathematics, experimental physics, and astronomy. Ultimately, James III's patronage of Catholic astronomy was immortalized in the inscription of his nativity on a marble slab in Santa Maria degli Angeli.<sup>58</sup> This was indeed a small world in which science, faith, and politics intermingled. Squire did not seek out the Old Pretender's support, but most likely she understood that the pope rather than an erstwhile king was a better choice of patron.

Since Squire's letter to Benedict XIV has yet to be discovered, we do not know exactly how she addressed the Holy Father. It is very likely that she revealed herself to be an English Catholic. Shortly after her death, Thomas Rawlins lamented her passing in terms that left no doubt as to her faith: "She was a Lady excellently well versed in Astronomy, Philosophy, & most pts of polite Literature. She had a most moral Life. She dyed ... with a just Resignation to ye Will of God (a Roman Catholick) & in a firm Hope of Salvation. It is a great Loss to Navigators yt she has not lived to finish her Catalogue of Stars, describing their Longitude, Latitude & Place in both Hemispheres in a Manner entirely new, & more certain than any ever done before."<sup>59</sup> Squire was indeed a woman with legitimate reasons to write to her pope. She belonged to a long tradition of Catholic astronomers who understood the science of the heavens to be a theological calculation that brought Easter into alignment. Perhaps her letter and the accompanying book arrived in Rome through the Jacobite network. Did Squire know of the Stuarts' passion for astronomy? Perhaps she envisioned the pope not only rewarding her efforts but also encouraging her rightful king to



give her the recognition that she believed was her due when the Stuarts resumed their place on the British throne.

### The Pope's Judgment

What, in the end, did Benedict XIV think of this fascinating book by an English Catholic woman? Did he really need the Institute's help to evaluate its content? His was after all a highly capable mind, reasonably well versed in scientific subjects. When Agnesi sent him her *Analytical Institutions* in 1749, he recalled the mathematics he had studied in his youth. The pope's own opinion of this book led him to declare Agnesi "without a doubt among the best Professors of Analysis," and the author of "a very useful work that will contribute to the learned reputation of Italy and our Bologna Academy of Sciences, to which you have been admitted to our great content."<sup>60</sup> He did not need the Bolognese mathematicians to form this judgment.

Perhaps it was the strangeness and foreignness of *Squire's Proposal* that led the pope to solicit expert opinion. Benedict XIV understood that neither the internationally renowned English astronomers nor the Board of Longitude took her seriously. Squire's project was the antithesis of the highly controlled, sophisticated mathematical cartography done under Benedict XIV's papacy that produced Giambattista Nolli's famously exact 1748 map of Rome with the assistance of the Milanese mathematician Diego Revillas, also tutor to the Stuart princes. Similarly, the 1750 expedition by the Jesuit mathematicians Roger Boscovich and Christophe Maire established a more accurate papal meridian from the dome of St Peter's and created a new and improved map of the Papal States.<sup>61</sup> Yet when we suspend judgment about the feasibility of Squire's proposal, we can nonetheless see how it fit into papal projects to perfect human understanding of time and space under divine sanction.

However, we might envision this episode as one of Lambertini's comedies in which he, feigning earnestness, sent a truly ridiculous book to the Bologna Institute to see if the mathematicians would recognize it for what it was, namely, an impossible scheme produced by an interesting and fervent mind. Yet the pope seemed sincere in his desire to receive the Institute's opinion on Dame Squire's proposal. On 20 November 1743 Benedict XIV thanked Senator Magnani for his efforts "in the affair of the known book."<sup>62</sup> The pope awaited the Institute's judgment.

The following month Benedict XIV received their response via Leprotti. The president of the Institute Matteo Bazzani submitted a report expressing the “uniform sentiment of the Institute Professors.” They offered a frank and confidential judgment of the “book’s merit” and a more diplomatically worded opinion “that could serve as a response to the same lady.”<sup>63</sup> As Magnani explained: “They have abstained from a critique of the book because it would be long and, in the end, much more distasteful to the lady author and dangerous to find a learned cancer that never ended. And therefore they have confined themselves to brief terms in the first folio in which they think they have said the truth, illuminating anyone who will read it while causing the least possible distaste to Madame Squire. Above all, obeying Your Holiness, they bend most humbly to kiss his foot.”<sup>64</sup> Mindful of Squire’s quarrelsome reputation, the Bolognese professors did not want to embroil the Institute in a debate with her about her proposal.

They felt compelled to give Benedict XIV a more complete account of their reservations, writing the following report for his consideration:

The book addressed to the Holiness of Our Father Benedict XIV by Madame Squire, touching upon the famous Problem of Longitude ... has been attentively read and pondered, especially by those who profess the mathematical sciences. Having been asked to disclose their sentiments seriously and sincerely, all of them are unanimously of the same opinion. They ingenuously confess that Signora Squire, however much she may have tried to manage and mix Astronomy and Nautical Science, has in no way developed or clarified the mentioned Problem unto itself, even within the limits of the question posed, but left it in as much obscurity and uncertainty as before. For this reason, they are well assured that her book should not be accompanied by any praise.<sup>65</sup>

Knowing Benedict XIV’s curiosity about the author, however, the Institute professors softened their judgment by recalling the difficulty of the problem of longitude. Its solution had so far escaped the best scientific minds in Europe. “Thus, for having embraced it, they with equal sincerity consider the courage of Madame Squire quite worthy of admiration,” wrote President Bazzani, “and deserving of that esteem that can arise from the best will, noble genius, effort, diligence, and industry of this Signora who would not have undertaken such difficult research without a great spirit.”<sup>66</sup>

Bazzani encouraged the pope to remind Squire that, to date, no one had found a reliable method to solve the problem of longitude using either "astronomical observations" or "the most exact measurements of the length and direction of a sea voyage." This other judgment of Squire's work was much vaguer in its assessment of her effort. "We believe we are able to wish the worthy female author a happiness corresponding to the effort and study that she employed in the termination of the proposed question," observed Bazzani with perfect tact. The Institute professors found Squire's "new division of the heavens" unsatisfactory, declaring that "nothing is more useful to the desired end than the ordinary and common division" of the evening sky. They wholeheartedly agreed with her that measuring the length and direction of a voyage would be most useful. "But since she does not propose any method of doing it," they wrote, "and the already noted methods have not so far been sufficient to the termination of the question, it seems that it remains in the obscurity in which it was."<sup>67</sup>

This perfect combination of intellectual honesty, scholarly empathy, and openness to novelty assured the pope that the Institute for Sciences was a worthy investment of his time, energy, and resources. The Bolognese academicians passed his test with flying colours. Soon thereafter, they received the welcome news that the Institute would be permanently endowed. Benedict XIV predicted: "the Institute is capable of being able to make our homeland famous as it was in other times because of the university which now is beyond repair." In November 1745 Bazzani presided over the inauguration of the newly reformed and endowed Institute.<sup>68</sup> The Bologna academicians, especially the forty-six recently appointed Benedictines, warmly thanked Benedict XIV for his support. They placed his statue in the Institute's headquarters in Palazzo Poggi.<sup>69</sup> As their library filled with books and their cabinets swelled with specimens and instruments, they saw what an enlightened papacy might do for the pursuit of science in post-Galilean Italy. The pope continued to express his satisfaction that "the study of mathematics and algebra is in force in Bologna."<sup>70</sup>

Upon receiving the Institute's report, Benedict XIV's relationship with Squire ended almost as abruptly as it began. On 21 December 1743 he thanked Magnani for soliciting the "wise opinions of those Professors of Mathematics on Madame Squire's book." Perhaps feeling as if he had unexpectedly been the butt of someone else's joke, the pope expressed his gratitude to the Institute professors, admiring the substance as well as the style of the response. Declaring himself incapable

of passing judgment on Squire's book, he nonetheless indicated his agreement with their expert opinion.<sup>71</sup> We do not know, however, if a letter bearing the papal seal ever crossed the English Channel.

Benedict XIV's bemused bewilderment at his encounter with Jane Squire was not without precedent on her native soil. "You must certainly have seen Mrs. Squire's scheme of the longitude," wrote Elizabeth Carter in July 1743. She confessed to Catherine Talbot that she could make neither rhyme nor reason of Squire's book:

But for my own part I never beheld so incomprehensible a thing in my whole life. Dear Miss Talbot, what language is it? How lamentably are people deceived by the title page. In the very little I was capable of reading, I could not help observe a marvellous singularity in the pointing, which looks as if the book was to be chanted. I am told the project is thought ingenious, and if you should happen to be of that opinion, 'tis ten to one but I may take up the book again, which I have at present thrown by in a great rage (at my own stupidity) and study myself half mad to find out the meaning of it.

Carter sagely observed that books that cannot be easily understood were often "comprehended under the name of lampoon." Perhaps having in mind William Hogarth's famous 1735 caricature of a "longitude lunatic," Carter concluded her judicious assessment of Squire's *Proposal* by consigning it to oblivion. "I am persuaded that if Mrs. Squire's book is arrived there, it is called a lampoon"<sup>72</sup> (Figure 2.5).

By contrast, Carter's assessment of Châtelet's *Institutions of Physics* (1740) revealed her ability to appreciate the complexities of a subtle philosophical system to which she was not wholly sympathetic. Carter was understandably sceptical of Châtelet's preference for elements of Leibniz's natural philosophy at the expense of Britain's legendary mathematical philosopher Newton. Yet she admired the talent of France's leading woman of science without agreeing with her conclusions.<sup>73</sup> It is surely no coincidence that Carter's assessment of the relative merits of Squire versus Châtelet precisely matched the opinion of the Bologna Academy of Sciences and its second benefactor, Benedict XIV. In 1746 the French marquise became the third woman admitted to the academy, after Bassi and Pignatelli.<sup>74</sup> The pope was very pleased with this result and encouraged them to admit Agnesi the following year.

Squire may have had the last laugh in this papal comedy. When her letter arrived in Rome, she had been dead for over seven months,



and servants.<sup>75</sup> Squire's will also reveals another salient fact about this English projector: she was recently released from Fleet Prison where she had been incarcerated for her inability to pay her debts.<sup>76</sup> The product of a genteel family fallen on hard times, Squire was very much in need of the Board of Longitude's cash prize.

Jane Squire was a bankrupt, debt-ridden but audacious English Catholic, whose project lived on without her. Did she write the letter that got the attention of the pope? Was it a missive *in extremis* as her thoughts turned to her Holy Father? It is certainly believable that one or more of her nieces and nephews found the letter among her papers and dispatched her last request. Postal routes during this period were sufficiently reliable to make it unlikely that the letter languished in transit for over seven months. So we must also contemplate another, even more absurd, possibility: that someone sympathetic to Squire's quest for recognition, possibly desirous of the inheritance she promised, picked up a pen and wrote on her behalf. We simply do not know, since direct correspondence between Benedict XIV and the alleged "Jane Squire" does not survive. If the pope ever heard this news, he would have laughed long and hard when he understood that he had been corresponding with a woman who had already achieved her desire of entering God's kingdom.

During the next few years Benedict XIV realized his plan to make the Bologna Academy of Sciences into a well-funded research and teaching institute. Upon Lambertini's death in 1758 the Neapolitan philosopher Ferdinando Galiani recalled the favours the pope had bestowed upon his native city. "Look at the Institute enriched by him during his lifetime with every sort of rarity," he remarked, especially praising Benedict XIV's gift of a magnificent library in September 1754.<sup>77</sup> His love of books and learning played a central role in his reputation as an enlightened pope. "He was a most learned master, but not in the ignorant and blind centuries," Galiani observed. "He obtained the name in the brightest light of learning, in the greatest furor of printing, in writing, in controversies, in studies, and in the universities."<sup>78</sup> These were among the many reasons why contemporaries mourned Benedict XIV's passing. "We have again lost a good Pope," wrote the poet, artist, and critic Giampietro Zanotti in June 1758 to Flaminio Scarselli, who had spent many years in Rome as secretary to the Bolognese ambassador. "Who knows when the Holy Church will ever have a similar Pontiff?"<sup>79</sup>

The learned women of Catholic Europe agreed with this sentiment. While a local chronicler of Bologna during Lambertini's archbishopric

observed that he generally did not care for women, he showed enormous appreciation for women of talent.<sup>80</sup> During his papacy Benedict XIV created a virtual community of learned women in the city where he remained archbishop until 1754. Squire was but a diversion in this larger project, yet it made perfect sense for him to assess the merits of this English Catholic woman, since he would have dearly liked to include someone like her in his program of enlightened science. But quality and content mattered a great deal to Benedict XIV. He did not simply reward the Englishwoman who sought recognition from her pope. One year after Squire's death, Benedict ruefully concluded that time was still not right for the "reestablishment of the Holy Religion in England."<sup>81</sup> In the end, both English ventures were a failure.

## NOTES

Thanks to Christopher M.S. Johns and Rebecca Messbarger, dott. Marco Fiorillo and his staff for access to the *Fondo Leprotti* in the Biblioteca Lanciana, Alexi Baker of the Board of Longitude Project in Cambridge, UK, and the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences and the Stanford Humanities Center for sabbatical support. It has been an added pleasure to discuss Benedict XIV with Brad Bouley and Joe St Meyer as both completed doctoral dissertations that dealt with other aspects of his legacy.

- 1 Sobel, *Longitude*; Andrewes, *The Quest for Longitude*. "Board of Longitude, 1714–1828," digital project by Schaffer and Dunn, is an exciting addition.
- 2 Squire, *A Proposal for Discovering Our Longitude*. Until recently, Squire has been simply a curious footnote to this subject: Taylor, *The Mathematical Practitioners of Hanoverian England*, 19–20, 193; Kuhn, "Dr. Johnson, Zachariah Williams," 44; and Owen Gingerich, "Crank and Opportunists: 'Nuttie' Solutions to the Longitude Problem," in Andrewes, *The Quest for Longitude*, 146–8. Alexi Baker's "Jane Squire and the Longitude" is the first full-length study of Squire's fascinating life and project.
- 3 Von Pastor, *The History of the Popes*; Haynes, *Philosopher King*; Cecchelli, *Benedetto XIV (Prospero Lambertini)*; Zanotti, *Prospero Lambertini*; and Greco, *Benedetto XIV*.
- 4 Rosen, *The Academy of Sciences*, 56. For an overview of the origins and activities of the Istituto delle Scienze, see Accademia delle scienze dell'Istituto di Bologna, *I materiali dell'Istituto delle Scienze*; Cavazza, *Settecento inquieto*; Tega, *Anatomie accademiche*, Vols 1 and 2; and Angelini, *Anatomie accademiche*, Vol. 3.
- 5 Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio (hereafter BCAB), B.3704, f. 374r.

- 6 Biblioteca Universitaria, Bologna (hereafter BUB), Ms. 1063, vol. 1, part 4, ch. 5, n.p. (22 June 1743); see also BCAB, B.3704, f. 373v.
- 7 Archivio di Stato, Bologna (hereafter ASB), *Archivio Malvezzi Campeggi* (Rome, 6 November 1743). Since I completed this research, kindly facilitated by Maria Teresa Fattori and the archivists of the ASB who made a largely uncatalogued collection accessible a few years ago, a published edition has appeared: Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al Conte Paolo Magnani*; see 132–3.
- 8 Corp, *The Stuarts in Italy*, 225–30. For his relations with the French monarchy and *parlement*, see St Meyer, “The ‘Strange Revolution.’”
- 9 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al Cardinale De Tencin*, Vol. 1: 1740–47, esp. 27, 31, 55, 60, 62, 65, 92, 98, 110, 159, 161–2; and Von Pastor, *The History of the Popes*, 76, 102, 110, 163–4.
- 10 For example, see BUB, Ms. 635, vol. VI, letter 41 (Benedict XIV to Camilla Caprara Bentivoglio Duglioli, Rome, 29 October 1749); and Kraus, *Briefe Benedicts XIV an den Canonicus Francesco Peggi*, *passim*.
- 11 Benedict XIV to Scipione Maffei, 31 October 1744, as quoted in Von Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 203n2. On Benedict XIV’s frequent portrayal with books, see Di Carlo, *Il libro in Benedetto XIV*, 12.
- 12 ASB, *Archivio Malvezzi Campeggi* (Rome, 6 November 1743).
- 13 Cassini, *La meridiana del tempio di S. Petronio in Bologna*; and Heilbron, *The Sun in the Church*.
- 14 Mario Fantì, “Prospero Lambertini, Archivescovo di Bologna (1731–1740),” in Cecchelli, *Benedetto XIV*, 1: 177; Haynes, *Philosopher King*, 67. On Benedict XIV’s patronage of Italian women of science and a full bibliography on Laura Bassi see Marta Cavazza’s chapter in this volume.
- 15 Campanacci, “La cultura extraccademica,” 46; Braccesi and Baiada, “Proseguendo sulla Specola di Bologna”; and Bönoli and Gualandi, “The Search for Stellar Parallaxes.”
- 16 Caraccioli, *La vie du Pape Benoît XIV Prosper Lambertini*, 105. On Benedict’s famous humour, see Evangelista, *Arguzie petroniane nei motti di spirito di Papa Lambertini*.
- 17 Di Carlo, *Il libro in Benedetto XIV*; Angelini, *Anatomie accademiche*, 3: 220–1.
- 18 Pignatelli’s identity of the *Anonyma Neapolitana* was an open secret: “Problemata mathematica Neapoli ad Collectores Actorum Eruditorum transmissa.”
- 19 Archivio Antico dell’Istituto delle Scienze, Bologna, *Registro degli Atti dal 1723 al 1803*, 5 (20 November 1734).
- 20 Findlen, “Always Among Men,” 189–206.
- 21 ASB, *Archivio Malvezzi Campeggi* (Rome, 3 April 1743).



- 22 Biblioteca Lancisiana, Rome, *Fondo Leprotti*, Ms. 282 LXXVII.1.15, f. 183 (Domenico Gusmano Galeazzi to Antonio Leprotti, Bologna, 23 June 1742); Angelini, *Anatomie accademiche*, 3: 213.
- 23 Cavazza, "The Institute of Science in Bologna"; and Enrica Baiada, "Geographica et Astronomica," in Tega, *Anatomie accademiche*, 2: 225–48.
- 24 Hellman, "George Graham." On Dereham, see Eisler, "The Construction of the Image of Martin Folkes," esp. 17–18; and Cook, "Rome and the Royal Society."
- 25 My discussion of the Bologna observatory during this era is derived, in part, from the excellent history of La Specola on the museum website: <http://www.bo.astro.it/dip/Museum/english/>. See also Braccesi and Baiada, "Proseguendo sulla Specola di Bologna," 7.
- 26 The relationship between gender, knowledge, and faith is explored more fully in Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*; and Findlen, "Calculations of Faith."
- 27 On this episode, see Findlen, "The Scientist's Body," 211–36.
- 28 Bandiera, *Trattato degli studi delle donne*, 1: 33, 148; *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, s.v. Bandiera, Giovanni Niccolò. On Bandiera's role in the Italian *querelle des femmes*, see Guerci, *La discussione sulla donna nell'Italia del Settecento*; Messbarger, *The Century of Women*.
- 29 Bandiera, *Trattato*, 2: 272.
- 30 Pennington, *A Series of Letters*, 1: 46 (Cuddesden, 27 December 1743).
- 31 Squire, "Copies of Letters Written in Consequence of the Preceding Proposal," in Squire, *A Proposal for Discovering Our Longitude* (1742), 12 (Jane Squire to Lord Viscount Torrington, 24 December 1731).
- 32 Squire, *A Proposal to Determine Our Longitude*, 3, 9.
- 33 Sobel, *Longitude*, 89–91.
- 34 Squire, "The Explanation of a Proposal to Determine Our Longitude, or Longitude Discover'd," in Squire, *A Proposal to Determine Our Longitude* (1742), 94.
- 35 Squire, "Copies of Letters," in *A Proposal to Determine Our Longitude* (1742), 2, 12 (Jane Squire to Lord Viscount Torrington, 24 December 1731).
- 36 *Ibid.*, 4. On Graham's patronage of John Harrison, see Sobel, *Longitude*, 76–7, 79, 82, 86, 101; Andrewes, *Quest for Longitude*, 198–9, 206–10, 214.
- 37 Squire, "Explanation of a Proposal," 6. See Umberto Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language*, trans. James Fentress (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).
- 38 Terrall, "Representing the Earth's Shape"; Greenberg, *The Problem of the Earth's Shape*.
- 39 Squire, "Explanation of a Proposal," 60.
- 40 *Ibid.*, 70.

- 41 Ibid., 110.
- 42 See especially Mack, *Visionary Women*.
- 43 Squire, "Copies of Letters," 36 (Abraham De Moivre to Jane Squire, [1731]).
- 44 Ibid. (Jane Squire to Abraham De Moivre, [1731]), 37 (Squire to Sir Philip York, Attorney General, 15 September 1732); British Library, *Sloane MSS* 4061, f. 43r (Squire to Sloane, [after September 1731]). See also *Sloane MSS* 4052, f. 17r (10 September 1732).
- 45 Squire, "Copies of Letters," 42 (Squire to Sir John Jennings, 20 February 1733/34)
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- 52 Ibid. (Squire to the Honourable Board of Commissioners for discovering the Longitude, 16 January 1741/42).
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- 54 Algarotti, *Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy Explain'd*, 1: 10. The argument in this section is indebted to Agorni, *Translating Italy for the Eighteenth Century*, 64–89.
- 55 "Sophia," *Woman Not Inferior to Man*, 46.
- 56 Montagu, *Selected Letters*, 392–3 (10 October 1753); see also Grundy, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*.
- 57 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al Cardinale De Tencin*, 1: 245 (Benedict XIV to Tencin, Rome, 9 February 1746); also quoted in Corp, *The Stuarts in England*, 230.
- 58 Corp, *The Stuarts in England*, 310, 327–32; Eisler, "The Construction of the Image of Martin Folkes," 9–11, 16–18; Heilbron, *The Sun in the Church*; and Ferrone, *The Intellectual Roots of Italian Enlightenment*.
- 59 Thomas Rawlins to George Ballard, 11 June 1743, as quoted in Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*, 11n1.
- 60 De Angelis, *Prospero Lambertini (Benedetto XIV)*, 309 (Rome, 21 June 1749).
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- 62 ASB, *Archivio Malvezzi Campeggi* (Rome, 20 November 1743). See also Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 140.
- 63 Biblioteca Lancisiana, Rome, *Fondo Leprotti*, Ms. 282 LXXVII.1.15, f. 83 (Magnani to Leprotti, n.d.).
- 64 *Ibid.*, ff. 83–4.
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- 66 *Ibid.*, ff. 87–8.
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- 68 ASB, *Archivio Malvezzi Campeggi* (Rome, 2 September 1744); Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 285; Biblioteca Lancisiana, Rome, *Fondo Leprotti*, Ms. 282 LXXVII.1.15, f. 163 (Signori Assunti dell’Istituto delle Scienze di Bologna to the Bolognese Ambassador in Rome, 13 November 1745).
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- 75 Sheffield Archives, *Cooke of Wheatley Muniments CWM/1400* (copy of the will of Jane Squire of par. St. Giles in the Fields, co. Middx., spinster, 14 March 1742/43). Rawlins provides the exact date of Squire’s death in his correspondence with Ballard. See above, n59. On Benedict’s desire to extend the Gregorian calendar, see Von Pastor, *The History of the Popes*, 191n1.
- 76 Baker, “Jane Squire and the Longitude.”
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### 3 Benedict XIV and New World Convent Reform

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STEPHANIE KIRK

Among a group of papers held at the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico that pertain to eighteenth-century convent reform we find an undated document entitled “Doctrine regarding the Common Life of Nuns for the Better and More Complete Control of the Ecclesiastical Prelates Who Attempt to Introduce It into the Convents Where It Is Not in Place.”<sup>1</sup> The document is attributed to “The Patron and Master of Letters, Benedict XIV, Supreme Pontiff” and is declared a “faithful” translation of Book 13, Chapter 12, of his *De synodo dioecesana*, an extensive treatise on canon law deemed to be the most important modern work of its kind.<sup>2</sup> The document details the views the pope held on the implementation in convents of the rule of “common life,” an issue that had long preoccupied the Church and that had been discussed at the Council of Trent in December of 1563 in Session 2 C of “de Regularibus et Monialibus.” The rule of the common life – what Pope Benedict referred to as “*vita commune*” – implied a way of life in the convent that was both austere and communal in all its aspects and stood as a response to the supposed “relaxation” of the unreformed female orders. *Vita commune* became the centrepiece of religious reform in eighteenth-century colonial Mexico and the subject of a bitter polemic between the majority of nuns and their supporters on the one hand and the ecclesiastical authorities on the other. The facts of the polemic and the many documents produced by both sides shed much light on the gender politics of Church reform in the colonial Mexican eighteenth century. The documents also tell a story of what convent life meant for Mexican women and of how they conceived of community as both individuals and as members of a group of cloistered women.

Pope Benedict's views, authored while he was still bishop of Bologna, help frame as well as problematize the events in Mexico, offering a context for both the actions of reform-minded bishops as well as the resistance of the nuns who adhered so strongly to their traditions. The complex role of Benedict XIV offers an important context for this resistance and, more acutely, for the actions of the Spanish Crown and its bishops. The relationship between the Spanish Crown, Lambertini's writings, and his actions and views once he became Benedict XIV are threaded in multiple and often conflicting ways throughout the Spanish Crown's motivations in introducing the reforms, their discussion at the Fourth Mexican Provincial Council, and finally in their implementation in the Mexican convents. In order to fully understand the Spanish Crown and its bishops' actions in reforming the convents, as well as the nuns' resistance to these changes, we must examine the former group's relationship with the papacy. At the same time, this relationship between Holy See and Crown during Benedict's papacy also illuminates his own conceptualization of the role of the Vatican in a global Catholic setting.

### **Benedict XIV and the Spanish Crown**

Although the Spanish Crown and the prelates loyal to its reform projects sought inspiration from Benedict's writings, the pope had experienced an often fraught relationship with the Crown, as the latter insisted on formalizing the religious control it wielded over territories it had conquered.<sup>3</sup> Spain's access to these privileges was known as the *real patronato*, or "royal patronage," and dated back to Spain's early conquest of American territories in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. During this time the papacy promulgated a series of key bulls with which they awarded Spain sovereignty over the lands it had conquered as well as control over the religious benefices there.<sup>4</sup> The *real patronato* had thus endowed Spanish monarchs with an unprecedented degree of control over the Church in their dominions since the early sixteenth century, allowing them to demarcate dioceses and award ecclesiastical positions.<sup>5</sup> However, the terms of the original *real patronato* were left vague and the conditions for its operation were "defined empirically over time."<sup>6</sup> This vagueness led to tensions between the papacy and the Spanish Crown as each institution struggled to impose control over these lucrative ecclesiastical benefices and offices in both Spain and its overseas empire. During Benedict's papacy, the disposition of 12,000 benefices was at stake.<sup>7</sup> The tensions would eventually culminate in

the famous Concordat of 1753 signed by Charles III of Spain and Pope Benedict XIV, which, after years of fractious negotiation, clarified and increased the Spanish Crown's control of the Church in its territories.

Spanish historians have traditionally depicted the Concordat as a great victory for the Crown in the face of almost humbling concessions on the part of the papacy in the form of Benedict XIV. Indeed, as Maria Teresa Fattori points out, the Roman Curia evinced serious displeasure at the reduction in papal control of the Church in Spain and its dominions.<sup>8</sup> As both Fattori and Jose F. Sigüenza Tarí explain, however, this view represents a far too simplistic and one-sided version of the complex events that preceded the signing of the 1753 agreement.<sup>9</sup> Instead, they point to the importance of seeing Benedict's decisions as part of a greater plan for the worldwide Catholic Church as well as offering evidence of his great intellectual and diplomatic skill. Fattori highlights Benedict's "global" goal in maintaining harmony between the papacy and Catholic kingdoms, in pursuit of which he adhered to policies he had initiated and promulgated as canon lawyer, archbishop, and cardinal under previous popes. In his desire to maintain harmony between the Holy See and the Catholic kingdoms the pope displayed pragmatism in accepting the papacy's loss of power on some international levels, while ceding nothing in terms of the "full recognition of the pastoral, episcopal, and apostolic power of the papacy."<sup>10</sup> Sigüenza Tarí, for his part, highlights the distinct disadvantage from which Benedict began his negotiations with the Spanish Crown, owing to the provisional and inconclusive nature with which these same issues were addressed in the treaty Clement XII had signed with Philip V in 1737.<sup>11</sup> Benedict nonetheless demonstrated superior political negotiating skills, displaying vast erudition in matters of canon law and history, as evidenced in the reply he made to the Spanish petition wherein he also requested that they provide evidence of a historical basis for their enjoyment of this extraordinary measure of control.<sup>12</sup> In his analysis of the Spanish case, Sigüenza Tarí deems this Spanish proof text both poorly executed and, at times, fallacious in its evidence. With the skill displayed in his *Rimostanza* in which he countered the Spanish evidence, Benedict was able to shape the negotiations towards an outcome he found more acceptable.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Vita commune* in the New World**

During his papacy, Benedict enacted a series of reforms with which he aimed to improve the quality of pastoral and sacramental care the

clergy offered. Fattori sees continuity in Benedict's writings from the first decade of the eighteenth century until his last papal interventions characterized by an attempt to rectify and reform a "pastoral semi-paralysis," which existed because of "excess of privileges, customs, of rights and duties bound up in an inextricable and litigious apparatus." Lambertini's writings represent an attempt to unravel this "skein" through the employment of what she terms *his* considerable powers of "legal rationalism."<sup>14</sup> In wider terms, the pope wished to intensify the Catholic Church's institutional identity, renewing an emphasis on the sacraments through the introduction of reforms that would bring the clergy into line.<sup>15</sup> One of the most important of these writings was the papal bull, *Pastoralis curae*, promulgated on 5 August 1748, by which Benedict increased the control the ordinary held over the confessors who ministered to convent communities. While Pope Benedict did address issues relating to nunneries at some points in his career, he did not attempt the same program of reform he directed at the male orders.<sup>16</sup> He never issued an official proclamation concerning *vita commune* and, despite the influence of his writings in *De synodo*, the reform had never been successfully implemented in European convents. Many professed nuns were from wealthy families and their expectations of convent life did not match the austerity required in order to observe *vita commune*. Moreover, the women's powerful families proved more than a match for clerics who might consider the viability of such an undertaking.<sup>17</sup> Benedict himself understood the complexity of the matter and the challenges it entailed, beginning his treatment of the subject in *De synodo* with the words "*longe difficilior*."<sup>18</sup>

The first large-scale attempt to impose Benedict XIV's vision of convent life as described in *De synodo* took place in the New World as part of a group of reforms undertaken by the Spanish Crown, which found itself desirous of asserting more stringent control over the proto-nationalist interests in its dominions and consolidating and intensifying the regalism it had established in the Concordat.<sup>19</sup> In 1769 Charles III of Spain issued a decree, the *Tomo Regio*, in which he ordered the archbishoprics of his American territories to convene provincial councils to discuss the implementation of the Crown's reform project.<sup>20</sup> The Fourth Provincial Council of Mexico was inaugurated on 15 January 1771 and was the first to be held there since 1585. Ecclesiastical officials did not wait long before introducing the matter of convent reform and the issue of *vida común* was first tabled in February and all representatives declared themselves in favour of its adoption.<sup>21</sup> The council approved a

series of ecclesiastical canons that radically transformed convent life in all aspects, wresting control over daily life from the communities themselves and altering their make-up (expelling non-professed women including servants).<sup>22</sup>

### **Gender, Religion, and Reform**

The principally Spanish ecclesiastics who promoted the reform of the Mexican convents framed their actions within the rubrics of rationality and social utility while denying these same attributes to the inhabitants of the convents they attempted to change.<sup>23</sup> These changes to women's religious lives in the New World, in turn, stand as part of the so-called Bourbon reforms of the second half of the eighteenth century by which the Spanish Crown strengthened imperial control while simultaneously weakening Creole (the descendants of Spaniards born in the New World) participation in both colonial government and the Church. The religious orders in particular were singled out for criticism as the Crown asserted its power over elements within the Church it regarded, to some degree, with jealousy and suspicion. In 1767 Charles III had expelled the Jesuits from his dominions in Europe and the New World, paving the way for a radical transformation of the balance of power between the religious orders and secular clergy that was to characterize religious reform in Bourbon Mexico.<sup>24</sup> The Bourbon reforms aimed to correct what the new dynasty saw as Habsburg lethargy and decadence and bring the Church's immense wealth and power firmly and definitively under metropolitan control. The climate of incipient secularization and economic reform converged on the convent space. Enlightenment philosophy influenced certain clerics' view of the colonial Mexican religious practices of marginalized groups such as women and indigenous peoples, whom they condemned for their embrace of baroque excesses now out of step with the supposed rational and modernizing project of the eighteenth-century reforming bishops.<sup>25</sup> However, to what degree Enlightenment ideals truly informed the actions of these ecclesiastical reformers lies open to debate. The male prelates seemingly did not stop to consider that it was the ecclesiastical authorities themselves who, through their insistence on the enclosure and of cloistered women being "dead to the world," had condemned the convents and their inhabitants to a life of social ineffectiveness.<sup>26</sup>

Despite much criticism of male religious groups, the only wide-scale reform project undertaken at this time was the overhaul of the

living conditions of the female orders. The reforms the Bourbon monarchy launched had a particular impact on the convent, as perhaps they became scapegoats for the need to harness the independence of the colonial Church. Seen through the lens of gender, it is clear that reform was used as a staging ground for male power plays that took advantage of the supposed vulnerability of the convent community in order for the clergy to launch restructuring projects. It appears to me that these reforms and the projects they engendered had much to do with the personal ambition of certain clergymen and little or nothing to do with the desires or the well-being of the women whose lives they wanted to change. The so-called Enlightenment reform projects bore striking similarities in terms of gender dynamics to reforms carried out in the fifteenth century. Old World models travelled through time and space as reform-minded clerics attempted to bring convent communities to heel. The moralistic rhetoric and personal ambitions present in the language and actions of medieval European clerics found their echo centuries later in the New World.<sup>27</sup>

The struggle over the configuration of convent community here demonstrates, as we will see, all the elements outlined in the above-cited passage: violence, the rhetoric of morality, accusations of indecorous behaviour on the part of male prelates, and the desire of these men to curtail any political authority or power female monastics had heretofore enjoyed in the New World. Convents of female religious, highly invested as they were with symbolic values pertinent to the health of colonial society as a whole, yet mistrusted as being populated by weak creatures prone to sin, were thus perfect subjects for reform. Reformers usually used excessive and hyperbolic language, and while there seems to be a propensity for words such as “*relajación*” (laxity) and “*decadencia*” (decadence) in the reformist tracts of the early modern Hispanic world, specific examples of such outrages are scarce.<sup>28</sup> The many reformist texts produced on the benefits of *vida común* exemplify this tendency to exaggerated rhetoric, as they depict seemingly inconsequential acts as presaging the downfall of religious values.

Spearheading the reform projects and particularly dominant in the Fourth Provincial Council were Spaniards, Archbishop of Mexico Fernando Lorenzana and Bishop Fabián y Fuero of Puebla. These “reforming” peninsular bishops sought to impose metropolitan power on what had become a highly creolized Church.<sup>29</sup> The anonymous author of a diary of the conciliar proceedings, the *Extracto compendioso de las actas del Concilio IV Provincial Mexicano*, identified two ideologically

aligned groups at the council, the “*modernos*” or enlightenment leaning or the “*tradicionales*” or scholastics.<sup>30</sup> Most of the latter group comprised Creole clergy, but he places Antonio Alcade, a Dominican friar from Spain who was bishop of Yucatán, in their number. Among the former group we find the most powerful and vociferous conciliar ecclesiastics – both in general terms and in matters regarding *vida común* – Lorenzana and Fabián y Fuero.<sup>31</sup>

### **Benedict’s *De synodo diocesana* and the Mexican Fourth Provincial Council**

The prelates present at the council found themselves consulting Benedict’s magisterial thirteen-volume treatise, *De synodo diocesana* (1763), which he wrote while holding the archbishopric of Bologna and which was subsequently published just after he became Pope Benedict XIV.<sup>32</sup> *De synodo* served as a reference point for clerics from different ideological standpoints. All the members of the council were very familiar with the text’s multiple volumes and employed Benedict’s writings therein on various occasions to resolve the most hotly debated topics. In particular, Benedict’s writings in general proved useful in “diluting some of the more pro-Jansenist ideas to be formulated.”<sup>33</sup>

Benedict covers many different aspects of convent life, *vida común*, in *De synodo*, but chief among his concerns are nuns’ abuse of personal finances. He initiates his argument on lofty ground, identifying the ideological beginnings of *vida común* in the descent of the Holy Spirit on the twelve apostles during Pentecost. The common life, the recuperation of what he terms an “ancient discipline,” represents, he believes, perfect adherence to the vow of poverty and, as a consequence, the maintenance of conventual discipline.<sup>34</sup> He is not, however, reluctant to engage in less historical arguments and also critiques nuns for not spending wisely, for “showering” gifts upon favourites both within and outside the convent, for using these gifts to create factions and foment envy, and, in short, for bringing about what he describes in dire terms as “inescapable disaster” and the “ultimate destruction” of convent community.<sup>35</sup> The pope declares it would be impossible to find anyone who would not hold this to be a “truth as clear as day.” The Mexican texts that appear after Benedict’s *De synodo* replicate the hyperbolic connection the pontiff makes between women, money, and the destruction of the cloister. These sentiments speak to the fear that the rich and

imposing New World convents with their large and diverse populations inspired in the ecclesiastical authorities.

Just as Benedict's writings wielded influence during the Fourth Provincial Council's deliberations, they had also provided the impetus for previous and more localized efforts at reform by one of the more militant reformers at the council, the Spanish-born bishop of Puebla, Francisco de Fabián y Fuero. In the 1760s, the bishop initiated sweeping changes in the convent communities in his diocese in an attempt to curb the excessively baroque New Spanish religious practice to which he believed many nuns adhered. In a pastoral letter written to the abbesses of the convents within his diocese on 10 August 1768, he invokes a series of infallible and impeachable authorities – including Benedict XIV – who had addressed this topic before him.<sup>36</sup> His letter echoes Benedict's dictate in his foregrounding of the need to curtail individual access to money. He claims the "community of hearts" cannot be as one if the "community of goods" is divided unequally among the many.<sup>37</sup> He claims he will outlaw the custom of *peculio*, the allowance the nuns drew from the dowry they had brought with them into the convent, which in most cases the nun's family had provided and with which they maintained their individual establishments.<sup>38</sup> In some cases – such as that of the most famous Mexican nun, the seventeenth-century poet Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz – a wealthy benefactor would bestow what the family could not. Whole convents were also recipients of generosity and largesse from the *siglo* (the outside world), as people often remembered them in their wills and could often amass considerable wealth over the years through these bequests and the investments in land and properties they allowed them to make. Fabián y Fuero claimed he would centralize expenditure and eliminate nuns' access to private monies. He further decreed he would dismantle all private living arrangements and dismiss private servants. The power nuns had previously enjoyed as *de facto* heads of households was to be taken away from them, and instead they were to be subject to living arrangements that afforded the ecclesiastical authorities a great deal more control over religious women both in terms of vigilance (they were to live in open, communal spaces) and in terms of the agency their relative economic independence had brought them. This communal life, Fabián y Fuero promises the abbesses, is not a "fearsome and terrible monster" but instead produces an existence characterized by "beauty, harmony and good manners."<sup>39</sup> Yet the seamless transition the bishop had promised appeared elusive, and the destruction of community Benedict had



foreseen as a result of *not* observing the common life seemed instead to accompany its implementation.

### The View from the Convent

During the council, lawyers presented petitions from the nuns who wished to remain in the lifestyle under which they had first professed their vows. Despite their lack of success in persuading the council to see their point of view, the cases seem to have possessed compelling arguments and wielded passionate sentiments.<sup>40</sup> Baltasar Ladrón de Guevara, a distinguished member of the Audience, brought the case of the convent of Jesús María before the council.<sup>41</sup> He offered a multifaceted argument, which emphasized the convent's role as a dynamic urban institution providing employment and lending money. The main thread of the lawyer's argument was historical, however, emphasizing the convent's foundation as royally appointed and referring to the customs they had maintained since inception.<sup>42</sup>

Yet Church and state authorities evinced much displeasure at how far the convents had strayed from their original intentions. In 1772 the Council of the Indies spoke with evident displeasure of the convent of Santa Clara in Puebla, declaring that "with so many girls and servant-girls there, it seemed more like a town than a cloister of nuns devoted to retirement." Many of the less austere convents housing "*monjas calzadas*" (calced nuns) did indeed resemble small cities accommodating an extensive and heterogeneous population of nuns, laywomen and girls, servants, and slaves, which grew constantly on an ad hoc basis, often creating the need for architectural modifications of the convent space. Nuns who followed the rule of *vida particular* (individual life) were exempt from having to eat and sleep in communal spaces. The nuns often enjoyed private cells in which also lived servants, relatives, and favourites and became the target of some of the more vitriolic criticism directed at the convents. In many cases, these cells and their furnishings allowed the women to approximate the lifestyle they had enjoyed before entering the convent. Moreover, these apartments constituted the only spaces where some kind of private life might be enjoyed in the convent, away from the rigours of communal activity. Houses of the more austere *descalzado* (discalced) orders that had always adhered to the common life possessed only communal spaces for sleeping, eating, laundry, and the administering of money. Moreover, the restrictions

on the number of secular women who might inhabit this space were rigidly policed.

Despite the continual charges of luxurious and opulent living levelled at them, the inhabitants of the “calced” convents did not enjoy sumptuous lifestyles. In Ladrón de Guevara’s representation of the convent of Jesús María in Mexico City he stated that each nun was given the modest sum of twelve *reales* daily in the form of *peculio*, of which four were spent on food for her and any servants she might have had in her employ. The rest of the money went to the upkeep of her clothing, laundry expenses, and sugar.<sup>43</sup>

In defence of the continuation of the conditions under which they had professed, many convent communities came together to resist the implementation of the *vida común* as well as some of the more extreme measures several ecclesiastical officials undertook in its pursuit. A letter of 1774 signed by eleven nuns from the convent of La Santísima Trinidad in Puebla and written to the viceroy of New Spain, Antonio de Bucareli, reveals how a group of nuns challenged Fabián y Fuero’s characterization of the common life as the only route to spiritual perfection, instead showing how his actions placed them in physical and moral danger as well as undermining the responsibilities he held as prelate.<sup>44</sup> The letter sets out a series of apparently hair-raising offences the bishop and his subordinates committed against members of the convent community in their desire to impose the so-called perfection of the common life. According to the nuns, the bishop and his men prevented the women from seeing their confessors and even withheld the solace of the sacrament of confession from the dying. The letter also accuses the bishop of jeopardizing the nuns’ vows of chastity and enclosure when, without warning, he sent workmen into their living spaces in the convent. Once there, these same workmen destroyed the women’s private cells to make way for the dormitories and other communal areas the bishop preferred and while so doing damaged many of the women’s private possessions, including objects of devotion. The nuns further rail against the bishop’s treatment of the secular women whom he expelled from the convent. Many of these women had lived there since childhood and, upon being cast out into the world, either died of hunger or were forced into prostitution. His actions also exposed intimate details of the nuns’ daily lives to the type of public scrutiny antithetical to their lifestyle and, the women claim, led to their receiving obscene letters and to the circulation of scurrilous verses written about them. Even more scandalously, the

nuns claim, the bishop himself underwrote the printing costs of some of these defamatory and salacious poems.

In levelling their charges, the nuns turned the tables on the bishop and challenged his authority, showing how his actions imperilled their vows of chastity and enclosure, thus invalidating the obedience they owed him as spiritual daughters. They speak, they say, for the entire community as well as for the four other *poblano* convents in which he was attempting to impose his program of reform.<sup>45</sup> They articulate their right to refuse the common life through an adherence to the vision of community they had accepted upon their profession and urge him to restore them to it not simply for their sake but for the reputation of religious life in all of New Spain: "Let them [the bishop and his subordinates] leave us in peace to follow the religious life that we professed, wherein much virtue flourished and in which the whole world recognized the union of peace and charity that reigned in all the calced convents; now our reputation is the opposite, and no one wished to become a nun seeing how dreadful the convents have become."<sup>46</sup>

### **Benedict's Legacy**

Returning to Benedict, we see that he had perhaps anticipated the difficulties the Mexican Church would endure in its handling of the implementation of *vida común*. While, as we saw, he deemed it obvious that the common life constituted the most perfect manifestation of convent community, he acknowledged that the difficulty lay in "removing the very great obstacles that we find at every turn" to what he calls the "re-establishment" of this way of life for nuns. He recognized that not all members of the community would act as one, or that there might not always be sufficient monies to sustain the convent financially without nuns' individual incomes. Finally, he seemed to foresee the great difficulties ahead for the reforming bishops of Mexico in "avoiding or quashing" the passionate emotions that might arise when the authorities attempted to place the nuns' individual finances into a common account administered by the prelate, referring to the "uprisings" and "disturbances" that might ensue.

The passionate emotions and resistance detailed in the letter penned by the nuns of La Santísima Trinidad as well as others like it had, at least in part, the effect the women had intended. On 22 May 1774, Charles III issued a royal decree – a *cédula* – in which he counselled the prelates to allow the nuns complete freedom with which to make their

decision regarding which way of life to follow. The monarch strived to appease the different factions involved, including the many powerful aristocrats and landowners who housed their daughters in the New World convents. While seemingly benevolent, he unequivocally stated that he himself favoured the common life: "I desire and wish that the common life be observed and kept in all the convents of my American dominions."<sup>47</sup> In pursuit of his goal, all future nuns must enter the convent under this rule.<sup>48</sup> Yet no nun was to be obliged to depart from the life into which she had professed should she not so desire. He favoured less overtly coercive methods of achieving the desired goal than those the *poblano* ecclesiastical authorities had demonstrated so far, and he insisted that clerics must convince nuns to accept their recommendations through gentle persuasion rather than employing physical violence and intimidation.<sup>49</sup> At the same time, he authorized the same clerics to restrict the agency of those nuns who refused to accept *vida común*, forbidding them, for example, from holding elected office in the convent.<sup>50</sup>

It is difficult to assess the success the nuns achieved in resisting the imposition of *vida común*. The 1774 *cédula*, issued in response to their many protests, had given them the opportunity to stay in the life that they had chosen when they professed. Moreover, it seemed that enthusiasm for the rigid implementation of the reforms weakened once their two main proponents – Fabián y Fuero and Archbishop Lorenzana of Mexico City – returned to Spain in 1773 and 1772, respectively. However, the Church would accept all incoming novices only if they agreed to observe the new rule. This meant that the Church had to settle for the gradual implementation of *vida común*, waiting patiently for the non-conformists to die off, so as to be able to replace them with more perfect models of nuns. Historical evidence shows that nuns continued to keep private servants, and that the reformation regarding the expulsion of secular women was really only half-fulfilled and only for a limited amount of time.<sup>51</sup> Indeed, from the time of the polemic until the convents were declared unconstitutional in 1863, there is no evidence to suggest that the common life was ever completely accepted by the nunneries, despite the best efforts of kings, popes, and bishops.<sup>52</sup>

## NOTES

I thank Maria Teresa Fattori for her invaluable help with sections of this chapter.

- 1 Bienes Nacionales 77 (1729–78). Exp. 20, fojas 56–58. “Doctrina cerca de la vida común de las monjas que para mejor y más acertado gobierno de los prelados eclesiásticos que intentan introducirla en los monasterios donde no se observa estampada. El patrono y maestro de las letras Benedicto XIV, Pontífice Máximo, en el tomo que escribió el Sínodo Diocesano, Lib. 12, Cap. 12, Núms. 18, 19, 20, y 21, de donde se sacó fielmente traducido a este papel. México.”
- 2 Brade, *The Diocesan Synod*, x.
- 3 Benedict had also been closely involved with issues pertaining to the Spanish Church and Crown before his accession to the Holy See. He was charged with preparing the material for the papal bull *Apostolici ministeri* of 13 May 1723, which issued instructions for the reform of the Spanish clergy. Fattori, “Documentos, archivos y memoria,” 41.
- 4 The key bulls in the establishing of the *Real patronato* are the ones issued by Alexander VI on 4 May 1493 and on 16 November 1501 and Julius II’s Bull of 28 July 1508, *Universalis Ecclesiae*. Peterson and Vásquez, *Latin American Religions*, 59–60.
- 5 Penyak and Petry, *Religion in Latin America*, 19.
- 6 Lach and Van Kley, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, 200.
- 7 Fattori, “Documentos, archivos y memoria,” 49–50.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 34.
- 9 *Ibid.*; José Felipe Sigüenza Tarí, “La consecución del patronato real en España.”
- 10 Fattori, “Documentos, archivos y memoria,” 41. All translations are mine.
- 11 Sigüenza Tarí, “La consecución,” 109.
- 12 *Ibid.*
- 13 *Ibid.* According to Sigüenza Tarí, the *Rimostanza* undermined the Spanish government’s confidence in achieving the *real patronato* they so desired. It was not until the death of the most vehement of the Spanish regalists, including Philip V himself, that the necessary conditions were met to sign the Concordat. For her part, Fattori shows how Lambertini himself was able to move forward once the Spanish Crown accepted that the historical claims they were making were not well founded. The removal of this obstacle, she writes, “put the Holy See in the position to concede the *patronato* freely and generously” instead of having to confront it as a contractual obligation (*ibid.*, 48).
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Fattori, “Documentos, archivos y memoria,” 43. Fattori emphasizes that Lambertini’s reforms of the clergy stemmed from their own “infidelity” rather than any perceived “defect in the model.”

- 16 Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 136. As examples of Lambertini's reforms of convents Greco cites his particular interest in tightening up abuses with regard to the vow of cloister. He identifies the encyclical of 1749, *Gravissimo Animi*, as the most significant of the pope's publications (*ibid.*, 137).
- 17 Chowning, *Rebellious Nuns*, 153; Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 138.
- 18 Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 138.
- 19 Elisa Luque Alcaide follows Menéndez y Pelayo in his definition of regalism as "rights that the State has or assumes to intervene in ecclesiastical matters" and she explains how it became one of the "pillars of colonial policy" under Charles III, as he looked to the Church's collaboration and identification with the Crown's interests in treating the American "kingdoms" as true colonies and to ensure and maximize their potential as "suppliers of resources for the Spanish monarchy to recover its position as a first-class world power." Luque Alcaide, "Reformist Currents," 745–6.
- 20 The other four conciliar assemblies were held in Manila (1771), Lima (1772), Charcas, Bolivia (1774–8), and Santa Fé de Bogotá (1774). The metropolitan sees of Santo Domingo and Guatemala were not "prepared for the initiative," as Luque Alcaide explains, owing to a combination of political turmoil and natural disasters (*ibid.*, 743).
- 21 Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 286.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 287.
- 23 Luque Alcaide, in "Debates doctrinales en el Cuarto Concilio Provincial Mexicano," 5, characterizes the mentality of late eighteenth century Spain as one which brought "enlightened Catholics" into conflict with so-called traditionalists. The former group counted many clergy in their number and they adhered to a regalist view in which episcopal and conciliar control took precedence over the Roman Curia. These views are those we see being promulgated by the "enlightened" bishops Fabián y Fuero and Lorenzana in the debate over *vida común* in Mexico.
- 24 Brading, *Church and State in Bourbon Mexico*, 39. At the time of Charles III's decree, there were 678 Jesuit priests and lay brothers in Mexico, many of whom came, as David Brading informs us, from leading Creole families (*ibid.*, 3).
- 25 With regard to the criticism of the baroque religious practices of nuns, see Chowning, *Rebellious Nuns*.
- 26 For an analysis of the concept of nuns being "dead to the world" in the writings of colonial Mexican clerics see chapter 2 of my book *Convent Life in Colonial Mexico*.
- 27 "[The] genuine idealism [of reform] was shaped and often warped by the ambitions of the popes and his legates, bishops, monastic orders, and

secular magistrates. They often used the rhetoric of morality, ranting about loss of chastity and filthy depravities. But when they thrust themselves indecorously and sometimes violently into women's communities, what they imposed was control. The property, the political authority, and the independence of female monastics were the chief target and the chief victims of these reforms." McNamara, *Sisters in Arms*, 419.

- 28 Lehfeldt, *Religious Women in Golden Age Spain*, 72.
- 29 Brading, *Church and State in Bourbon Mexico*, 497.
- 30 Luque Alcaide, "Debates doctrinales," 18. Luque Alcaide believes the author was most likely a pro-Jesuit Creole, most likely a Cayetano Antonio de Torres, a *magistral* of the administrative council of Mexico City (*cabildo*) who received information from his brother, Luis de Torres, who was in attendance at the council (*ibid.*, 11–12).
- 31 *Ibid.*, 17. Luque Alcaide also describes the position of those historians who have argued strongly for seeing the American Church and its clergy as actors in these reform projects rather than as passive victims of peninsular reforms ("Reformist Currents," 744–5).
- 32 In the preface to the second edition, Pope Benedict carefully clarifies the question of the authority that pertains to the opinions he puts forward in the various volumes: "But upon subjects where neither my predecessors in the Apostolic See, nor myself in my official Bulls or elsewhere have promulgated any definition as of Apostolic Authority and generally in all matters to which the weight of no public and authoritative pronouncement of the Church attaches, it is not my aim that anything in this book shall be of the nature of a decree of authority" (cited in Brade, *The Diocesan Synod*, xv). In support of this clarification of how people should interpret these pronouncements the pope cites Melchor Cano, who had opined on the weight that corresponded to books published by pontiffs: "When the Roman Pontiffs publish books on any subject they are expressing their opinion as any other learned man may do. They are not issuing pronouncements concerning the Faith in their capacity as Judges of the Church" (cited in *ibid.*, xv–xvi).
- 33 Luque Alcaide, "Debates doctrinales," 18.
- 34 "Doctrina cerca de la vida común," f. 56.
- 35 *Ibid.*, f. 72
- 36 Cited in Salazar, *La vida común*, 99–106.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 105. All translations are my own.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 103.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 106.
- 40 Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 287.

- 41 Lavrin deems his brief, the *Manifiesto*, to be the most “polished” of those she studied; *ibid.*, 287.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 288.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 201.
- 44 The letter appears in Salazar, *La vida común*, 119–47.
- 45 See the chapter on *vida común* in my *Convent Life in Colonial Mexico* for a discussion of the different interpretations male ecclesiastics on the one hand and nuns on the other held of the meaning of community.
- 46 Quoted in Salazar, *La vida común*, 146.
- 47 Bandos 8 (1771–1774). Exp. 68, fojas 263–66. “El Rey: Mi Virrey, Gobernador y Capitán General del Reino de la Nueva España y Presidente de mi Real Audiencia de la Ciudad de México. Como Protector que soy de los Sagrados Cañones, y del Santo Concilio de Trento, deseo y quiero que en todos los conventos de mis dominios de América se observe y guarde la vida común. La Real Cédula dada en Aranjuez a veinte dos de mayo de mil setecientos setenta y cuatro,” f. 263.
- 48 *Ibid.*, f. 263.
- 49 *Ibid.*, f. 264.
- 50 *Ibid.*.
- 51 Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 201.
- 52 *Ibid.*, 202.

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La Real Cédula dada en Aranjuez a veinte dos de mayo de mil setecientos setenta y cuatro.”

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## **PART II**

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### **Faith and Medicine in the Catholic Enlightenment**

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## 4 The Art and Science of Human Anatomy in Benedict's Vision of the Enlightenment Church

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REBECCA MESSBARGER

### The Legacy

Before he set off from Vienna in March 1769 on his Grand Tour of Italy, Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II dashed off a dense, four-page checklist of the main attractions he intended to see in each city. In Bologna, the young sovereign itemized sites standard to the tour itinerary, including the Public Palace, the magnificent church of San Petronio, and the undulating porticoes of the ancient university. His list is notable, however, for the special emphasis placed on scientific sites, especially those devoted to human anatomy. Three times in the brief, eleven-line paragraph he indicates the anatomical wax museum established in 1742 by Pope Benedict XIV Lambertini in Bologna's prestigious Institute of Sciences.<sup>1</sup> Although Benedict had been dead for more than a decade, for the emperor, as for countless lesser "Grand Tourists" to Bologna, the pope's patronage of the art and science of empirical anatomy epitomized his enlightened legacy and the scientific celebrity of Bologna, Benedict's native city.

Thus, it was on the morning of Pentecost Sunday, 14 May 1769, that an extravagant retinue of Bologna's religious, civic, and academic leaders escorted the emperor from his lodgings at the Inn of the Pilgrim first to the Palladian palace of Senator Count Girolamo Ranuzzi. In a second-floor apartment, Joseph met at length with the internationally celebrated woman anatomist and anatomical modeller Anna Morandi Manzolini (Plate 11), whose support from Pope Benedict XIV had led to her appointment as university lecturer in anatomical modelling and a lifetime honorarium for her celebrated anatomy demonstrations.<sup>2</sup> According to Joseph II's chronicler, just as the pope had intended, the

emperor examined “the beautiful works of the celebrated Manzolini, who formed and expressed in wax according to the laws of anatomy all the component parts of the human body.”<sup>3</sup> Benedict’s promotion of the remarkable woman anatomist,<sup>4</sup> like his conspicuous patronage of other learned women, served to showcase to native citizens, but especially to Grand Tourists and public intellectuals across Europe, Bologna’s ascendancy as a centre of modern inquiry and of social progress, where even women could occupy the scientific forefront.<sup>5</sup>

The emperor then visited the magnificent wooden anatomy theatre in the university Archiginnasio, where hundreds of human dissections had been staged before sell-out crowds during its 133-year history and, from 1731 to 1740, before Archbishop Lambertini himself prior to his rise to the papal throne. Joseph finally made his way to the culminating point of his tour: the first museum in Italy devoted to human anatomy, which Benedict had erected in the acclaimed Institute of Sciences. Joseph marvelled at the pope’s anatomical “tableau” of life-size wax figures shown progressively excavated layer by layer to their skeletal core. Here, he also regarded the working obstetrical collection of nearly 200 true-to-nature models in wax and terracotta of the female reproductive anatomy and pregnant uterus with developing fetus bundled in myriad normal and abnormal stations of presentation (Plates 4–6).<sup>6</sup> On Benedict’s orders, the Bolognese senate had installed the collection for the instruction of surgeons and midwives in proper methods of childbirth.<sup>7</sup>

Sixteen years after his Bolognese tour, Joseph II would act on Benedict’s inspiration by establishing the Josephinum Surgical College in Vienna to train military doctors in anatomy and obstetrics by means of more than 1,000 anatomical and obstetrical wax models.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the pope’s museum was the chief inspiration for the spectacular wax anatomy collection commissioned in 1775 for Florence’s new Museum of Physics and Natural History by Joseph II’s younger brother, archduke of Tuscany Peter Leopold.<sup>9</sup> The development during the Italian eighteenth century of anatomical wax modelling thus began in Benedict’s Bologna, which inspired the Florence collection that in turn produced the grand compendium of anatomical models for the Viennese school of surgery.

What precisely was Benedict’s legacy in the realm of anatomical science? What did he do to advance the study of the parts and functions of the human body? How did the scientific and artistic renderings of the anatomical body serve the cultural and sacral aims of his papacy?

Most essentially, what impact did his facilitation of the disciplinary configurations of both *art* and *science* have on the institutionalization of knowledge during his age? I intend to offer some answers to these questions based on Benedict's continuous patronage of anatomical art and science from his native city of Bologna to the papal throne, as well as on his extensive use of the science of anatomy in his rationalization of Church doctrine, specifically on saints and miracles in his doctrinal masterwork *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione*.<sup>10</sup> Although he has received very limited attention in major studies of the European Enlightenment, as I hope to show, Benedict embodied a new model of institutional knowledge influential for both the Italian Enlightenment cultural context as well as the broader Enlightenment society of learning with which he dynamically engaged.

### Double Vision

Born to a noble Bolognese family in 1675 and died as pope in 1758, Prospero Lambertini straddled the divide between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries as well as rival existential and epistemological thrusts, those of the Counter-Reformation and the burgeoning European Enlightenment.<sup>11</sup> These competing world views coalesced in his lifework and papacy, which were marked by a simultaneous commitment, on the one hand, to ecclesiastical reform founded on doctrinal rigour, pastoral duty, and the strict regulation of monastic life and, on the other, recognition of experimental science as a means to material and spiritual truths and the commonweal. In the broadest terms, as lawyer and leader of the Roman Church, Lambertini determinedly sought to resolve through sensate empiricism, including empirical anatomy, what Hans Belting has called the "Crisis of the Image."<sup>12</sup> Instigated by Reformation iconoclasm, this was a crisis both of the cult of the sacred image and of the image of the Church itself, whose authority had hinged in large part on the cultural potency of holy signs.<sup>13</sup> Through his embrace of empirical science and his application of its methodologies in the realm of the spiritual, including the processes of beatification and canonization, the patronage and public display of devotional images, and the regulation of popular piety, the Bolognese pontiff can in fact be seen to revise and expand the signifiers of Church authority. To accusations of superstitious idolatry against the Catholic Church,<sup>14</sup> Lambertini countered in Enlightenment terms by recurrently fixing manifestations of the sacred in the realm of sense perception and subjecting them to

nature's laws. Lambertini deployed observed proofs systematically unveiled according to modern methods of discovery, frequently at the dissection table, to demonstrate the natural order of the body and, only rarely, the "incarnation of the Word." Above all, through an institutionalized science of the spiritual, he sought to defend the infallibility of the Church in the modern world.<sup>15</sup> As Lucia Dacome has argued, Lambertini's patronage of the art and science of anatomy must be read within the context of "post-Tridentine concerns about the cult of saints and relics, the authority of the pope and the pontiff's claims to jurisdiction over temporal and spiritual realms."<sup>16</sup>

Benedict XIV's openness to the burgeoning European Enlightenment intellectual movement is starkly evident in his engagement with its leading philosophers, writers, political and Church leaders, and men and women of science, and in turn their regard for him as exceptional among popes for his erudition and his moderate and reformist leanings.<sup>17</sup> The French *philosophe* Voltaire tempered his violent anti-clericalism to send to the pope, whom he admired, Latin verses as an inscription for Benedict's portrait, calling him "the ornament of Rome and Father of the world."<sup>18</sup> Voltaire followed this praise by dedicating to Benedict his 1736 tragedy *Le fanatisme ou Mahomet* on religious extremism, which the pope received with praise for the author.<sup>19</sup> Montesquieu declared him "Pope to the learned,"<sup>20</sup> while the English man of letters, Horace Walpole, eulogized Benedict as the pontiff who "restored the lustre of the tiara ... his virtues beloved by papists, esteemed by protestants: a priest without insolence or interest; / ... an Author without vanity / in short a Man / whom neither wit nor power could spoil."<sup>21</sup> Among devotees and detractors alike, he was cited for his conciliatory disposition on political and doctrinal issues. While Count Marco Fantuzzi wrote in his memoir that Benedict "had given too many caresses and courtesies to heretics and strong spirits,"<sup>22</sup> Ludovico Antonio Muratori instead declared that "for centuries God's Church has not been endowed with a pope so learned or skilled in pastoral leadership."<sup>23</sup>

Historians have recurrently defined Benedict's pontificate as an expression of the Christian moral philosophy of "regulated devotion" advocated by his influential contemporary, the historian and Catholic reformer Ludovico Antonio Muratori, whom historian Dale Van Kley has described as the personification of Catholic Enlightenment.<sup>24</sup> This "sincere and moderate" manifestation of Christian faith for which reason and learning were deemed not only compatible but necessary is set in opposition to a credulous, baroque religiosity.<sup>25</sup> Muratori was

particularly forceful on the need for the rational interpretation of sacred signs and images. Writing on the veneration of holy relics and devotional images, he warned against the idolatrous attachment of mystical powers to the objects themselves, which he averred served only to *inspire* prayerful devotion:

The Relics of the Saints should not be considered as anything other than earthly matter, nor [devotional] Images as anything but a mix of colors painted on wood or canvas, or of gold, silver, marble, wood or stucco if formed into statues. That which is matter is not deserving of any kind of cult whatsoever, and whoever adores and venerates such things, commits idolatry. We find pagans condemned in the divine Scriptures and in ancient and new laws for this illegitimate cult ... Thus, when we prostrate ourselves before the tombs of saints and before their holy Relics and Images, we must well remember that the Saint is not there, which these [images] only recall or represent to us. His soul is in Heaven ... Hence it is there that our thoughts, prayers and thanks should fly, and not stop so soon at insensate matter.<sup>26</sup>

Muratori thus strips the relic and devotional image of any residual mystical power attached to the body of the living saint and reduces them to symbolic object and material sign for what, he so pointedly states, is *not* there. While Muratori recognizes that sacred icons are potent means of fortifying the faith of the masses, he insists that they be seen, especially by the “ignorant,” as fixed in the physical world. In answer to the *crisis of the image* in this empirical age, Muratori responds that superstition is anathema to the true expression of faith.

That Benedict was deeply concerned with protestant accusations of idolatry and credulity in the Catholic Church and sought to purify religious practice of superstition by endorsing a Muratorian “regulated devotion” is conspicuous in his doctrinal writings, his personal correspondence, and the myriad reforms he enacted in the realm of sacraments, indulgences, the cult of saints, liturgical books and breviaries, and popular devotion.<sup>27</sup> Repeatedly in the *De synodo dioecisana* on correct diocesan administration,<sup>28</sup> for example, Benedict condemns religious practice founded on superstition, ignorance, irreverence, and ancient rites.<sup>29</sup> In his extensive correspondence with the French Cardinal Tencin, he recurrently expresses his resolve to regulate the cult of Saints by means of historical documents and reason. In his letter of 7 June 1743 he in fact acknowledges that, while these restrictions may



incite ire among the zealous at a supposed weakening of the cult, this response is far preferable “to accusations of apocryphal or false claims to sanctity.”<sup>30</sup> Among his many practical reforms of popular religious rituals, Benedict eradicated numerous religious feast days and such extravagant and bloody spectacles as public flagellation.<sup>31</sup> Although he sanctioned the pious veneration of relics as witness and inspiration to heroic faithfulness and sent a steady stream of relics to churches with which he had ties, like Muratori, he recognized their precarious sway for the uneducated multitudes and, as can be seen in his correspondence, often displayed a decidedly perfunctory view of these saintly synecdoches. In one of his many letters to the archdeacon of Ancona, where he had been archbishop from 1727 to 1731 and which now served as a way station for his shipment of continual bequests – from mummies to marble – to his hometown Bologna, Pope Lambertini announced the arrival of a small cache of holy gifts for the feast of the city’s patron, Saint Cyriacus.<sup>32</sup> The donations, including relics, appear to have been assembled somewhat randomly from the Vatican’s stores, while his main concerns were strictly practical – repairing damage to the assorted objects after their bumpy carriage ride from Rome:

In the boxes, then, you will find a noble chasuble, a missal that is new but Ordinary [of the Roman Rite]. The remainder, if We are not mistaken, consists of many relics along with their authentications. In a small separate box, you will find a kind of Office bound in tortoise shell and fastened with gold clasps. This opens and inside are stored various relics that, if because of the movement of the carriage, became broken apart, with a bit of glue can be reattached. Nothing can be done, however, against the woodworms, but which themselves can do considerable damage to the tortoise shell. Yet, with four or five grains of pepper placed in the box ... you can repair the damage from these bookworms.<sup>33</sup>

The pope follows the Muratorian ideal even more closely in his sanction of devotional images that adhered no less to the laws of nature than to scripture and Christian history.<sup>34</sup> To that end, he cultivated a science of the fine arts, especially representations of the body, by modernizing art academies in Bologna and Rome, where young artists could draw the nude body from life (Accademia del Nudo in Rome) and study the anatomized muscles and bones that move the body from deep beneath the skin (Accademia Clementina in Bologna).<sup>35</sup> Keenly aware, moreover, of the high stakes involved for the true faith in how sacred signs

were framed and staged, he also made a science of their exhibition. As Christopher M.S. Johns has eloquently stated, under Lambertini “sacred art goes from the mass to the museum.”<sup>36</sup> The pope founded within the Vatican Library a museum of paleo Christian art, the Museo Sacro, which valorized the earliest sacred icons, many of which were excavated from the Roman catacombs, while establishing the authenticity of the historic origins of Christianity.<sup>37</sup> In an allied endeavour, he founded four Roman academies for the study of the history of the Church.<sup>38</sup> Historical and empirical analysis thus became the prime defence of sacred objects and of the modern credibility of the Church.<sup>39</sup>

Nowhere is the mark of Benedict’s enlightened piety plainer, however, than in his public advocacy for the compatibility of faith and experimental science, vividly manifest in his patronage of modern scientific institutions and practices,<sup>40</sup> the promotion of scientific men and women within these same institutions,<sup>41</sup> and his extensive application of scientific theories and methods to questions of faith and Church doctrine.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, Lambertini’s revision of the worldly role of the Church develops in crucial ways at the intersection of Muratori’s moral philosophy and the practical defence of experimental knowledge by Luigi Ferdinando Marsili, founder of Bologna’s Institute of Sciences.<sup>43</sup> Lambertini succeeded Marsili as chief patron of the Institute and accepted the latter’s view that “a copious series of observations [are necessary] to see the chain and the thread that unites all things ... In Nature, which always necessarily acts uniformly, the wisdom of man is not so lacking that it cannot discern a great many of its designs.”<sup>44</sup> Thus did the pope’s promotion of modern science and its methods serve distinctive but interrelated aims – to curb credulity among the faithful, especially the untutored classes, by nurturing in its place the seeds of rational understanding of the natural order and of Christian devotion itself; at the other end of the social spectrum, to advance science in laboratories and classrooms the equal, if not the envy, of the greatest centres of learning in Europe; to enhance the public good practically through programs such as improved healthcare, sanitation, and agricultural development; and, above all, through these and related endeavours to demonstrate the cultural currency and command of the Church.

He favoured with his public support and Church treasure the hands-on study of chemistry, physics, astronomy, and mechanics.<sup>45</sup> Practical medicine, especially those fields that most impacted the health of the greatest number – surgery, obstetrics, and the treatment of infectious disease – won Lambertini’s steadfast patronage from his reign as archbishop of

Bologna through his pontificate. Yet, to return to Emperor Joseph II's historic tour of Bologna with which this essay began, the pope's patronage of the foundational medical discipline of human anatomy and its representation in art shaped his legacy as Enlightenment Pope. The martyred or autopsied saint, the fragmented body part of the servant of God sealed in a crystalline reliquary, and the devotional image derive sacred authority under Lambertini from the morbid truths of the anatomized body scientifically parsed and mapped by physicians and surgeons.<sup>46</sup> Knowledge of the structure, parts, and functions of the human body illumines the physical laws and natural order of human existence as well as the extra-natural truths of the divine Word made flesh.

However, notwithstanding the Bolognese pope's zealous engagement with contemporary Enlightenment culture and his application of science to spiritual concerns, his motivations for that engagement were, at their core, fundamentally conservative.<sup>47</sup> By interweaving post-Tridentine doctrinal rigour with Enlightenment science and political and social reform, Benedict sought to redraw indelibly the "Holy Circle,"<sup>48</sup> bolstering the force of authority of the Church likewise against protestant and secular revolt. This fortification of revelation by science is perhaps most palpably demonstrated in the anatomy museum he founded in Bologna in 1742.

### **Anatomy Most Pious**

Situated within the most important institute for the practice and teaching of modern empirical science on the Italian peninsula, the pope's Anatomy Museum served as a spectacular sign of his native city's resurgence as a centre of modern medicine as well as of the sanctification of an alliance between faith and science within the Catholic Church. Notwithstanding the profusion of historical accounts to the contrary, anatomical science, including human dissection, was fully supported by the Church from medieval times and served to reinforce Church authority, perhaps no more vigorously and unequivocally than under Benedict XIV.<sup>49</sup>

In accordance with the meticulously delineated papal commission of 1742, Benedict's select anatomical modeller, Ercole Lelli, created a spectacular double pageant of the mysteries beneath the skin and beyond the sepulchre. The series of eight life-size figures of the progressively unmade body, from an intact and classically posed Adam and Eve (Plate 7), to four male figures anatomically excoriated layer

by muscular layer (Plates 8–9), and finally to the bony framework of a male and a female skeleton clasping iron emblems of grim death (Plate 10), simultaneously demonstrated the locomotor apparatus, the muscles and bones that move the body as well as man's mortal nature after the Fall.<sup>50</sup> Anatomically graphic and exact to the smallest glandular detail, each figure comprised the macerated bones of more than fifty cadavers, whose use Lambertini had explicitly authorized for the greater glory of Bologna, the training of a new generation of Bolognese artists in a more scientific study of the nude, and for the necessary *bene pubblico*. As archbishop, he approved Lelli's request "to have needed Cadavers at the ready" and to be able "to transport them from the Churches and Hospitals of this City and to have from their Rectors and Ministers all necessary accommodation to acquire them at every opportunity; while promising said Oratorio in turn to make every proper use of them with all discretion and caution, and to return to the Sacred Sites all the parts of the Cadavers that he had removed."<sup>51</sup> It was a monumental project in every sense, which took twenty years to complete (1732–52); Lelli reassembled the 200 bones of the body to create, in accordance with Vasari and the dominant Vesalian model of anatomical design,<sup>52</sup> each perfectly proportioned skeletal frame posed in classical contrapposto on which he directly moulded waxen muscles, tendons, veins, arteries, and glands, all coloured to life.

As Lambertini had explicitly ordained, sexual difference was a critical focus of the anatomical series, with intact male and female nudes at the head and male and female skeletons forming the coda of the series "in order to demonstrate the difference that passes between the two sexes, even in the configuration and deposition of the bones."<sup>53</sup> As *Promotor fidei*, Lambertini had long been concerned with questions of sexual difference in faith contexts, especially as regarded the investigation of the sanctity of female mystics, whose ecstatic hysteria he interrogated with singular rigour and diffidence. Anatomical evidence was a critical empirical means for disputing or, more rarely, confirming claims of female mystical sanctity, as the cases he reviewed of Catherine of Bologna, Maria de Agreda, Catherina Knuppfler, and Crescentia of Kaufbeuren, among others, make manifest.<sup>54</sup> No doubt Lambertini's directive for Lelli to highlight the distinctions between the order and design of the anatomized male and female bodies arose in part from want of bodily proof, a dissectible source, of presumed male and female neurological difference.

The procession of ideal anatomical bodies,<sup>55</sup> as I have argued elsewhere, was conceived as a permanent artistic counterpart to the Public Anatomy or Carnival Dissection, as it was popularly known.<sup>56</sup> Performed annually in Bologna's University Anatomy Theatre for elite municipal and religious leaders, including then-Archbishop Lambertini, as well as local and foreign ticket holders, the Public Anatomy disclosed the hidden parts of the body in an extravagant morality play designed to dramatize at once the perils of a wicked life and the holy order of God's handiwork in the humblest visceral part. As art historian William S. Heckscher has elaborated, this unique *sacra rappresentazione* traditionally began with the public hanging of a criminal from the gibbet erected in the main piazza; act two would often be performed on the same night in the anatomy theatre, where the public dissection enacted a postmortem retribution against the body of the criminal that had violated the body politic. The final act comprised the Christian burial of the dissevered remains and a celebratory banquet, both symbols of the restoration of moral order.<sup>57</sup>

The public dissection was a powerfully emblematic and starkly practical means *cognitio sui* (to know thyself) and *cognitio Dei*. As countless documents from the seventeenth through the eighteenth centuries attest, it was also a foremost civic tool for heightening the international celebrity of the city and the ancient university. However, it did not serve to teach anatomy to medical students, who instead frequented the hospital laboratories and their professors' homes for this training.<sup>58</sup> The wax anatomy museum, like the ritual public dissection, was always meant to be more art than science. The pope was unequivocal on this point. In his *motu proprio* of 1747, he stated:

Given the critical place in which the People hold the Public Anatomy [Dissection], and ... since there is nothing comparable at the Institute [of Sciences] ... we therefore resolved to have made, at no small expense, by Ercole Lelli ... eight life-size wax Statues demonstrating distinctly the muscle and bone structures, which in the traditional Public Anatomy are treated generally. As a consequence [of such cursory treatment, these structures] cannot be adequately seen, nor can they sufficiently convey to Painters and Sculptors ... those principles needed by Beginners in these Arts and Profession.<sup>59</sup>

In an associated decree, Pope Lambertini further clarified that medical students should study human anatomy, not by means of wax anatomical

models, but in courses in anatomical dissection taught in designated hospital laboratories by professors expert in the science. The heroic wax anatomical bodies in the pope's museum thus exhibited the musculo-skeletal system for artists and allegorized for "the People" the execution and dissection of the criminal body during Carnival. Both actual and virtual dissections are thus subsumed symbolically in the interdependent high Christian dramas of the Fall, the Passion, and the Last Judgment. Grand sacred narratives serve to constrain the extra-naked truths of the body and act as a moral fortress against the body's ambiguous connotations and the heterodoxy of witnesses to its anatomical exegesis. In other words, for the common culture, the material body even, or perhaps especially, in the exhibition of its dismemberment, must be conceived in spiritual terms, indeed as a kind of Enlightenment reliquary.

Yet from Benedict's references to the study of anatomy by medical students it is clear that he conceived of a discrete context in which the anatomical subject signified solely a physical body in nature and the physical universe. Within the exclusive spaces of the medical laboratory the professor anatomist appropriately uncovered and isolated the material and mechanical truths of the body for the purposes of research and the instruction of new physicians and surgeons. In this context, the body was detached from any but the disciplinary discourse of experimental anatomical and physiological science. And Benedict did much to advance that science.

During the decade 1731–40, when he was archbishop of Bologna and first envisaged his anatomical wax museum, Lambertini launched a campaign for the promotion and advancement of experimental anatomy. In his Notification of 8 January 1737, he called upon Bologna's pastors to persuade their parishioners to donate the bodies of their deceased relatives for the publically useful purpose of anatomical dissection.<sup>60</sup> Among his early acts as pope, Benedict appointed the noted surgeon Pier Paolo Molinelli to the first chair of surgery he established in Bologna in 1742. He provided Molinelli with an incomparable collection of surgical tools designed in Paris for his requisite forty lessons per year in human dissection held, as the pope commanded, from December to February in Bologna's two main hospitals: Santa Maria della Vita and Santa Maria della Morte.<sup>61</sup> Lambertini ordered the installation of Giovan Antonio Galli as the first chair of obstetrics in Bologna's Institute of Sciences in 1757. As stipulated in the appointment, the physician taught sixty hands-on lessons in obstetrics annually to midwives and surgeons, supplanting traditional teaching texts with his expansive

collection of realistic three-dimensional obstetrical models. Through this well-publicized support, Benedict aimed to raise surgery and obstetrics, those areas of medical science perhaps most crucial for the improvement of the general public health, from their traditional low ranking among the mechanical arts. The pope also launched new initiatives in Rome to improve public health, including the renovation and expansion of hospitals specializing in the cure of infectious diseases, the establishment of separate children's wards, and the expanded care of the poor. Here, he also founded anatomy theatres and anatomical cabinets for the training of medical students.<sup>62</sup>

During his reign as archbishop of Bologna, moreover, Lambertini was directly engaged in ritualized anatomical exhibitions, from capital execution to Public Anatomy. As a leading member of the *Confraternità della Morte*, he famously accompanied criminals to the scaffold, as on 31 October 1731 in the case of the murderer Francesco Giuliani, whose confession Lambertini heard and with whom he prayed until the offender's death by hanging.<sup>63</sup> Year after year, as previously mentioned, he witnessed from his designated chair in the Archiginnasio anatomy theatre the dissection of criminal and indigent bodies.<sup>64</sup> The resurgence of Bologna under Lambertini as a centre of anatomical science and exhibition represented the culmination of his engagement with anatomical science, begun twenty years prior as *Promotor Fidei*, commonly known as the "devil's advocate."

Indeed, 1738 marked a watershed of that work, when the academic and religious elite of Bologna joined in celebration at the local publication of the fourth and final volume of Lambertini's masterwork of Church legal doctrine, *On the Beatification of the Servants of God, and the Canonization of the Blessed*. Part I of this volume, which was 484 pages long, elucidated the critical role of miracles in the processes of beatification and canonization, drawing directly from Bologna's ample resources in medical science to distinguish between natural and miraculous cures. Lambertini had consulted doctors of medicine at the ancient university and the university's rich holdings of scientific literature in order to establish firm boundaries between the natural functions of the body and supernatural intercession, which was of utmost importance for assessing claims to miracles.<sup>65</sup>

### **Anatomy of a Saint**

The immense four-volume tract drew directly on Lambertini's twenty years of experience in Rome, 1708–31, disputing numerous claims

to sainthood and miracles according to a forensic approach founded on Church legal precedent,<sup>66</sup> ancient to modern medical literature, and his own direct knowledge of contemporary medical practice.<sup>67</sup> Lambertini's medical preparation developed from his collaboration with a number of Roman physicians, above all Giovanni Maria Lancisi (1654–1720), who served as chief physician to three popes and who privileged case studies and observed physical evidence obtained mainly during dissection as the basis of medical knowledge and diagnosis.<sup>68</sup> Lambertini's treatise on beatification and canonization, which still guides these procedures today, insists upon practical knowledge of human anatomy to defend the truth of sanctity.

In the thirty-three chapters devoted to miracles, he investigates the signs, symptoms, and possibilities for cure of an array of physical and mental illnesses, including blindness, deafness, mutism, paralysis, epilepsy, rabies, mania, dropsy, hemorrhage, leprosy, and cancer. Benedict seeks to delineate with scientific precision what is natural to the physical human existence – the development, structures, functions, decline, and death of the body – in order to discern and verify what is miraculous or diabolical. He explicitly recognizes, however, that medical and scientific knowledge necessarily changes and develops as the means to this knowledge improve. In his investigation of ancient to contemporary medical theories on diseases, his approach is rigorously historical. He cites more than 100 ancient to contemporary medical masters in the chapters devoted to miracles, from Galen, Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Avicenna to Bartholin, Falloppio, Redi, Malpighi, Descartes, Willis, Fieno, Tulp, and Lancisi, notably far more than his references to Church Fathers. New, more exacting scientific authorities and theories repeatedly displace the old.<sup>69</sup> He likewise concedes the limits of empirical science for analysing still obscure facets of human existence. Specifically, in the last and perhaps most fascinating chapter of part I of the final volume, "On the Imagination and Its Powers," Lambertini maps the dynamic landscape of human neurological anatomy and physiology, encapsulating dominant theories in brain science by lights such as Falloppio, Malpighi, and Willis: "The spinal cord represents an extension of the brain, or a product flowing to the eyes, ears, nostrils, the tongue, and to the hands, where resides the sense of touch, and extends and divides its same filaments to all the lower parts of the body."<sup>70</sup> He traces the path from external sensory input along the "continuous tracks of the nerves," to their impression on the "pits, folds and wrinkles" of the brain; yet he is particularly concerned with the way insensible, spiritual



images formed by our own mind/soul amass together with sensible images within the imagination, which he calls the “wondrous Book of the Brain.” Unlike the mathematical language of Galileo’s *Book of the Universe*, which he improbably evokes with this phrase, however, Lambertini acknowledges that the neuropsychological language in which the imagination is naturally written is beyond current medical understanding and, as Fernando Vidal discusses, must necessarily be excluded as a source of the miraculous.<sup>71</sup>

Space will permit me to focus briefly on the role of anatomy with regard to two primary questions of miraculous cures. I have selected them because of their relevance to the representation of the body in the pope’s anatomical wax museum, namely, the “miraculous healing of the lame,” and the “putrefaction of cadavers.” It will be remembered that the series of life-size figures in the pope’s museum demonstrated the locomotor apparatus, the muscles and bones that move the body, within a visual allegory of man’s Fall from prelapsarian innocence. Likewise, the graphic, anatomized bodies wrought in tinted wax provided an artful solution to the natural corruption and decay of the cadaver on the dissection table, which had begun to moulder even before the surgeon’s first cut.

Benedict begins his examination of miraculous cures of the lame by listing the parts and construction of the leg and foot requisite for normal motion. To move, he states, it is necessary to have “solidity, continuity and the articulation of bones,” as well as “due proportion in the cavity of the joints, in the consistence of bones, in their length, in the elasticity of fibres, in the toughness of tendons, in the stretching of nerves, and in the dampness made by mucilaginous liquids.” He then describes in meticulous detail the biomechanics of walking:

A man supported by his feet on the pavement transfers the line of inclination here upon the sole of his right foot, there of his left, which the soles of his feet do not transfer through one straight line, but through two parallel ones between them. As a result, with the back leg moved by the extension of the foot and with the pavement pushed back, *the machine* is raised, which is moved by the other foot steady in front, pushed by the motion of the transversal, and hence immediately after the back foot, lifted from the ground, is suspended by the three bent joints of the hip, knee, and outward foot through their individual muscles, the second phase is repeated, and afterwards the rear foot makes the steps continuous within the working period.<sup>72</sup>

He cites numerous authorities, including Giovanni Alfonso Borelli (1608–79), who studied the biomechanics of walking, running, and jumping and muscle elasticity in his *De motu animalium* (Figure 4.1);<sup>73</sup> Hieronymus Fabricius Aquapendente, the author of influential theories on dislocation and tendon rupture; and the Belgian physician Philip Verheyen (1648–1711), who, aside from being the first to name the Achilles tendon, possessed unique expertise in the anatomy of the leg and the biomechanics of walking derived first-hand from his experience of the amputation of his own leg. Benedict's description of healthful mobility gives way to a comprehensive review of the diseases from arthritis, dislocations, tendon ruptures, and "rotten joints" to congenital deformities that prohibit walking. This elaborate "safe verdict," or scientific précis of the nature of the "machine of the body," as he calls it, will be "brought to bear on [claims to] the miraculous healing of those most grave and incurable illnesses." The miraculous cure of the lame is thus infallibly confirmed when a disease shown by anatomical science and primary case studies to leave the locomotor apparatus permanently disabled is reversed immediately and always.<sup>74</sup>

In Lambertini's thirty-first chapter, "On whether the blood, fluid and smell that pour forth from corpses should be ascribed to miracles,"<sup>75</sup> he again begins systematically by mapping the anatomy of body, in this case in the state of death and putrefaction. Yet, in this chapter, he opposes with singular vigour the legitimacy of learned science based on systematic observation to rude superstition before signs of death, which indeed provoked the most fervent irrationality among the masses:<sup>76</sup>

Around a corpse, many things may be observed that create not only the suspicion of a miracle, but certitude in the ignorant rabble, when in fact none surpasses the power of nature: corpses sometimes move; they blush; they are soiled; they are sprinkled with ruddy stigmata; they remain warm for a great length of time; and their nails, hair and teeth are sometimes said to grow ... While the corpse of Gualterius Bustaccius, decapitated by the executioner in Florence, was being carried to the Church of the Holy Cross to be buried, it was suddenly and spontaneously disturbed by so powerful a convulsion that the boards upon which it was set were splayed and the body nearly detached itself from the shoulders of those bearing it, and persisted while the funeral proceeded until it was shot by an arrow ... Even men recently killed and dashed to bits ... and truly dead, are not free of motion, when the limbs spring up and the trunk shakes violently.<sup>77</sup>

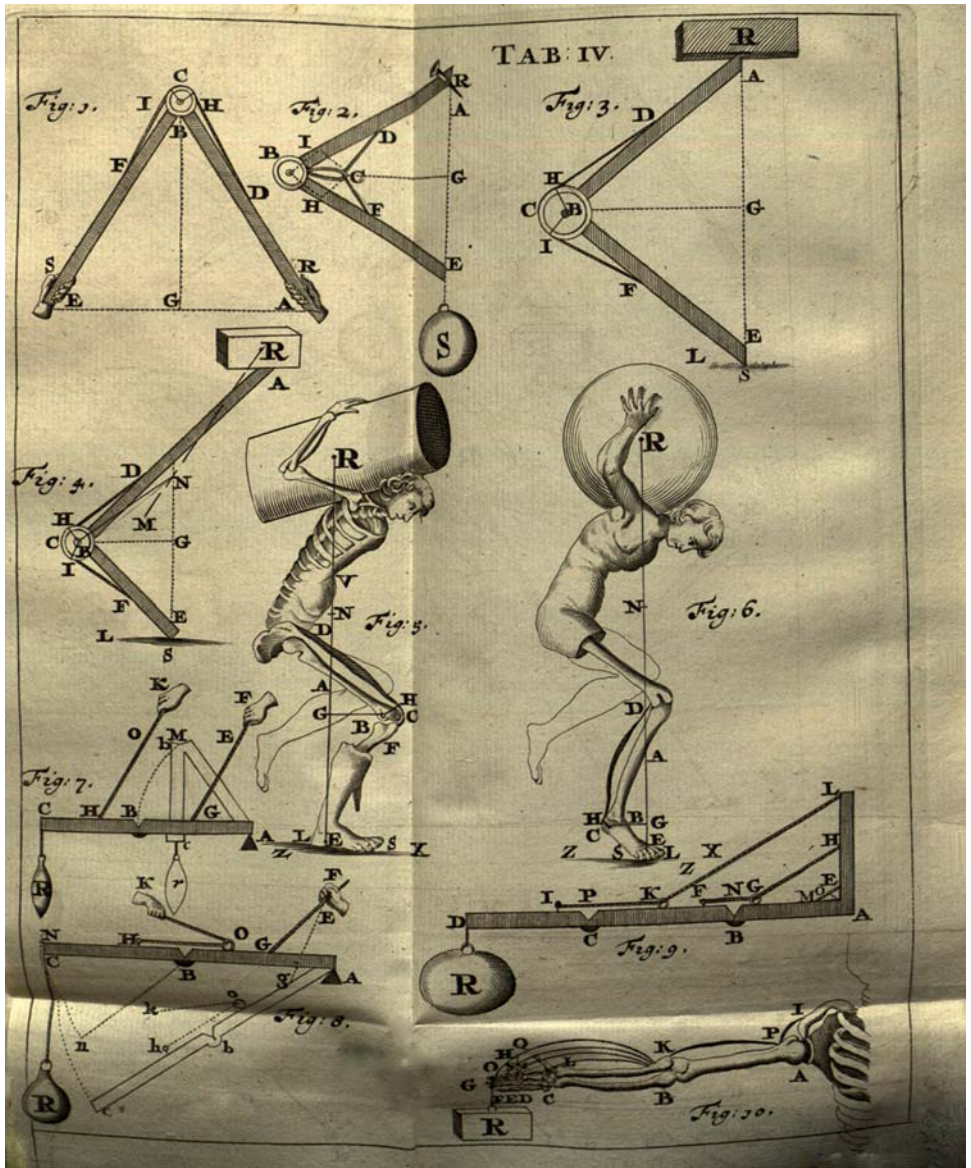


Figure 4.1 Alfonso Borelli (1608–79), *Joh. Alphonsi Borelli ... De motu animalium, pars prima -secunda. Editio nova, a plurimis mendis repurgata, ac Dissertationibus physico-mechanicis de motu musculorum, et De effervescentia, et fermentatione ... Joh. Bernoullii ... aucta, & ornat De Motu Animalium* (Hagae Comitum The Hague: Apud Petrum Grosse, 1743), Table IV. Courtesy of the Becker Rare Book Library, Washington University School of Medicine.

To this ghastly scene interpreted by the crowd as a diabolical resurrection, Lambertini responds with scientific disinterest, "These movements are ... but certain clumsy paroxysms brought forth by traces of living breath hiding and flickering among the recesses of the entrails."<sup>78</sup> In his strictly clinical account of putrefaction, without scent of incense or allusion to *memento mori*, Lambertini ridicules superstition, denies the miracle, and substantiates Church infallibility not at the altar but at the dissection table.

Indeed, in the same chapter, Lambertini applies his staunchly forensic approach, predicated on doubt and demonstration, even to the miracles attributed to Christ himself. In the controversial case of the blood and water that flowed continuously, according to the Gospel of John, from the crucified Saviour's pierced side (Plate 12), the lynx-eyed canonist replies: "Some doctors speculate that blood flowed out normally, with the pericardium deeply injured by the lance fixed near the heart of Christ ... Other doctors have asserted that only the pleural cavity – pierced by the lance without injury to the pericardium and heart – could have caused the flow of water, natural to that part of the chest ... But hitherto it remains to be investigated whether a miracle may be ordained in the flow of blood, in the flow of water, or in both."<sup>79</sup> An opening to the miraculous remains in this judgment, but divine intervention in the sacred epic of Christ's passion, as in lesser narratives of sanctity, demands investigation and validation by science.

Under Benedict as with no other pope, the exposure and deconstruction of the body at the dissection table became a crossing point for signifying the natural order of the body, its diseased disorder, and, at those exceptional times, the extraordinary physics of the body wrought by divine or diabolical power. Empirical anatomy provided requisite flesh and bone proof of truth in sanctity and, more important, of the foundational canon: "The Pope is head of all heads, and the prince moderator and pastor of the whole Church of Christ under heaven."<sup>80</sup>

## NOTES

My thanks to Benjamin Halliburton for his translation from Latin of excerpts of Benedict XIV's *De servorum Dei* cited in this essay. Unless otherwise indicated all other translations are mine. I am grateful to Maria Teresa Fattori for her expert help in indicating passages in Benedict's religious writing and correspondence

germane to this article. I appreciate Christopher Johns's generous guidance on key issues confronted here and Julia Walker's advice on how to frame this study.

- 1 "Sale d'Anatomie," "Benedictine Theatres," "tableaux de Lambertini," Vienna State Archive, Hausarchiv-Hofreisen (HHSTA), Joseph II, *Tables des choses à voire*, box 1.
- 2 Archivio di Stato di Bologna (ASB), Assunteria d'Istituto, *Diversorum*, busta 10, *Camere e materiale scientifico*, fascicolo 3. See also ASB, Senato, *Partiti* (1756–61), fascicolo 39.
- 3 HHSTA, Hausarchiv-Hofreisen, box 1.
- 4 For a comprehensive study of Anna Morandi's lifework, see Messbarger *The Lady Anatomist*.
- 5 On Benedict's patronage of women, see Paula Findlen's chapter in this volume; Findlen "Science as a Career in Enlightenment Italy"; Findlen "Translating the New Science"; Marta Cavazza's chapter in this volume; Cavazza, "Women and Science in Eighteenth-Century Italy"; Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*; Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*, 20–39.
- 6 On the Early Modern concept of the truth-to-nature objectivity, see Daston and Galison, *Objectivity*, 57–60.
- 7 On Galli's obstetrical school and Benedict's support of it, see *Ars obstetricia bononiensis*.
- 8 On Joseph II's anatomical models see Maerker, *Model Experts*, 151–84. On Peter Leopold's anatomical collection in the Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History, see Messbarger, "The Re-birth of Venus"; Contardi, *La casa di Salomone a Firenze*; Maerker, *Model Experts*; Knoefel, "Florentine Anatomical Models."
- 9 In the proposal for the collection, Benedict's patronage of anatomy served to validate Peter Leopold's benefaction of the project. Galileo Museum and Institute, Florence, *Filza di Negozi dell'anno 1791*, fol. 226v.
- 10 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*. On this tract, see Fattori, *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV*.
- 11 Mario Rosa's studies of Pope Lambertini are indispensable for understanding the political, intellectual and religious traits of his papacy; see "Benedetto XIV."
- 12 Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 458–84.
- 13 See Carlo Ginzburg's study of changing Christian views of sacred signs, "Representation."
- 14 On the eighteenth-century Church's defences against these accusations, see Cahill-Esholz, "The 'Significant Other' in Canonizations."
- 15 "Inerranza" (inerrancy) was, as Fattori has observed, the term consistently used by Benedict. "Infallibility" becomes doctrine only in 1870. Casals, "Benedetto XIV e le canonizzazioni."

- 16 Dacome, "The Anatomy of the Pope," 356. See also Dacome, "Al confine del mondo naturale."
- 17 These included the enlightened despots Maria Theresa of Austria, Louis XIV, and Catherine the Great; religious lights Celestino Galiani, L.A. Muratori, and Giovanni Bandiera; literati and scientists Voltaire, Montesquieu, Francesco Algarotti, Scipione Maffei, Maria Gaetana Agnesi, Antonio Genovesi, Pierre Louis Maupertuis, Laura Bassi, and Roger Joseph Boscovich, SJ. See Cenacchi, "Benedetto XIV e l'Illuminismo." It must be noted that during the second half of his papacy, Lambertini grew increasingly distrustful and censorious of the anticlerical culture of the Enlightenment. See Mario Rosa, *Settecento religioso. Politca della ragione e religione del cuore* (Venice: Marsilio, 1999), 114–201.
- 18 Cited in Parton, *Life of Voltaire*, 2: 502.
- 19 On Voltaire and Benedict, see Tega, "Papa Lambertini."
- 20 Letter of 9 April 1754, in Montesquieu, *Lettres de Monsieur de Montesquieu*, 201.
- 21 Walpole, *The Letters of Horace Walpole*, 381.
- 22 Cited by Fanti, "Prospero Lambertini Arcivescovo di Bologna, 43.
- 23 Muratori, *Annali d'Italia ed altre opere varie di Lodovico Antonio Muratori*, 771.
- 24 Kley, "From Catholic Enlightenment to the Risorgimento."
- 25 On Muratori's moral philosophy, see Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*; Petrucci, *La regolata religione*; Continisio, "Governing the Passions."
- 26 Muratori, *Della regolata devozione dei cristiani*, 332–3.
- 27 My thanks to Maria Teresa Fattori for clarifying Benedict's position on Protestant attacks against Catholic credulity and in identifying documents in which Benedict elaborates his reformist positions. She writes on these subjects in her current book project, *Tradurre Trento nel Settecento. Il De synodo diocesana di Prospero Lambertini – Benedetto XIV*, in which she dedicates a chapter to the question: "Sacro e santo tra ragione scolastica e filosofia natural."
- 28 Benedict XIV, *De synodo diocesana*. See especially Book 5, chap. 8; Book 8, chap. 7; Book 11, chap. 10; and Books 13, 17, and 18.
- 29 Indeed, he cites the three-volume *Traité des superstitions qui regardent les sacrements selon l'Écriture sainte, les décrets des conciles, et les sentiments des Saints pères, et des théologiens* (1697–1704) by the French cleric J.B. Thiers. In the extended tract Thiers denounced superstitious beliefs and sacrilegious practices based on ignorance and irrational fears and condemned the corruption of the faith by religious orders, congregations and confraternities by means of indulgences, especially in such privileged churches in Rome as Saint John Lateran.

- 30 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al Card. De Tencin*, 1: 51–2.
- 31 Rosa, *Settecento religioso*, 154–6.
- 32 It is fair to assume that the holy presents helped placate the archdeacon for his supervision of the shipments to Bologna.
- 33 Letter of 28 March 1742, Pope Benedict to Archdeacon Innocenzo Storiano of Ancona in *Archivio Storico per le Marche e per l'Umbria*, Vol. 2 (Foligno, 1885), 725.
- 34 Mariani, “Il dogma Cristiano.”
- 35 Lambertini founded the Accademia del Nudo on the Capitoline in 1754. See Johns, “The Papacy and the Patrimony II: The Expansion of the Capitoline Museums Under Benedict XIV and Clement XIII,” chap. 5 of his *The Visual Culture of Catholic Enlightenment*, 394–481; and Barroero, “I primi anni della Scuola del Nudo in Campidoglio.” On Benedict’s influence on the Clementina Academy, see Maino, “Magistero e potestà pontificia sull’Accademia Clementina di Bologna.” Lambertini founded the Anatomy Museum in the Institute for the instruction of artists in anatomical design. See Messbarger, “The Pope’s Anatomy Museum,” chap. 1 of *The Lady Anatomist*, 20–51.
- 36 Johns, *The Visual Culture of Catholic Enlightenment*, 405. According to Johns, beyond his establishment of the Museo Sacro in the Vatican and the Pinacoteca’s Christian art collection on the Capitoline, Lambertini sought mostly unsuccessfully to replace prized paintings in churches with copies and to transfer art in select local churches to public museums.
- 37 Orello, “Il Museo Cristiano di Benedetto XIV.”
- 38 Donato, “L’Età di Benedetto XIV,” 77–115.
- 39 Mariani, “Il dogma cristiano,” 29–37.
- 40 Walter Tega, Introduzione, in Tega, *Anatomie Accademiche*, 9–43.
- 41 See Marta Cavazza’s chapter in this volume.
- 42 See Fernando Vidal’s chapter in this volume; see also Vidal, “Miracles and Testimony,” and “Prospero Lambertini’s ‘On the Imagination and Its Powers’”; Dacome, “Al confine del mondo naturale”; and Duffin, *Medical Miracles*.
- 43 On the history of the Institute, see Tega, *Anatomie Accademiche*, Vols 1 and 2, and Angelini, *Anatomie Accademiche*, Vol. 3.
- 44 Marcello Malpighi, “Risposta apologetica” (1689), in *De pulmonibus observationes anatomicae*, ed. Silvestro Baglioni (Rome: G. Bardi, 1944), 99.
- 45 See John Heilbron’s and Maurice Finocchiaro’s chapters in this volume.
- 46 For analysis of pre-Modern to Renaissance approaches to the anatomy of sanctity, see Katharine Park, “Holy Anatomies,” in Park, *Secrets of Women*, 39–76; Bornstein, “The Uses of the Body”; Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later*

- Middle Ages*, 163–77; Carlino, *Books of the Body*; and Ziegler, “Practitioners and Saints.”
- 47 The darker aspects of that conservatism are the focus of Gaetano Greco, *Benedetto XIV* (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2011); Caffiero, *Forced Baptism*; and Maria Pia Donato’s chapter in this volume.
- 48 I am referring to Peter Gay’s notion elaborated in “Beyond the Holy Circle,” in Gay, *The Enlightenment*, 1: 358–422.
- 49 Andrew Cunningham crisply answers the question of the Catholic Church’s view of anatomy and dissection: “the fact is that the Catholic Church has never been opposed to the practice of anatomy whether for post-mortem demonstration, teaching or research purposes. Never, ever, anywhere”; *The Anatomist Anatomis’d*, 14. On Church influence on anatomy in Italy, see Cushing, “Ercole Lelli and His Écorché”; Carlino, *Books of the Body*; and Park, *Women’s Secrets*.
- 50 See the following series of documents in the first proposal for the museum in 1732 (the commission would not come until 1742, when Lambertini could pay for the project from papal coffers): ASB, Assunteria d’Istituto, *Atti*, n. 3 (1727–1734): f. 652, 7 febbraio 1732; f. 658, febbraio 1732; f. 697–700, 17 luglio 1732.
- 51 Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), Ms. 90, 17 November 1732.
- 52 Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of Artists*, 1: 249. From 1543, the year of its publication, through the first half of the eighteenth century, Andreas Vesalius’s anatomical atlas, *De humani corporis fabrica*, in which for the first time the images of the anatomical body arguably became more important than the words, continued to occupy a supreme position in the canon of anatomical illustration.
- 53 ASB, Assunteria d’Istituto, *Diversorum*, b. 10, n. 2 e 2 bis, “Fondazione delle Camere di Anatomia fatte da Benedetto XIV” (1742–1747), “Statue anatomiche formate in cera da Ercole Lelli.”
- 54 On this question, see Vidal’s chapter in this volume and his “Miracles, Science and Testimony.”
- 55 Ercole Lelli first established his reputation as foremost anatomical sculptor by carving the wooden écorché that upheld the lector’s throne in the Public Anatomy Theatre.
- 56 See Messbarger, “The Pope’s Anatomy Museum,” in Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*, 20–51.
- 57 Heckscher, *Rembrandt’s Anatomy of Dr. Nicholaas Tulp*.
- 58 See Ferrari, “Public Anatomy Lessons and the Carnival”; and Heckscher, *Rembrandt’s Anatomy of Dr. Nicholaas Tulp*.
- 59 ASB, Assunteria dei Magistrati, *Affari Diversi*, vol. 3, part 1, 28 November 1747, “Benedictus Papa XIV. Motu Proprio,” Busta 78, f. 3.



- 60 Reproduced in Martinotti, *Prospero Lambertini (Benedetto XIV)*, 5–8.
- 61 Morelli, *Le Lettere di Benedetto XIV al Card. Tencin*, 87, 92.
- 62 Curcio, “L’ampliamento dell’ospedale di Santo Spirito in Sassia.”
- 63 Biblioteca Comunale di Bologna, Fondo Ospedali, *Giustiziati dall’anno 1674–1796*, vol. III, n66, f. 14r. Criminal bodies used for the “notomia” were always executed in late December and in February.
- 64 Giancarlo Angelozzi and Cesarina Casanova, *La giustizia criminale a Bologna nel XVIII secolo e le riforme di Benedetto XIV* (Bologna: CLUEB, 2010).
- 65 See Gianna Pomata’s chapter in this volume. See also the series of letters to Lambertini providing theological and medical corrections for the tract in BUB, Ms. 1071, t. xxvii, no. 13. Dr Fattori kindly indicated this source.
- 66 Principally that elaborated under Pope Urban VIII by the physician Paolo Zacchia, *Quaestiones medico legales*.
- 67 Duffin, *Medical Miracles*, 12–31; Dacome, “Anatomy of the Pope,” 353–34.
- 68 On Benedict’s relationship to Lancisi and medical science in Rome, see Donato, *Morti improvvise*, 148–58.
- 69 Except, significantly, when the case had been previously decided, in which instance, Lambertini always supports infallibility no matter how incompatible with his standard interpretation of law.
- 70 Stefano Guliza translated this section from the Latin to Italian. The English is mine.
- 71 See Fernando Vidal’s chapter in this volume and his “Prospero Lambertini’s ‘On the Imagination and Its Powers,’” and “Miracles, Science and Testimony.” Vidal advances the critical thesis that opposition to the imagination as a verifiable source of miracles was linked to Lambertini’s reinvigoration of scepticism in adjudicating the saintly and his resistance to claims, mainly in the cases of women, of mystical ecstasy.
- 72 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Book IV, Part I, 136–8; my emphasis.
- 73 Borelli, *De motu animalium*; Aquapendente, *De Motu locali animalium secundum totum*; and Verheyen, *Corporis humani anatomia*.
- 74 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Book IV, Part I, 136–8.
- 75 All citations on putrefaction come from *ibid.*, 429–34.
- 76 On a crisis during Lambertini’s lifetime over pronouncements of death, see Donato, *Morti improvvise*.
- 77 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Book IV, Part I, 430–31.
- 78 *Ibid.*, 431.
- 79 *Ibid.*, 432.
- 80 Benedict XIV, *De synodo dioecessana*, Prati, Typ. Aldina, 1844 (t. XI, *Benedicti XIV olim Prosperi cardinalis de Lambertinis Operum ed. novissima*), 19.

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## 5 The Devil's Advocate among the Physicians: What Prospero Lambertini Learned from Medical Sources

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GIANNA POMATA

In *De servorum Dei beatificatione* (1734–8), Prospero Lambertini, archbishop of Bologna and future Pope Benedict XIV, gave a new and highly erudite synthesis of the criteria for evaluating miraculous evidence.<sup>1</sup> Among these criteria, a prominent role was assigned to the expertise of physicians as witnesses in canonization proceedings. Medical practitioners had been involved in canonization since the Middle Ages. In fact, the legal process of saint-making had been a key area of contact between religion and medicine – a contact involving cooperation but also some tension, if not downright rivalry.<sup>2</sup> In medieval times, the official approval of healing miracles by the Holy See had not formally required medical authentication: healing miracles were established through the testimony of two concordant witnesses (*testes contestes*), whether “*in re medica periti*” or not.<sup>3</sup> Starting at the end of the sixteenth century, however, the role of medical witnesses grew steadily in canonization practice.<sup>4</sup> By contributing to the drawing of boundaries between natural, preternatural, and supernatural bodily phenomena, medical expertise played a decisive role in the early modern process that turned miracles from objects of faith into objects of knowledge, from mere *sign* to rationally validated *proof* of supernatural agency. No longer established simply through the ecclesiastic screening of the popular perception of sanctity, miracles became a highly debated object of specialized scholarly inquiry – an inquiry that contributed prominently to the rational justification of religious belief.<sup>5</sup> This process involved vigorous debate in Protestant physico-theology,<sup>6</sup> while in the Catholic Church it led to a massive effort to reform canonization proceedings in the first half of the seventeenth century. In the legal framework of the new procedures, introduced by the decrees of 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. *Prima facie* prodigies were critically assessed through the judicious combining of theological, moral, historical, natural-philosophical, and medical notions of evidence.<sup>7</sup>

The new rules introduced by Urban VIII gave great 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 cardinals assembled in the Sacred Congregation of Rites.<sup>8</sup> Even more significantly, in the latter part of the century, a new norm was created 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*.<sup>9</sup> “Because it has been observed that the Postulators often present the written opinions of physicians or surgeons as validation (*confirmazione*) of miracles, while the other side does not customarily respond, it seems necessary, in order that one may rejoin according to the state of the art, that the most eminent [Cardinal] Ponens appoint *ex officio*, secretly, and by previous oath, another physician or surgeon of more fame, who, for the sake of truth, will offer a rejoinder on whether the asserted miracles exceed the forces of nature.”<sup>10</sup> 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, which handled parts of the canonization proceedings, had routinely asked for medical advice on controversial cases, as is attested by the published *consilia* on healing miracles by the physicians Paolo Zacchia and Angelo Vittori.<sup>11</sup> In 1678, what had been simply a legal custom became an official norm – a norm that marked a turning point in the use of physicians’ opinion in canonization trials, allowing a stronger role for medical scepticism on asserted miraculous evidence. Physicians appointed by the Congregation of Rites to provide their expertise for the better scrutiny of miracles became part of the staff employed in the canonization process, and as such they were remunerated for their written reports. Originally their compensation was not fixed by law, though it was not supposed to exceed that of the consistorial advocates, that is, the lawyers whose principal duty was briefing the claims of candidates for canonization in the Congregation of Rites.<sup>12</sup> In 1741, shortly after his



election to the papacy, Lambertini set the compensation at thirty scudi, irrespective of the number of miracles examined, urging the physicians who were consulted on miracles, either on behalf of the postulators or of the Congregation, to write their report concisely, without addressing all the objections of the Promoter of the Faith.<sup>13</sup> “For the sake of making their study easier,” these written medical opinions were also printed together with the other principal documents produced in the final stage of the proceedings (the *Positiones supra miraculis*, the *Animadversiones* of the *Promotor Fidei*, the *Responsio Juris* of the advocate representing the postulators, etc.). Thus, some degree of publicity (very limited, because the number of copies was capped at sixty) was given to the discussion on miracles among physicians, theologians, and canon law experts.<sup>14</sup>

This new rule was applied for the first time in the final stage of the canonization process of St Catherine of Bologna, in which the young Lambertini, also from Bologna, was involved.<sup>15</sup> After graduating in theology and law (*in utroque jure*) at age nineteen in 1694, Lambertini trained under the Rota auditor, Alessandro Caprara.<sup>16</sup> Lambertini became consistorial advocate in 1705 and was appointed *Promotor Fidei* in 1708. He would hold that important office for twenty years, until 1728.<sup>17</sup> It was while serving as *Promotor Fidei* that Lambertini started to work on his text on canonization; the manuscript of the first draft of the treatise was completed in 1721.<sup>18</sup> The treatise was, in fact, a lifetime project. Lambertini kept working on it even after its first publication in 1734–8, preparing revisions for the following two editions that appeared during his lifetime, in 1743 and in 1747–51.<sup>19</sup>

In his twenty years’ experience as *Promotor Fidei*, Lambertini took part in over 200 meetings of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, examining the miracles of twenty-five candidates to sanctity.<sup>20</sup> What did he learn from his frequent contacts with physicians in his role as critic of miracles? How much did he know of the medical culture of his times? Scholars have shed light on Lambertini’s interest in anatomy, which he promoted both as archbishop and as pope, sponsoring the development of anatomical research in Bologna and Rome. Lucia Dacome and Rebecca Messbarger, in particular, have studied the creation of an anatomy room at the Bolognese Institute of the Sciences under Lambertini’s sponsorship, arguing that his interest in anatomy was due to the essential role he attributed to anatomical knowledge in the evaluation of claims to sanctity.<sup>21</sup> However, the extent of Lambertini’s knowledge of the medical culture of his times has never been studied in depth.<sup>22</sup> In this chapter, I will examine Lambertini’s use of the medical literature

as indicated by the section on healing miracles in his treatise. Which medical authors and what kind of medical works did he read? How did he use these texts? How extensive were his readings and how up to date? What did he learn from personal contacts and exchange of ideas with the physicians who were involved as expert witnesses in canonization proceedings?

### Understanding and Evaluating Medical Evidence

Let us compare, first of all, the section on healing miracles in Lambertini's text (book 4, chaps 8–19) with the treatment of the same topic in the most important canonization treatise prior to *De beatificatione servorum Dei* – bishop Carlo Felice de Matta's *Novissimus de sanctorum canonizatione tractatus* (1678), which also contains a fairly long section on the evaluation of medical evidence. How different are the two texts? They are deeply different, as we shall see, though they both start from a similar theological framework, especially concerning the definition of "miracle." Both Matta and Lambertini worked within the traditional conceptualization of miraculous healing as a miracle of the "third kind," or *praeter naturam* (beside the ordinary way of nature) by means of which God produces a natural effect, such as healing, in a way that nature could not effect.<sup>23</sup> The criteria for assessing such miracles had been formulated early in the seventeenth century by the papal archiater Paolo Zacchia in his influential *Quaestiones medico-legales*. To count as miraculous, healing had to satisfy the following requisites: the condition had to be serious and difficult or impossible to cure by common medical standards; the recovery ought to be sudden and instantaneous, as well as perfect and complete, excluding the possibility of relapse.<sup>24</sup> Most important, it had to be proved beyond all doubt that the recovery was not due to medications or to the healing power of nature. Nature was thought to effect a cure by means of a "crisis" (typically, an "evacuation" or discharge of humours).<sup>25</sup> In Zacchia's Hippocratic-Galenic framework, the notion of "crisis" provided the main reason why the physician's expertise should be considered necessary in distinguishing between natural and supernatural healing. Only the physician could determine whether certain symptoms (sweating, bleeding, diarrhea, etc.) were in fact "critical evacuations," a sign that indicated a spontaneous, natural recovery from the disease, thus excluding supernatural agency.

Both Matta and Lambertini drew on Zacchia's guidelines, but with significant differences in their approach to medical knowledge.

Matta offered his readers a crash course in the basics of Galenic medicine. He prefaced his discussion of healing miracles with a concise description of human anatomy.<sup>26</sup> He then gave a summary listing of classes and causes of diseases, followed by a description of natural healing, and a list of diseases that are “curable by nature,” in alphabetical order.<sup>27</sup> What were Matta’s medical sources? Curiously, his source for anatomy is the succinct précis of human anatomy in Zacutus Lusitanus’s *Medicorum principum historia* (1629), which Matta says included both ancient and modern anatomical views.<sup>28</sup> Zacutus (1575–1642) was a Portuguese physician of Marrano background, who returned to Judaism after emigrating to Amsterdam, where he kept practising medicine and published a series of volumes collecting case histories from ancient and modern authors.<sup>29</sup> It is surprising that Bishop Matta selected a reconverted Jew as his main source – and one who was so aware and proud of his Jewish ancestry.<sup>30</sup> Though heterodox from a religious viewpoint, however, Zacutus was a defender of Galenist orthodoxy in medicine. The account of anatomy that Matta derives from Zacutus has no mention of the circulation of the blood, the lymphatic vessels, and the other novelties of early seventeenth-century anatomy that would cause the irreversible decline of Galenism.<sup>31</sup> Matta’s medical sources, besides the inevitable ancient and medieval authorities (Galen, Aetius, Celsus, Oribasius, Rhasis, Avenzoar) are Zacchia and two textbooks of the *Medical Institutions* genre (introductory overviews for students), by Daniel Sennert and Lazare Rivière, respectively – texts that he probably chose because of their popularity. Sennert (1572–1637), interestingly, was a true innovator – a Lutheran with leanings to atomism and alchemy. His *Institutiones Medicinae* (1611), on which Matta relies extensively, was printed over and over again in the course of the seventeenth century,<sup>32</sup> including an expurgated edition published in 1655 by Claude Bonnet, a professor at Avignon, for use by Roman Catholics.<sup>33</sup> Next to Sennert, Matta drew on Lazare Rivière’s *Institutiones medicae* (1655) and his *Praxis medica* (1644). A professor at the University of Montpellier, Rivière adopted in his *Institutiones* a moderately reformed Galenism:<sup>34</sup> he did not mention radical novelties, such as the circulation or mechanical philosophy, but he expressed some interest in new chemical remedies. He also published one of the most fortunate exemplars of the new medical genre of *observationes*, that is, case collections.<sup>35</sup>

Bishop Matta drew his medical notions from popular textbooks that remained within the confines of a moderately reformed Galenism.

The concepts of crisis and critical days that he used (drawn from Zacchia, Sennert, and Rivière) are entirely conventional.<sup>36</sup> Though ignoring developments in anatomy, Bishop Matta was aware of the new literature of medical case collections, to which Rivière and Zacutus had contributed and which he quotes at times.<sup>37</sup> On the whole, however, the view of seventeenth-century medicine we get from Matta is narrow and limited, insulated from the most dynamic and powerful new trends that were transforming the early modern medical landscape.

Not so with Lambertini. His approach to the medical literature is much more sophisticated, nuanced, and, most important, in touch with new medical developments. First of all, he avoids any naive assumption that one can give a concise summary of anatomy or a list of diseases. He does not want to offer a smattering of medical knowledge for the use of theologians and canon lawyers. His primary goal is to understand and evaluate medical expertise as an essential component in the legal process of proving miracles. Medical doctors are included as partners in what he sees as a team effort – of theologians, jurists, historians, natural philosophers – to demonstrate the reality of miracle as fact, "*factum concordatum*," as it is called in the publications of the Congregation of Rites.

Lambertini organizes his subject matter around those medical conditions that are typically associated with miracle claims: the blind, the deaf-mute, the lame, the hunchback, the paralytics; those suffering from epilepsy and hysteria; insanity and hydrophobia; dropsy, empyema, and hernia; bleedings and wounds; leprosy, cancer, gangrene; fevers; plus some other diseases.<sup>38</sup> For each of these groups of illnesses, the exposition follows a constant order. First, Lambertini reports the scriptural evidence, that is, the cases of miraculous healing of that condition as described in the Bible. He then lists the juridical precedents, namely, those healings of that specific condition that were recognized as miracles by the Congregation of Rites, as recorded in the papal decrees of beatification or canonization and in the reports of the Rota auditors. Thereafter, he reviews the medical literature, with particular attention to the medical case collections. Rare cases are especially important for him because they signal the limits of the possible – the farthest boundaries of natural healing. Finally, he reports in detail his experiences as *Promotor Fidei*, comparing his own strictures on asserted miracles with the physicians' opinions, the rejoinders of the postulators' advocates, and the final decisions of the Congregation of Rites.

Lambertini's goal in this work is to establish guidelines for the assessment of the legal validity of medical testimony on miracles. He stresses that medical testimony, like all testimony, should ideally be "*de visu*," based on first-hand ocular experience.<sup>39</sup> He notes that it is very important to have the report of miraculous healing directly from the physician who treated the patient, though this was not a formal requirement in canonization proceedings:<sup>40</sup> "I incline to believe that one should proceed with the utmost caution in approving a miracle of the third kind – in which class of miracles healings are for the most part considered to belong – if there is no direct testimony of the physician who took care of the sick person."<sup>41</sup> He adds that while working as *Promotor Fidei* he saw "many miracles rejected because such testimony was missing, owing to the physician's death before the onset of the [canonization] proceedings."<sup>42</sup>

Like all testimony, medical testimony can be biased. Whenever he mentions a medical opinion in the context of canonization proceedings, Lambertini always specifies whether it is the opinion of a physician on the side of the postulators ("*ad favorem*") or of a physician appointed by the Congregation of Rites ("*pro veritate*"). He clearly implies that the opinion of those physicians writing *pro veritate* is of more weight than that of the physicians chosen by the postulators. To his mind, however, the strongest evidence of all is when both sets of physicians, *ad favorem* and *pro veritate*, agree on the miraculous nature of the healing episode.<sup>43</sup> He uses the jurisprudential model of consensus (*communis opinio*) as a lodestar to orient himself amid the variety of contrasting medical opinions.

Like all testimony, medical testimony should be examined critically. Lambertini derisively points out examples of medical credulity: "it is ludicrous what reported in Bartholin, centuria 3, epistula 67, of a monk who could see just fine when his beard was long, but would lose his sight whenever he shaved it."<sup>44</sup> Most important, Lambertini stresses that physicians may sometimes talk of miracles in a sense that is less rigorous than that used in canonization proceedings. He quotes, for instance, a passage from Valleriola's *Observationes*, in which the physician called "miraculous" a case that he had managed to treat successfully with certain medications. But if the same case were examined in the Sacred Congregation of Rites, Lambertini notes, it would definitely *not* be considered a miracle, because one of the requisites of a miracle of the third kind is that no medication be employed.<sup>45</sup> In other words, Lambertini stresses that the scrutiny of miracles by the Congregation is

even stricter than that by the physicians themselves. He supports this claim with his personal experience. He cites case after case in which his strictures as *Promotor Fidei* were more rigorous and stringent than those of the medical expert witnesses *pro veritate*. He reports, for instance, the case of a woman's recovery from blindness attributed to the Blessed Pierre Fourier, which the physicians Giovanni Tomasi and Francesco Soldati had considered miraculous. He himself, however, as *Promotor Fidei*, had argued that it was not a true miracle, because the woman had regained her sight in only one eye, so the requisite of complete and perfect recovery had not been satisfied.<sup>46</sup> He lists various cases in which the Congregation did not approve a miracle in spite of medical opinion in its support.<sup>47</sup>

So Lambertini is far from giving medical practitioners the last word on healing miracles. He makes it abundantly clear that in assessing miraculous evidence physicians have much to learn from the rigorous approach followed in canonization proceedings. On the other hand, it is just as clear that he considers it imperative for the members of the Sacred Congregation, especially for the *Promotor Fidei*, to be well versed in contemporary medical literature. Lambertini's medical erudition, as indicated by the amount and range of his quotations in the treatise, was extraordinary.<sup>48</sup> His text is packed full of references to a great number of medical sources. In strong contrast to Matta, from Lambertini we get a sense of the exciting complexity, innovation and richness of the medical thought of his times. Which medical authors, which medical genres did he especially read?

### Medical Casuistry

Lambertini was very proud of his medical erudition. Speaking to the Consistory cardinals in 1746 about the genesis of his work on canonization, he mentioned the vast collection of medical texts he had assembled in his library in Bologna as well as his contacts with the physicians of that university: "I had a large number of books related to physics and medicine, by ancient and modern authors, and especially by the doctors that I met in Bologna."<sup>49</sup> In fact, the catalogue of his personal library includes a large number of medical texts, on topics ranging from anatomy and surgery (clearly a strong interest of Lambertini's), mostly written by modern, and even contemporary, authors. Not only do the *recentiores* by far outnumber the *veteres* among Lambertini's medical books, but many volumes he collected were published in the early decades of the

eighteenth century and even after 1747, that is, after the publication of the first edition of his treatise on canonization, indicating that he had acquired a taste for medical novelties and was keeping an eye on new publications in this field. The range of his lively intellectual curiosity is indicated by the presence among his books of an exotic text: “a book on medical matters published in Chinese characters,” as it is described in the library’s inventory.<sup>50</sup>

Compared with that of Matta, it is indeed astonishing how much larger the corpus of medical sources is in Lambertini’s treatise. While Matta had used a textbook approach to medicine, drawing his information from introductory texts of the “medical institutions” kind, Lambertini relied instead on a new and distinctively early modern genre – the clinical and anatomical *observationes*, or case collections. This genre originated in the second half of the sixteenth century, grew rapidly over the course of the seventeenth century, and became a primary form of medical writing by the eighteenth century.<sup>51</sup> Lambertini knew this extensive literature very well. He quotes all the most important exemplars of the genre, including the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century classics such as Amatus Lusitanus’s *Centuriae Curationum*, Marcello Donati’s *De medica historia mirabili*,<sup>52</sup> and the *observationes* of Valleriola, Forestus, Schenck, Hildanus, Eugalenus, Zacutus Lusitanus, Gregor Horst, Nicolaes Tulp, Guillaume de Baillou, and Domenico Panaroli,<sup>53</sup> among others. He also cites more recent collections, such as Bernhard Verzascha’s *Centuria prima observationum medicarum* (1677) and the Dutch Stalpart van der Wiel’s *Observationum rariorum medicarum anatomicarum chirurgicarum centuria* (1687).<sup>54</sup> For anatomy, he relies especially on Théophile Bonet’s *Sepulchretum sive Anatomia practica* (1679), the most extensive collection of autopsy case reports published in the seventeenth century.<sup>55</sup> Most significant regarding his engagement with this literature is the fact that he followed up the *observationes* published in the new medical and scientific journals, such as the *Miscellanea curiosa* of the German Academia Naturae Curiosorum<sup>56</sup> and the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society, which he cites in the Italian translation by Thomas Dereham.<sup>57</sup>

How did Lambertini use this literature? He used it much in the same way in which it was used by early modern medical practitioners: as a cumulative database created by medical practice over the centuries; an observatory on the rare, the usual, the possible, and, by implication, the impossible in the realm of disease. In an age of theoretical controversy, when the old Galenic doctrine was steadily losing ground but no

consensus had yet emerged for an alternative medical paradigm, case narratives, drawn from direct experience, were perceived as the most reliable part of medical knowledge.<sup>58</sup> For Lambertini, the case literature was an essential tool, especially in view of the lack of specificity of early modern disease terminology. The same name often covered widely varying forms of an ailment. That was, for instance, the case of dropsy (*hydrops*): Lambertini cites Sydenham's *Tractatus de podagra et hydrope* (1683) on the different forms of this disease, some of them curable, some incurable. What should one do then when faced with a claim of miraculous recovery from dropsy? Lambertini turns to the "*multae historiae*" of cures from the disease, even in its chronic form, reported in the *observationes* literature.<sup>59</sup> These case narratives suggest the need for the utmost caution in accepting claims of miraculous healing from dropsy. Similarly, in the case of insanity (*mania*), Lambertini reports many instances of spontaneous healing, drawn from the *observationes* of Amatus and Hildanus, again urging scepticism about claims of miraculous recovery from this condition.<sup>60</sup>

On the contrary, in his discussion of epilepsy, for instance, Lambertini finds strong evidence in the case literature that "hereditary epilepsy" is extremely difficult to cure. He quotes Sennert's notion of a "*diathesis epileptica*" transmitted from parents to children, and a long series of case reports from various authors attesting to the quasi-incurability of the illness when it runs in families, including a story from Zacutus about an epileptic man with eight children and three grandchildren, all affected by the disease.<sup>61</sup> In this case, the *observationes* literature provided a clear rule of thumb for safely assessing miraculous evidence: healing from "hereditary epilepsy" should be considered highly improbable, and therefore miraculous in all likelihood. As a consequence, Lambertini reports, the physicians Lancisi and Sinibaldi, appointed by the Congregation of Rites to examine an asserted claim of miraculous healing from hereditary epilepsy, had indeed considered it a miracle.<sup>62</sup>

However, there was the possibility, also clearly indicated by the case literature, that hereditary epilepsy would go into remission, only to come back at some later stage. From Lambertini's viewpoint, recidivating conditions were bad candidates for miracles, because a miraculous recovery should be permanent. So, after citing Forestus and Henri de Heer on relapse in cases of "hereditary epilepsy," Lambertini reports how he proceeded, as *Promotor Fidei*, to look into the asserted healing of a nun from this disease. The canonization proceedings took place eighteen months after the event, and he took care to ascertain whether



the nun had stayed healthy in this period. Only after it was proved that she was still living and in good health, was the miracle accepted. In contrast, during the canonization of St James of the Marche, a similar case of recovery from “hereditary epilepsy” was not recognized as miraculous because the patient had meanwhile died and his continuing health could not be proved.<sup>63</sup> By referral to the case literature, Lambertini shows that the decisions of the Congregation were taken on the best available medical information, based on a vast repertory of medical experience.<sup>64</sup>

Lambertini drew on two centuries of *observationes* literature that he perceived as cumulative medical experience. As empirical evidence, sixteenth-century *observationes* were just as valid, in his eyes, as more recent ones. Nonetheless, he was fully aware of, and intensely alert to, changes of medical opinion over this period. The demise of the Galenic framework implied, among other things, that the notion of “crisis” could no longer be used as the unequivocal indicator of natural healing. Lambertini knew that recent medical authors – especially Hoffmann in his *Medicina Rationalis Systematica* (1718–34) – had vigorously challenged this ancient tenet of Galenism. Moving from an iatromechanical perspective, Hoffmann had argued that some symptoms (e.g., bleeding and sweating), once understood as salutary crises, could turn out, in fact, to be negative, pathological signs. Lambertini noted that previous authors writing on canonization had dealt “in a simplistic and inadequate way (*jejuné*)” with this issue.<sup>65</sup> Following Hoffmann, he recommended caution in distinguishing between “evacuations” that are truly “critical,” that is to say, positive and therapeutic, and “evacuations” that are “morbid” – all the more reason to insist on the careful scrutiny of the case literature rather than relying on simplistic general rules.

Lambertini was also aware of changing definitions of disease. His appreciation of anatomy, for instance, was directly related to his belief that anatomical research was contributing to a better understanding of the causes and nature of illness. In the case of hysteria, for instance, after quoting (from the *observationes* of Schenck, Forestus, and Rodrigo de Castro) the traditional view of this ailment as “*uteri suffocatio*,” he noted that “physicians nowadays no longer attribute this condition to the uterus, but rather to a vice of the digestive juices,” in consequence of the fact that the anatomist Willis found no problems in the uterus of women affected by this condition.<sup>66</sup> Lambertini was also keenly interested in forms of treatment that opened up new therapeutic possibilities. He reports, for instance, the use of paracentesis

(draining of fluids) in the cure of “empyema” (dropsy of the lungs) practised by the surgeon Vittorio Masini in the Hospital of San Giacomo degli Incurabili in Rome, as described to him by the Roman physician Alessandro Pascoli.<sup>67</sup>

The *observationes* literature plays a very important role in Lambertini's treatise, and he was clearly very familiar with it. It is debatable, however, whether his familiarity was entirely first-hand or derivative. It is quite possible indeed that Lambertini may have quoted some of this literature second-hand, from the physicians' reports that he read as *Promotor Fidei*. We could learn much in this respect by comparing the references in Lambertini's treatise with the physicians' reports in the records of the Congregation of Rites, for the period when he was *Promotor Fidei*.<sup>68</sup> As a matter of fact, however, second-hand quoting was common practice among early modern medical scholars. In the *observationes* literature, each case was usually inserted in a web of references to previous cases observed by other authors, in keeping with the genre's ideal of collective observation.

What cannot be doubted is that Lambertini was completely at home in this literature. And no wonder: casuistry was a very congenial medium for him because of his legal training, first of all, but also because of his interest in moral casuistry (the science of moral situations). While he was archbishop of Bologna, he had a long series of “cases of conscience” published yearly for the use of the local clergy in their activities as spiritual advisors and confessors.<sup>69</sup> In the early modern period, the detailed description of cases grew exponentially in various disciplines – jurisprudence, moral theology, and medicine. The rise of the medical *observationes*, as a genre specifically devoted to case narratives, is part of this wider trend, and Lambertini's treatise should also be understood in this context. His use of medical case literature is one more example showing that “thinking in cases” deeply affected the “style of reasoning” of early modern scholarly culture.<sup>70</sup>

### The Inner Circle

The *observationes* literature represented a Europe-wide *res publica medica*, a community held together by the collective endeavour of sharing observational knowledge beyond national, philosophical, and religious divisions.<sup>71</sup> The authors of the *observationes* belonged variously in the Catholic or the Protestant camp, but they apparently quoted each other irrespective of religious affiliation. Lambertini seems perfectly at ease

with that attitude: he mentions cases from Jewish physicians such as Amatus and Zacutus Lusitanus or from Protestants such as Sennert and Sydenham. Such a liberal stance is not surprising in the pope who corresponded with Voltaire and cited, in his canonization treatise, "*hodierni scriptores heterodoxii*" such as Daniel Leclerc and the Cambridge Platonist Ralph Cudworth, whose *True Intellectual System of the Universe* (1678) he admits to having read with admiration.<sup>72</sup>

Yet there are evident limits to Lambertini's acceptance of a *res publica medica* transcending confessional boundaries. Much as he seems to be open, in his medical readings, to the contributions of scholars from all creeds, the medical community with which he truly connected was much narrower and was exclusively restricted to Catholics. The most often mentioned medical opinions in his treatise are those of a small group of physicians who were in close contact with the Roman Curia and because of this contact were appointed as expert witnesses *pro veritate* in the canonization proceedings for which he was *Promotor Fidei*. Undoubtedly, Lambertini's contact with this circle of Roman medical men was the factor that most deeply shaped his attitude to medical knowledge and medical evidence. Foremost among these influences is the papal archiater Giovanni Maria Lancisi (1654–1720), perhaps the most often quoted medical authority in the treatise – "*saepe memoratus*," as Lambertini calls him.<sup>73</sup> Lancisi was an innovator, with leanings towards mechanical philosophy and corpuscularism. Appointed to the chair of anatomy and surgery at the Sapienza at a very young age in 1684, he combined an international reputation and the membership in the Royal Society with a most successful practice as personal physician of three popes – and this in spite of incurring the censorship of the Inquisition on charges of Epicureanism and atomism.<sup>74</sup>

Before his death in 1720, Lancisi was involved as expert witness *pro veritate* in many of the canonization proceedings for which Lambertini was *Promotor Fidei*.<sup>75</sup> In one of the autobiographical comments scattered in the treatise, Lambertini writes that he "cultivated Lancisi's friendship" and that he was involved, in his capacity as lawyer, in the writing of Lancisi's testament.<sup>76</sup> Lambertini invariably quotes Lancisi's opinion as carrying great weight. Referring to the canonization proceedings of St John Francis Regis, for instance, he states: "Of the several things asserted [on the miracles], those that Lancisi believed should be acknowledged as miracles were so acknowledged; those that he argued should be rejected, were rejected."<sup>77</sup> He also reports how very often, as

*Promotor Fidei*, he found himself in agreement with Lancisi's views.<sup>78</sup> The relationship between the two seems to have been deeper than warranted by the formal contact between *Promotor Fidei* and expert witness for the Congregation of Rites. Occasionally, Lancisi wrote confidential letters to Lambertini, sharing with him some doubts about the asserted miracles, which he was not willing to express openly in his written report.<sup>79</sup> One gets the impression that Lambertini, the younger of the two, grew up under Lancisi's tutelage in medical matters. Their intellectual exchange should be further studied in the context of the early eighteenth-century Roman milieu that Maria Pia Donato has recently, and most interestingly, explored.<sup>80</sup>

Besides Lancisi, several other Roman physicians of the turn of the century are often quoted in Lambertini's treatise. They include Giacomo Sinibaldi (d. 1700), first reader of botany, then professor of theoretical and practical medicine at the Sapienza, and interested, like Lancisi, in chemical corpuscularism;<sup>81</sup> the anatomist Paolo Manfredi (1640–1715); Alessandro Pascoli (1669–1757);<sup>82</sup> Giovanni Tomasi, who was Lambertini's personal physician when he lived in Rome before becoming archbishop of Bologna; Luca Tozzi, commentator of Hippocratic texts, whom Lambertini declares he knew personally when Tozzi was archiater of Innocent XII.<sup>83</sup> Beyond this Roman medical circle, Lambertini also acknowledges his contacts with Bolognese physicians. He mentions especially Giuseppe Pozzi, a member of the Istituto delle Scienze, "to whom I confess I owe much, since I drew many things to illustrate this subject matter of miracles from familiar conversations with him." When he became pope, Lambertini appointed Pozzi as his "medico segreto onorario" (honorary archiater).<sup>84</sup>

The physicians most often mentioned in Lambertini's treatise have one feature in common: all are papal archiaters. That is the case for Lancisi, Sinibaldi, Tozzi, Tommasi, and Pascoli.<sup>85</sup> In 1743, Lambertini drew up a list of medical practitioners appointed by the Sacred Congregation as expert witnesses *pro veritate*: all were lecturers from the Roman University of La Sapienza and members of the Roman Medical College.<sup>86</sup> Though the virtual medical community evoked by Lambertini's massive erudition was pan-European, it is nevertheless a fact that, in practice, the *real* medical community involved in canonization proceedings was – in his time and is still today – rigidly restricted to Catholic physicians and, indeed, to those belonging to the inner circle of the papal court.<sup>87</sup>

## APPENDIX:

**Medical Books in Lambertini's Personal Library**

This text reproduces the list in BUB Ms. 425 tt. I–IV, *Catalogus Bibliothecae Domesticae Ssmi Domini Nostri Benedicti XIV*, 1750: t. II, cc. 559–67. I have kept the original grouping and order of the books, but I have given the vernacular name of authors, instead of the Latin form in the manuscript, for the purpose of easier identification. I have also omitted the size of the volumes, which was not consistently indicated.

*I. Medici veteres et recentiores*

Hippocratis Coi et Claudij Galeni Archiatrov. *Opera G[raece] L[atine]* cum notis Renati Charterij. 13 vols. Paris, 1679.

C. Galeni Pergameni. *Opera Graece*. 5 vols. Basel, 1538.

Hippocratis Coi. *Opera Graece*. Venice, 1526.

Domenico Guglielmini. *Comment. in primam Aphorismorum Hippocratis Sectionem*. Bologna, 1748.

Aetij Amideni. *Lib. Medicinalium Graece*. Venice, 1534.

Aeginetae Pauli. *Opera medica Graece*. Venice, 1528.

Aurelij Cornelij Celsi. *de Medicina lib. VIII cura et studio Th. J. ab Almeloveen*. Padua, 1722.

Pietro Angelo Rotondi. *De' Principi della Natura messi in luce, e dimostrati*. Rome, 1752.

Gaspar a Rejes. *Elysium jucundarum quaestionum*. Brussels, 1661.

Giovanni Maria Lancisi. *De Romani coeli qualitibus. Accedit Historia Epidemiae Rheumaticae, quae per Hyemem anni 1709 vagata est*. Rome, 1711.

– *De noxijs Paludum effluvijs*. Rome, 1717.

– *Opera Omnia*. Rome, 1745.

Giovanni Battista Mazini. *Opera Omnia*. Brescia, 1745.

Matteo Giorgi. *Opera*. Genoa, 1722.

Damianus Sinopei. *Parerga Medica*. Typ. Academiae Scientiarum Petropolitanae, 1734.

*Europa medicina a sapientibus illustrata, et a Comite Francisco Roncalli observationibus adaucta*. Brescia, 1747.

Francesco Roncalli. *Historiae Morborum observationibus auctae*. Brescia, 1741.

Domenico Gagliardi. *L'idea del vero medico*. Rome, 1718.

– *L'infermo istruito*. Rome, 1720.

Paolo Zacchia. *Quaestiones Medico-Legales*. Avignon, 1655.

Ottavio Nerucci. *Lettere medico-fisiche*. Lucca 1748.

- Stefano Danielli. *Raccolta di Quistioni mediche*. Bologna, 1723.  
 Giuseppe Gazola. *Il mondo ingannato da falsi medici*. Trento, 1718.  
 Gaetano Armillei. *Consulti medici*. Venice, 1743.  
*Dissertazione, nella quale provasi non esser valevole la Fisica Medicina a prolungare la Vita umana*, recitata da Agostino Forno nell'Accademia Palermitana del Buon Gusto. Palermo, 1754.  
*Liber de re medica caracteribus sinicis editus*. In quarto.  
 James. *Dictionnaire Universel de Medecine ... 6 vols*. Paris, 1746–.

**II. De Humani Corporis habitudine, seu Natura; nec non de Alimentis, de Vitae Regimine, de tuenda, et conservanda valetudine, et de morbis Tractatus singulares**

- Alessandro Pascoli. *De Homine*. Rome, 1728.  
*Risposte sulla natura di varie infermità, e la maniera di ben curarle*. Rome, 1736.  
*Delle Febbri, Teorica, e Pratica*. Perugia, 1699.  
 Paolo Zacchia. *De mali ipocondriaci*. Venice, 1665.  
 Pietro Angelo Rotondi. *De Victus ratione in morbis acutis, seu de Febre acuta continuata*. Rome, 1739.  
 Giovanni Battista Selvatico. *De ijs, qui morbum simulant deprehendis*. Milan, 1595.  
 Gio. Girolamo Lapi. *Ragionamento contro la volgare Opinione di non potere venire a Roma nella State*. Rome, 1749.  
 Paolo Valcarengli. *De saxis, acubus, ferreis, vitreisque frustis per vomitum, et per inferiores partes ejectis, tum de miris morbosis affectionibus Cremonensis cujusdam Virginis*. Cremona, 1746.  
*Parere sopra la cagione della morte della Contessa Cornelia Zangari ne' Bandi*. Rome, 1743.  
 Cesare Marescotti. *De variolis*. Bologna, 1723.  
*Memoire sur l'inoculation de la petite Verole*, par Mr. de la Condamine, Avignon, 1755 e volgarizzata. Lucca, 1755.  
 Gerard van Swieten. *Commentaria in Hermanni Boerhaave Aphorismos de cognoscendis, et curandis morbis*. Hildburghausen and Meiningen, 1747.  
*Il Tesoro della Sanità di Castor Durante da Gualdo*. Venice, 1611.  
 Giovanni Bianchi. *Se il Vitto Pittagorico di soli Vegetabili sia giovevole per conservare la Sanità, e per la Cura di alcune Malattie*. Venice, 1752.  
*Osservazioni intorno all'abuso del caffè, ed alle virtù d'un nuovo Tè Veneziano*. Venice, 1755.

**De Peste et Epidemia Tractatus Singulares**

- Girolamo G. Gastaldi. *De Avertenda, et profliganda Peste*. Bologna, 1684.  
*Il medico per tutti in tempo di Peste, o sia raccolta di validissimi rimedi*. Rome, 1743.

- Lodovico [Antonio] Muratori. *Del Governo della Peste*. Modena, 1714.  
Claudio Fromont. *Risposta apologetica sopra il Commercio Degli Ogli navigati procedenti da Luoghi appestati*. Lucca, 1745.  
Giovanni Maria Lancisi. *De Bovilla Peste*. Rome, 1715.  
– *Epidemiae Rheumaticae*. Rome, 1711.

### III. *Anatomici et Chirurgici*

- Antonio Pacchioni. *Opera*. Rome, 1741.  
– *De dura Meninge humana*. Rome, 1721.  
Domenico Gagliardi. *Anatome ossium*. Rome, 1689.  
Giovanni Giacinto Vogli. *Fluidi nervei historia*. Bologna, 1720.  
Robert Boyle. *Historia sanguinis humani*. Geneva, 1685.  
Josia Witbrecht. *Syndesmologia, sive historia ligamentorum corporis humani*. Petropoli, 1742.  
Giovanni Girolamo Sbaraglia. *Oculorum, et Mentis Vigiliae ad distinguendum studium anatomicum*. Bologna, 1704.  
Alamanno Laurenzi [but Giovanni Giuseppe Orsi]. *De moralibus criticae regulis monita, quibus exiguntur controversiae inter Malpighium, et d. Sbaragli [sic!]*. Cologne, 1706.  
*Responsio Francisci Simonij, et Petri Aegidij Olandi ad Epist. Horatii de Florianis adversus d. Jo. Hjer. Sbaragli Tractatum*. Bologna, 1718.  
Giovanni Giacinto Vogli. *De Anthropogonia, in qua de Viviparum genesi ...* Bologna, 1718.  
Giovanni Battista Morgagni. *Adversaria Anatomica Omnia*. Padua, 1719.  
Paolo Andrea Parenti. *Trattato de' Medicamenti spettanti alla Chirurgia*. Bologna, 1755.  
Govard Bidloo. *Anatomia Corporis Humani CV Tabulis Aeneis Illustrata*. Amsterdam, 1685.  
Giovanni Maria Lancisi. *De motu cordis, et Aneurismatibus*. Rome, 1728. Et Editio 2a ab Antonio Leprotti aucta. Rome, 1743.  
Pietro Paolo Molinelli. *De aneurismate, et laesa brachij in mittendo sanguine Arteria*. Bologna, 1745.  
Carlo Guattani. *Historiae duae Aneurismatum*. Rome, 1745.  
Giuseppe Ferdinando Guglielmini. *De recto morbosorum Cadavero judicio. Praelectio ad Anatomen*. n.d.  
– *De Claris Bononiae Anatomicis, Oratio*. Bologna, n.d.  
Luigi Stampini. *Descrizione di un Feto umano*. Rome, 1739.  
*La Peyronie, Memoires de l'Academie Royale de Chirurgie*. Paris 1743.  
*Prix de l'academie Royale de Chirurgie depuis l'année 1732 ...* Paris, 1753.

*Traité de la structure du Coeur, de son Action, et de ses Maladies par Mr. Senac.*  
Paris, 1749.

**IV. Pharmaceutici, Chimici, Alchymistae, seu Philosophi Hermetici,  
Distillatorij et Spargyrici [sic]**

*Antidotarium Bononiense a Collegio Medicorum novissime restitutum.* [Bologna], 1750.

*Modo di fare la Pietra Filosofica, ed altre ricette.* Manoscritto in octavo.

*Il Conte di Gabali, o ragionamenti sulle scienze secrete, cavati dal libro La Chiave  
del Gabinetto del Cav. Borri dall' Abb ... di Montfaucon di Villars.* London, 1751  
[addition in the left margin: "Rothelin. Biblioth. 1696"].

**Miscellanea**

Angiolo Calogera. *Raccolta di Opuscoli Scientifici e Filologici.* Venice, 1728.

**NOTES**

- 1 I have used the edition of *De servorum Dei beatificatione et sanctorum canonizatione* [henceforth DS] in Lambertini's *Opera Omnia* (Prato, 1839–47), of which the treatise occupies the first seven volumes. This edition reproduces the text of the third edition (Rome, 1747–51). See Criscuolo, "Presentazione," 61.
- 2 See Ziegler, "Practitioners and Saints." For the significance of healing miracles among the prodigies examined in canonization proceedings, see Delooz, *Les miracles*, and Duffin, *Medical Miracles*.
- 3 Antonelli, *De inquisitione medico-legali super miraculis in causis beatificationis et canonizationis*, 28.
- 4 On the growing role of medical witnesses in the early modern period, see *ibid.*, 30–86. See also Gentilcore, "Contesting Illness in Early Modern Naples"; Seitz, *Witchcraft and Inquisition in Early Modern Venice*, 149–68.
- 5 Parigi, *The Rationalization of Miracles*; see also Daston, "Marvelous Facts and Miraculous Evidence"; Boesch Gajano and Modica, *Miracoli*.
- 6 Harrison, *The Bible*. Physico-theology, or natural theology, is the demonstration of God's existence and attributes based on arguments drawn from natural knowledge. Most studies on physico-theology deal with Protestant authors: see, for instance, on Britain, Brooke, *Science and Religion*. On the German case, see Stebbins, *Maxima in minimis*. Comparable studies on Catholic physico-theology are more rare: see especially Vidal, "Extraordinary Bodies and the Physicotheological Imagination," which examines both Protestant and Catholic sources.



- 7 On canonization proceedings as an “epistemic process,” see Vidal, “Miracles, Science and Testimony.”
- 8 The role of *Promotor Fidei* was originally combined with that of *Procurator Fiscalis*: see Moroni, *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica*, 55: 292–5: s.v. “promotore della fede.” See also Gotor, “La fabbrica dei santi,” *I beati del papa*, 285–334, and “I decreti di Urbano VIII.” See also Parigi, *The Rationalization*, 107–25. On the reform of canonization proceedings, see Dalla Torre, “Santità ed economia processuale.”
- 9 *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*, Vol. 7 (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticani, 1935), n5626. Cf. Antonelli, *De inquisitione*, 74–6.
- 10 The text of the decree is partly quoted in DS, lib. I, cap. 19, n. 17, 123–4.
- 11 Antonelli, *De inquisitione*, 57–65; DS, lib. I, cap. 19, n. 17, 124. As an early example of reliance on medical testimony, Lambertini quotes a text on the canonization proceedings of Carlo Borromeo: Marc’ Aurelio Grattarola, *Successi maravigliosi della venerazione di S. Carlo Cardinale di S. Prassede*, 173. Zacchia and Vittori were consulted in the canonization proceedings of Filippo Neri, Lorenzo Giustiniani, Gregory X, and Felice da Cantalice: see Zacchia, *Quaestiones medico-legales*, liber 9, consilia I–VIII, 675–80 (Giustiniani); consilia IX–X, 725–6, 728–9 (Gregory X); consilia XXX, XXXII, XLV (Felice). See also Vittori, *Medicae Consultationes*. On Zacchia, see Pastore and Rossi, *Paolo Zacchia*; Duffin, “Questioning Medicine in Seventeenth-Century Rome.” On Vittori’s report on Neri’s miracles, see Siraisi, “La comunicazione del sapere anatomico ai confini tra diritto e agiografia”; Andretta, “Anatomie du Vénérable dans la Rome de la Contre-réforme.”
- 12 DS, vol. I: lib. I, cap. 46: 2, n. 15, 341–2. Lambertini notes that it would be better to establish the compensation by law, in order to avoid “jurgia et querimoniae.”
- 13 *Nuova Tassa*, 17–18. This text also prohibited the giving of gifts, such as relics or effigies of the saint in the making, to the physicians employed in the canonization proceedings.
- 14 The publication of these canonization records was decreed on 19 July 1661. See DS, vol. I: lib. I, cap. 19, n. 17, 124.
- 15 Antonelli, *De inquisitione*, 78; “Catharinae de Bononia. Puncta historica in causa beatificationis et canonizationis”; Pomata, “Malpighi and the Holy Body.”
- 16 Caprara was officially involved in St Catherine of Bologna’s case as the author of the “Responso Juris” for the postulators. See Pomata, “Malpighi and the Holy Body,” 574n37.

- 17 At first, he was the coadjutor of Prospero Bottini, with right of succeeding him in the office of *Promotor Fidei*. Bottini died in 1712, but de facto Lambertini held the office well before this date because of Bottini's health problems. See Criscuolo, "Presentazione," 12–13. For biographical information on Lambertini see Fattori, "Cronologia della vita e delle opere di Prospero Lambertini," supplemented by Criscuolo, "Presentazione," 9–16 (with new archival material). The role of *Promotor Fidei* had been combined with that of fiscal advocate (see n8 above). Clement XI separated the two offices in 1708. So Lambertini was the first to hold the office in the new form (Moroni, *Dizionario*, 55: 292–3; Criscuolo, "Presentazione," 17). With the Constitution *Inter cospicuos* of 1744, Benedict XIV made the separation of the two roles final (Moroni, *Dizionario*, 55: 293). According to Lambertini, the first case in which the *Promotor Fidei* played a role was the early sixteenth-century proceedings for the beatification of Lorenzo Giustiniani (DS, lib. I, cap. 18, cited in *ibid.*).
- 18 Biblioteca Universitaria, Bologna (henceforth: BUB) Ms. 260, tt. I–II: on this manuscript, see Saccenti, "La lunga genesi dell'opera sulle canonizzazioni," 13–17, and especially "Descrizione dei manoscritti del *De Servorum Dei beatificatione et Beatorum canonizatione*," 217–22. In this first draft of the treatise (1721), there is no section on healing miracles or medical matters (except for a brief section on f. 413v: Caput XXXV, "De advocatis et Phisicis qui in causis Beatificationis et canonizationis scribunt").
- 19 Frutaz, "Le principali edizioni e sinossi del *De Servorum Dei beatificatione et Beatorum canonizatione* di Benedetto XIV" 1: 27–90. Ms. 969 of the Biblioteca antica del Seminario di Padova contains the revisions to the second edition (Padua, 1743). See Saccenti, "La lunga genesi," 24 (see also 26, on the revisions of indexes, and the inclusion of reviews).
- 20 Numbers based on archival documentation listed in Criscuolo, "Presentazione," 20–48. Lambertini's *animadversiones* were published in the *Positiones* relative to each case. For a list of these printed *Positiones*, see Schamoni, *Inventarium processuum beatificationis et canonizationis*. As pope, Lambertini made six beati and five saints (see Criscuolo, "Presentazione," 58n364 for the names of these beati and saints).
- 21 Dacome, "The Anatomy of the Pope"; Messbarger, "The Pope's Anatomy Museum," in Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*, 20–51, and her chapter in this volume.
- 22 On Lambertini's medical culture, the only contributions I know are Gorce, "L'oeuvre médicale de Prospero Lambertini," and Maragi, "Psichiatria e guarigioni miracolose nel trattato di Prospero Lambertini." In the few pages devoted to Lambertini in her book, *Medical Miracles*, Jacalyn Duffin does not examine his medical knowledge and sources. But see now the

important and detailed contribution by Fernando Vidal in his chapter in this volume.

- 23 Hardon, "The Concept of Miracle."
- 24 Zacchia, *Quaestiones Medico-Legales* (1651 ed.), 199.
- 25 Zacchia, *Quaestiones Medico-Legales* (1662 ed.), lib. 4, tit. 1, quaestio 8, 13: "Crises, praesertim quae per insignes evacuationes fiunt, maxime ostendunt, sanationem Naturae vi successam."
- 26 Carlo Felice de Matta, *Novissimus de sanctorum canonizatione tractatus* (Rome, 1678), pars III, cap. XVIII, sect. 1: De humani corporis partibus," 206–38.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 203–67.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 208.
- 29 Lemos, *Zacuto Lusitano*. Friedenwald, *The Jews and Medicine* 1: 309–21. On Zacutus's work as part of the tradition of "aggregatores," who synthesized and reconciled various medical opinions, see Jarcho, "The Style of Zacutus Lusitanus."
- 30 In the opening peroration of the first volume of his *opera omnia*, Zacutus "fully acknowledges his Jewish identity" and relates his work to a proud Jewish medical tradition: see Ruderman, *Jewish Thought and Scientific Discovery*, 308. See also Ian Mclean, "Lusitani periti."
- 31 Matta, *Novissimus*, 208–38. Zacutus's text first came out in 1629, so it could hardly include an account of the circulation, as Harvey's *De motu cordis* had been published only in the previous year (1628).
- 32 It was reprinted in 1620, 1628, 1631, 1633, 1637, 1646, 1667: see Brentini, *Die Institutiones medicinae des Daniel Sennert*. On Sennert's alchemical interests, see Newman, *Atoms and Alchemy*, 91–2. On his Lutheran allegiance, see Stolberg, "Particles of the Soul."
- 33 Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, pt 4, 204–5.
- 34 King, "Precursors of Boerhaave's *Institutiones medicae*," 61–3.
- 35 Rivière, *Observationes medicae et curationes insignes*.
- 36 Matta, *Novissimus*, 203.
- 37 He cites some cases from Zacutus and (once) the important collection of Johannes Schenck von Grafenberg, *Observationes medicae, rariae, novae, admirabiles et monstrosae* (1584–97).
- 38 DS, lib. IV, cap. 8–19.
- 39 Lambertini was fully part of his times' culture of observation. He sometimes reports his own first-hand medical observations, such as, for instance, some cases of rabies transmitted from animals to humans he came across in the Hospital of S. Maria della Morte in Bologna (DS, vol. IV, 148). On the early modern culture of observation, see Pomata, "Observation Rising"; Daston, "The Empire of Observation."

- 40 DS, vol. IV: lib. IV, pars I, cap. 8, 89.
- 41 DS, vol. III: lib. III, cap. 7, n. 9, 61.
- 42 DS, vol. III: lib. III, cap. 7, n. 8, 60.
- 43 For example, see vol. IV, 133–4.
- 44 DS, vol. IV, 112: “Risum movet Bartholino, cent. 3 epist. 67 casus Monachi, qui, barba promissa, acute videbat, barba rasa, caecus fiebat.” The reference is to the famous anatomist Thomas Bartholin’s *Epistolae medicinales* (1663–7).
- 45 DS, vol. IV, 136, citing Vallerioli, *Observationes medicinales*, lib. 4, obs. 4. On Vallerioli, see Nance, “Wondrous Experience as Text.”
- 46 DS, vol. IV, 113. Similarly, in the case of miraculous healing of several children incapable of walking, attributed to St Peregrine Laziosi, Lambertini had argued against the miracle on account of the “plasticity” of nature, especially in children. The physician Alessandro Pascoli, writing *ad favorem*, had disagreed. The miracle was not approved (*ibid.*, 126). See also the case reported in Vidal, “Miracles, Science and Testimony,” 494.
- 47 He also mentions, however, cases in which his objections to the miracle were overruled by the medical opinion, and the miracle was approved by the Congregation (example: healing from empyema in the canonization of Giacinta Mariscotti: the physician Lancisi approved the miracle and so did the Congregation in 1726: DS, vol. IV, 154–5). Cf. other cases: 106, canonization of St John of the Cross; 122, canonization of St Vincent de Paul.
- 48 See the Index of references (*Nomina auctorum*) in vol. V of DS, which includes many medical authors. In the list of authorities in vol. I, CLXI–CLXXII, in contrast, the only physician mentioned is Zacchia. Here, however, Lambertini lists among his sources the reports of physicians, next to the reports of the Rota Auditors and the *animadversiones* of the Promoters of the Faith (CLXVII–CLXVIII).
- 49 Cited in Saccenti, “Lunga genesi,” 4. In 1754, Lambertini donated his books and manuscripts to the library of the Bolognese Istituto delle Scienze (now BUB) except for the manuscripts relating to the Holy Office and the Segreteria di Stato (Fattori, *Introduzione*, xxxviii). See also Di Carlo, *Il libro in Benedetto XIV*. For the inventory of Lambertini’s personal library, see BUB, Ms. 425, tt. I–IV, *Catalogus Bibliothecae Domesticae Ssmi Domini Nostri Benedicti XIV, 1750*: t. II, cc. 559–67 for the list of medical and pharmaceutical texts. This list is published in the appendix to this chapter. For the inventory of Lambertini’s manuscripts, see BUB, Ms. 428: *Catalogus Codicum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Benedicti XIV*; Fattori, *Introduzione*, xxxix.
- 50 BUB, Ms. 425, t. II, c. 559: “Liber de re medica caracteribus sinicis editus.”
- 51 For a description of this new medical genre, see Pomata, “Sharing Cases.”

- 52 For example, DS, lib. IV, pars 1, cap. 8, 110, where he quotes the case (curatio 44) from Amatus's Centuria VII (cf. Amatus Lusitanus, *Curatium medicinalium centuriae septem*, Florence, Venice, Lyon, Paris, 1551–66); and 112, where he quotes the *historia* from chapter 11, book 2 of Donati, *De medica historia mirabili libri*.
- 53 Cf. Valleriolo, *Observationum medicinalium libri sex*; Foreest, *Observationum et curationum medicinalium*; Johannes Schenck von Grafenberg, *Observationes medicae, raras, novae, admirabiles et monstrosae*; Wilhelm Fabry von Hilden (Fabricius Hildanus), *Observationum et curationum chirurgicarum centuriae*; Eugalenus, *De scorbuto morbo liber*; Horst, *Observationum medicinalium singularium libri quatuor priores*; Tulp, *Observationes medicarum libri tres*; Baillou, *Epidemiorum et ephemeridum libri duo*; Panaroli, *Iatrogismi sive medicae Observationes*, expanded as *Iatrogismorum seu medicinalium observationum pentecostae quinque*.
- 54 Verzascha was town physician in Basel; Van der Wiel was town physician at The Hague. See Endtz, Mensonides, and van Hasselt, *De Hage-Professoren*, 27–37. See also van der Graaf and Nicolai, “Bell’s Palsy before Bell.”
- 55 Bonet’s *Sepulchretum* included about 3,000 autopsies performed by himself and others. See Schutta and Howe, “Seventeenth-century Concepts of ‘Apoplexy.’”
- 56 See, for instance DS, lib. IV, 120–1.
- 57 DS, lib. IV, 121, citing *Saggio delle transazioni filosofiche della Società Regia*, 129.
- 58 On this trend, see Pomata, “Sharing Cases,” and “Observation Rising.”
- 59 DS, lib. IV, 153: “Multae referuntur historiae curationum hydropis, etiam inveterati.” He quotes cases from Donati and Schenck.
- 60 DS lib. IV, 146, citing a case from Amatus (Cent. 2, obs. 57: a child was insane for twenty-five days, then recovered in five days); and from Hildanus (Cent. 3, obs. 13: a boy healed after fifteen days of insanity by application of bloodletting, purgation and scarification).
- 61 DS lib. IV, 140: he quotes Bernard de Gordon’s opinion: “si parentes epileptici deinde genitus incurritur epilepsiam, talis non videtur curabilis”; he also cites cases from Donati, Rivière, Zacutus, and Nicolas Le Pois, *De cognoscendis et curandis praecipue internis humani corporis morbis*, Frankfurt, 1580.
- 62 DS, lib. IV, 140–1.
- 63 DS, lib. IV, 141–2: the nun’s miracle was approved in 1722, eleven years after the event. He cites observations from Foreest, *Observationum et curationum medicinalium*, and Heer, *Observationes medicae oppido raras*. The notion that

- temporary healings should not to be considered miraculous was also noted by Lambertini in his manuscript "Notae de miraculis"; see Alessandrini, "Creder tutto...creder nulla," xc.
- 64 DS, lib. IV, 138. He also mentions anatomical research on the causes of epilepsy, namely, that "in the heads of people affected with it, inside and around the substance of the brain, one can find a serum that is sometimes fetid and putrid, sometimes acrid and thin," referring to Willis, *Pathologiae cerebri, et nervosi generis specimen*.
- 65 DS, lib. IV, 167–68. "Scribentes de Canonizatione Sanctorum nimis jejune se expediunt a materia, de qua nunc agitur" (168). On Hoffmann's views on this issue, see Neuburger, *The Doctrine of the Healing Power of Nature*, 60.
- 66 DS, lib. IV, 143.
- 67 DS, lib. IV, 154.
- 68 This research is especially possible in the case of Lancisi, whose manuscripts at the Biblioteca Lancisiana in Rome include his "vota" (opinions) on cases of asserted miracles in canonization proceedings (see n79 below). Unfortunately, the Biblioteca Lancisiana was not accessible in the period when I was researching this essay, so I have not been able to consult these manuscripts.
- 69 *Casus conscientiae Bononiensis diocoesis presbyteris de mandato sanctissimi domini nostri papae Benedicti 14 ... ad discutiendum propositi pro anno 1734*. Similar collections were published also for the years 1743, 1744, 1745, 1750, and 1753 and later collected in one volume: the Venice edition of 1783, in two volumes, included cases from 1732 to 1780. On early modern casuistry, see Turrini, *La coscienza e le leggi: morale e diritto nei testi per la confessione della prima età moderna*; Leites, *Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe*.
- 70 On "thinking in cases" as a style of reasoning, see Forrester, "If *p*, Then What?"
- 71 See Pomata, "Sharing Cases," and "Observation Rising."
- 72 DS, lib. IV, 112, where he cites, besides Cudworth, Daniel Leclerc's history of medicine.
- 73 DS, lib. IV, 155.
- 74 Lambertini quotes Crescimbeni, *Vita di monsignor Gio. Maria Lancisi* (1721). Born in Rome in 1654, Lancisi studied in the Jesuit Roman College and then in the Sapienza under Paolo Manfredi, Giacomo Sinibaldi, and Lucantonio Porzio. He attended the anatomies of the surgeon Guglielmo Riva, and practised at the Hospital of Santo Spirito. On Lancisi's biography, see De Angelis, *Giovanni Maria Lancisi*, 11–101; Donato, *Morti improvise*, 56–60.
- 75 Lancisi was involved in the following beatification and canonization proceedings: Pope Pius V (canonized 1714); the Jesuit Stanislaus Kostka (canonized 1726); John de Prado 1712 (beatified 1728); Giacinta Mariscotti

- (beatified 1726); Felix of Cantalice (beatified 1712); Turibio Alfonso de Mogrovejo, archbishop of Lima (canonized 1726); Pierre Fourier (beatified 1730); James of the Marche (canonized 1726); Francis Solanus (canonized 1726); the Jesuit John Francis Regis (beatified 1719; canonized 1737).
- 76 DS, lib. IV, 88. He specifies that he wrote Lancisi's testament at the time when he was Praesul of the Roman Aula. Lancisi's will was published by De Angelis, *Giovanni Maria Lancisi*, 83–92.
- 77 DS, lib. IV, 89.
- 78 DS, lib. IV, 90, 99, 133–34.
- 79 DS, lib. IV, 113: "Lancisi [...] aliqua silentio praeteriit ... quod tacita reprobavit, uti mihi per familiarem epistolam significavit" (case of St Pierre Fourier). Comparing Lambertini's text with Lancisi's *vota* in the canonization proceedings in which he was appointed as expert witness *pro veritate* would tell us much on the direct influence that Lancisi exerted on Lambertini. See Biblioteca Lancisiana, Rome: Fondo Lancisi, Mss. 303 and 307. Ms. 303, "*Vota sanctorum pro veritate*," includes a subject index, referring to the miracles by disease, in the following order: "de morbis capitis, de morbis oculorum, de morbis linguae, de morbis thoracis, de morbis abdominis, de morbis mulierum, de febribus, de morbis artuum, de morbis chirurgicis, de mortuorum resurrectione," etc. (cc. 90r–95v); see also c. 77r–v, a further "*Index Positionum supra miraculorum scrutinio et vota*." Ms. 307 contains Lancisi's opinions on healing miracles, together with the opinions of other physicians, Angelo Papi, Emanuele Lopez, Giovanni Battista Lucini, Antonio Pacchioni. Papi (fl. 1706) was the author of *Sacra authorum recentiorum critica in philosophia, chimia & medicina*.
- 80 Donato, *Morti improvise*.
- 81 On Sinibaldi, see *ibid.*, 178n23.
- 82 On Manfredi see the entry by Maria Pia Donato in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* at [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/paolo-manfredi\\_\(Dizionario\\_Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/paolo-manfredi_(Dizionario_Biografico)/). On Pascoli, see Guerrini, *Il grande affare della sapienza umana*. See also Pascoli, *Opere scelte*.
- 83 DS, lib. IV, 113 (on Tomasi as his personal physician); 139 (on Tozzi).
- 84 Marini, *Degli architri pontifici*, xlviii. Of the Bolognese medical figures, Lambertini mentions also the surgeon Pietro Paolo Molinelli and the anatomist Antonio Maria Valsalva. He quotes a personal letter from Molinelli of 1732 on the anatomy of the eye (lib. IV, 114); and he cites Valsalva's work on the anatomy of the ear, *De aure humana* (lib. IV, 120).
- 85 Cf. Marini, *Degli architri pontifici*.
- 86 Congregatio Sacrorum Rituuum, *Nota de' medici, e chirurghi destinati da ... Benedetto XIV nella congregazione de' sagri*. It would be useful to compare

this list with that of the physicians appointed as expert witnesses *pro veritate* before Lambertini's times.

- 87 On the present-day Consulta medica as restricted to practising Catholics, see Duffin, *Medical Miracles*, 34.

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## 6 Modernizing the Miraculous Body in Prospero Lambertini's *De servorum Dei*

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FERNANDO VIDAL

The book on miracles of Prospero Lambertini's *De servorum Dei beatificatione, et beatorum canonizatione* (1734–8) has been hailed as “the first survey of Catholic paranormology” and as the work that gave the Catholic Church its definitive “medical code.”<sup>1</sup> Although *preternatural* characterizes better than *paranormal* the range of phenomena Lambertini dealt with, *code* is the right word. Indeed, Lambertini's goal was to offer rules for assessing whether or not extraordinary events, especially healings, were to be considered miraculous.<sup>2</sup> This was in line with his perspective as a canon lawyer and with the legal offices he held at the Roman Curia, those of consistorial advocate and *Promotor Fidei*.<sup>3</sup> It has been noticed that, to attain his goal, Lambertini substantially reduced the field of possible miracles in connection with “nervous and mental illnesses.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, he has also been praised for clearly differentiating “between cure by miracle and cure by suggestion.”<sup>5</sup> His move, however, was more radical than that.

In the chapter “On the Imagination and Its Powers,” which closes the book on miracles of *De servorum Dei*, Lambertini concluded that medical conditions that may be caused or healed through the imagination could not be properly examined and should therefore always be excluded from the domain of potential miracle cures. While the later decline of miracles concerning “psychiatric” or “somatoform” conditions was certainly influenced by the late nineteenth-century rise of the neurological examination and the reinterpretation of hysteria as a conversion disorder,<sup>6</sup> it is rooted in a protracted tradition of distrust of the imagination and – decisively – in Lambertini's explicit ban on imagination-related pathogenic, pathological and therapeutic phenomena.<sup>7</sup> After *De servorum Dei*, miracles ceased to be a therapeutic option in the psychopathological domain.

Such a momentous outcome resulted from a combination of the Catholic doctrine of miracles, the early modern understanding of the imagination, the Counter-Reformation emphasis on the heroic virtues of candidates for sainthood, the norms for assessing miracles in post-Tridentine canonization procedures, and Lambertini's views about appropriate devotion.

Theologically speaking, it is not holy persons who perform miracles, but God acting through them in reply to prayers. A miracle is then said to have happened through the intercession of one such person, and it is considered God's way of corroborating his or her holiness.<sup>8</sup> Depending on their object and mode of operation, miracles belong to three "classes" and are designated as *supra naturam*, *contra naturam*, or *praeter naturam*: "above," "against," or "beyond or outside" nature. The first differ from nature with regard to their substance (*quoad substantiam*) and consist in events, such as a dead person's resurrection, that nature cannot accomplish. Miracles of the second class are *quoad subjectum*; they involve things that normally happen, but not in the subjects in which they miraculously occur. For example, since birds, but not humans, fly, Saint Joseph of Cupertino's flights must be counted in this class. Miracles of the third class differ from nature only *quoad modum*, by the way they happen. In such instances, as Aquinas put it, "God does what is usually done by the working of nature, but without the operation of the principles of nature. For example, a person may be cured by divine power from a fever which could be cured naturally, and it may rain independently of the working of the principles of nature."<sup>9</sup> Here, natural processes, such as the healing of a wound or the resorption of a tumour, take place in a preternatural manner: instantaneously, perfectly, and irreversibly, in cases judged chronic or desperate.<sup>10</sup> Most extraordinary phenomena approved in canonization trials are therapeutic miracles of the third class.<sup>11</sup> Although in the context of saint-making miracles have low probatory value, they contribute decisively to reducing uncertainty and are sociologically essential.

Since medical miracles entail natural processes and since the imagination is a natural faculty, it should be possible for miracle cures to happen through the imagination operating preternaturally. However, Lambertini argued that, given the imagination's powers and specific mode of action, it was impossible to decide if a cure that might have involved them was purely natural or caused by divine intervention. As he wrote:

It may be advanced that one should distinguish the imagination which leads to confidence in gaining health through some natural remedy from

the imagination which produces trust in gaining health through the intercession of some Servant of God or some Blessed; and likewise it may be asserted that when a crisis arises in the first case, the cure that rapidly follows is natural, yet different [i.e., miraculous] in the second case – since God can also bring about the crisis itself, clearly making use of a natural instrument for curing the person who had recourse to a Servant of God or a Blessed whose sanctity He wishes to manifest by means of that healing. And yet ... one thing is that a miracle be such [i.e., indeed a miracle] in itself and in the eyes of God, another that it can be approved [as such] by the Church, which judges only on the basis of what can be observed [*de externis*]. Thus we freely admit that a cure of that kind can be accomplished by God; but we say that, as a rule, it cannot be approved by the Church, which, seeing a crisis and ignoring its causes, either suspends judgment, or decides in favor of nature. Hence from all these things it is concluded that, however much is attributed to the imagination, the imagination cannot work miracles, nor can those events which are approved as miracles be ascribed to its power and efficacy.<sup>12</sup>

“Crisis” here designates the discharge of bodily humours in a pathogenic state of corruption or imbalanced mixture; according to Galenic medicine, such evacuation could launch a patient’s recovery. In principle, to be judged miraculous, a cure should not be preceded by crisis, which announces healing, and since the imagination was said to have the power of inducing a crisis; the example served Lambertini’s main point well.

Lambertini emphasized that, when considering *asserta miracula* (the extraordinary healings proposed as miracles), the Church judges exclusively on the basis of what can be empirically ascertained. However, the possibility of doing so was ruled out in connection with the imagination’s pathogenic and therapeutic effects, both because they are protean, and because they tend to look preternatural. Of course, since God could produce miracles through an individual’s imagination as much as through any other “natural instrument,” Lambertini’s decision resulted from his view about the limits of knowledge as regards psychological causation. It also converged with his efforts to replace the sometimes visionary fervour of baroque piety with moderate forms of devotion, as well as to shield faith from both credulity and scepticism.<sup>13</sup> The sciences of mind and body were crucial allies in that enterprise – and nowhere more patently than apropos of the imagination.

I shall here sketch some of the scientific background of Lambertini’s conclusion. *De servorum Dei* combined theories and stories about the



imagination from the humoral tradition with more recent, solidist and mechanic-hydraulic views, which emphasized the brain and the nerves as intermediaries between the soul and the body. Lambertini's modernization of the miraculous body was sustained by the traditional presence of physicians in canonization procedures and its reinforcement in the early seventeenth century.<sup>14</sup> In comparison with earlier treatises, *De servorum Dei* expanded medical considerations, thus buttressing the sceptical dimension built into saint-making as a legal process. Here, the mechanization of the body and the psychologization of the mind went hand in hand, and the integration of the psyche into a solidist and brain-centred framework associated it more strongly than before with phenomena whose elusiveness made them unfit for miraculousness.

### A Pragmatic Purpose

When dealing with psycho-medical (as with legal) topics, Lambertini merged the testimony of tradition with his own and that of his contemporaries. His corpus was dominated by early modern authors, and partly overlapped with those of the main canonization treatise prior to his, by the canonist Carlo Felice de Matta. Matta dealt with human anatomy, illnesses, and therapeutics in a long chapter on "cures pertaining to miracles of the third class."<sup>15</sup> Lambertini was much more detailed, learned, and up-to-date, devoting eleven chapters to the miraculous healing of particular pathological conditions, such as blindness, paralysis, epilepsy, mania, hernia, leprosy, cancer, fevers, gout, and arthritis.<sup>16</sup> Each chapter combines case narratives with decisions and medical opinions from canonization records and Lambertini's personal experience during his two decades as *Promotor Fidei* (1708–28); it also cites reports and explanations from a range of authors since Hippocrates, as well as examples and conclusions from medical *observationes*, an "epistemic genre" that rose in the late 1500s and was well established by the second half of the following century.<sup>17</sup> *De servorum Dei* refers to the two most important early-modern collections of the genre, the *Observationes medicae, raras, novae, admirabiles, et monstrosae* (1584–97) by Johannes Schenck von Grafenberg and the *Observationes et curationes medicinales* (1584–1609) by Pieter van Foreest, in connection with hysteria, epilepsy, apoplexy, hemorrhage, hydropsy, blindness, and intestinal conditions.

Lambertini's first-hand knowledge of an extensive medical literature is indisputable, and his sometimes quoting second-hand or reproducing

an earlier synthesis reflects usual learned practices.<sup>18</sup> Either way, his considerations show the importance he attributed to the details of recent medical knowledge. For example, when dealing with resuscitation after drowning, he summarized the informative footnotes that make up most of the chapter on breathing of William Derham's *Physico-Theology*, reproducing the original references and taking up a highly specialized discussion of the foramen ovale (an opening between the atria of the heart, which allows the blood to bypass pulmonary circulation in the fetus, and generally closes soon after birth).<sup>19</sup>

Lambertini's personal proximity to two major figures of the settecento, Ludovico Antonio Muratori (1672–1750) and Giovanni Maria Lancisi (1654–1720), is significant for grasping his “modernizing” frame of mind. Muratori, a priest and one of the luminaries of “enlightened Catholicism,”<sup>20</sup> was an active participant in the epistolary Republic of Letters, a historian of Italian antiquities and from 1700 librarian and archivist to the duke of Modena. Prolific and polymathic, in addition to erudite historiography he wrote on a variety of topics aimed at furthering the renewal of Christian culture and a “public happiness” based on the equilibrium between religious tradition and “reason.”<sup>21</sup> Medicine, together with awareness of its limits, was for him particularly important.<sup>22</sup> Regarding matters of faith, early on (in *De ingeniorum moderazione in religionis negotio* of 1714) Muratori argued against sceptics for a balance between history and tradition; later, in *Della regolata devozione de' Cristiani* (1747), he defended moderation in the cult of relics, saints, and the Virgin Mary.<sup>23</sup> His overall outlook was anti-scholastic and anti-baroque, and mechanistic as far as nature was concerned. Lambertini befriended Muratori starting in 1731; their correspondence testifies to their mutual trust, affection, and admiration.<sup>24</sup> *De servorum Dei* refers to some of his works, such as *Del governo della peste* (1714) on bubonic plague and its treatment,<sup>25</sup> the treatise on medieval Italian antiquities for questions involving inscriptions,<sup>26</sup> and his didactic *Moral Philosophy Presented and Proposed to the Young* for the physiology of body and mind.<sup>27</sup>

Lancisi was professor of anatomy, and later of theoretical medicine at the papal university of La Sapienza from 1684. Starting in 1688 and almost without interruption until his death, he was physician, or archiater, to three successive popes.<sup>28</sup> As a “‘Malpighian’ pathological anatomist,” he sought to link symptoms and diagnosis to anatomical causes, and eventually to treatment.<sup>29</sup> Like his medical contemporaries, he adhered to established rhetorical and theoretical traditions, giving room to Hippocrates and the bodily humours.

Lambertini referred to two works that are representative of such a combination. One is *De subitaneis mortibus* (*On Sudden Deaths*), “one of the most accomplished examples of mechanical philosophy” in eighteenth-century life sciences,<sup>30</sup> written to fulfil Pope Clement XI’s request of an inquiry into an apparent wave of sudden deaths in Rome.<sup>31</sup> In the first book, Lancisi reviewed possible anatomo-physiological causes that involved the “major fluids” (air, blood, and the “nervous fluids”) or the “major solids” (the respiratory, cardiovascular and nervous systems). In the second book, after concluding that there was no single etiology, he investigated the Roman episode via two sets of *observationes*: “physico-medical” ones on several apoplexy survivors and “physico-anatomical” ones concerning fatal cases, each offering a clinical *historia*, an autopsy report, and a *scholium* on etiology. The main causes he identified were cerebral hemorrhage and heart infirmities. Lambertini cited *On Sudden Deaths* while examining the conditions under which bleedings and wounds could be considered miraculously healed.<sup>32</sup>

The other work was Lancisi’s posthumous *De motu cordis et aneurysmatibus* (*On the Motion of the Heart and on Aneurysms*), widely considered a landmark of cardiology. Lambertini summarized part of its contents in an account of aneurysms and varicose veins that served to introduce some miraculous cases, including the complex one of Saint Filippo Neri, discussed below.<sup>33</sup> Lancisi made other contributions to anatomy and medicine, including – of immediate relevance for mind and brain – a short dissertation, of Cartesian inspiration, on the seat of the cogitative soul, which he placed in the corpus callosum.<sup>34</sup> However, most references to Lancisi in *De servorum Dei* were to his *suffragia pro veritate*, that is, his opinions as medical expert for the Congregation of Rites. As *Promotor Fidei*, Lambertini valued these opinions highly.<sup>35</sup> Reciprocally, calling Lambertini his “*particolare*” and “*singularissimo Amico*,” Lancisi appointed him as one of his two testamentary executors,<sup>36</sup> and it was in that capacity that Lambertini published *On the Motion of the Heart*.<sup>37</sup>

Lambertini’s experience, erudition, systematic approach, and accumulation of empirical evidence served a chiefly legal (rather than theological) purpose.<sup>38</sup> As a canonist, he was concerned with the rules that govern procedures within the Roman Catholic Church, including beatification and canonization. His approach to the imagination, consistent with the suspicion built into those procedures, was prompted by the doubters who had long appealed to that faculty to explain extraordinary healings.<sup>39</sup> Lambertini made it clear that he wished not “to pursue

philosophical questions,” but to examine only “the effects of the imagination.”<sup>40</sup> He thus used medical cases and theories in a jurisprudential perspective, to elaborate a procedural response to disbelief and uncertainty.

Lambertini began with several questions: whether the imagination can act on a body that is separate and distant from the imaginant’s own; whether it can act on a body distinct, but neither separate nor distant from the imaginant’s body (as in the maternal imagination); whether it can act on the imaginant’s own body; whether it can cause illnesses in those bodies; and whether it can cure those illnesses instantaneously.<sup>41</sup> Far from being new, these questions had long appeared in contexts where the imagination played a role in connection with saints, witches, and demons acting on humans. In *De servorum Dei*, they led to excluding the imagination as a vehicle of the miraculous.

### A Jurisprudential Approach

As Jacalyn Duffin has shown, the illnesses touched by medical miracles evolved alongside developments in ways of understanding the body, technologies and modalities for physical examination, and approaches to diagnosis and treatment.<sup>42</sup> By the early nineteenth century, for example, disease categories and diagnoses were increasingly anchored in anatomical localization at the expense of symptomatology. Thus, pneumonia, one of the oldest diagnosed diseases,<sup>43</sup> as well as other lung conditions like emphysema appear as such in discussions of proposed miraculous healings only with the advent of the stethoscope. Cancer, an equally ancient diagnosis,<sup>44</sup> is significantly present in miracle records across the centuries. However, until the advent of surgical biopsy, it was reported for the skin, limbs, or breasts, but not for the internal organs. In both cases, the change is related to the rising diagnostic significance of anatomical localization and to the development of techniques for probing internal processes or tissues.

Lambertini’s approach to evolving medical knowledge is well illustrated by his account of the case of Filippo Neri (1515–95), the founder of the Congregation of the Oratory, who was canonized in 1622. While meditating in a catacomb, Neri felt the Holy Ghost penetrate through his mouth and into his breast. He thereafter endured a swollen heart, and acute palpitations during ecstasy or contemplation. The autopsy revealed an enlarged heart and pulmonary artery, as well as two broken ribs. Doctors claimed that Neri’s complex syndrome (which included

other manifestations, such as almost constantly excessive bodily heat), was a divinely ordained mechanism to maintain the holy man's organic balance in spite of the extraordinary intensity of his piety.<sup>45</sup> Neri's physicians, reported his biographer, "usually considered this palpitation miraculous and supernatural," in support of which, others wrote "particular treatises, all agreeing that the blessed God had wrought in him [Neri] that fracture of the ribs, so that the heart might not be injured in beating so strongly, and the neighboring parts could dilate better, and take so much air as to sufficiently refrigerate the heart."<sup>46</sup> The saint's condition, therefore, was declared a typical canonization miracle, in which God acts by way of natural mechanisms operating preternaturally.

In *De servorum Dei*, miraculously cured aneurysms posed no particular challenges.<sup>47</sup> In contrast, Neri's "miraculous palpitations" did, not only because they were a mystical phenomenon, but also because, a century after his canonization, Neri could have been diagnosed as suffering from an intrathoracic aneurysm. Lancisi noted that sometimes the entire mass of the heart is enlarged with aneurysm.<sup>48</sup> From this, Lambertini remarked, one could easily infer that Neri's condition was *juxta naturalem rerum cursum*, "in conformity with the natural course of things."<sup>49</sup> This statement has been often quoted second-hand from the study accompanying the 1950 edition of a physician's report of 1595.<sup>50</sup> But it has gone unnoticed that immediately after the quoted statement, Lambertini wrote that if the circumstances "are weighed with painstaking attention," then – even recognizing that Neri's *vitium* was aneurysmatic, that his ribs were broken *naturaliter*, and that his heart was swollen *ex morbo naturali* – one remained persuaded that something in the context in question was supernatural.<sup>51</sup>

Again, Lambertini reasoned as a jurist. A miracle approved under appropriate legal conditions cannot be revoked. Retrospectively, of course, many diagnoses can be revised. That possibility is irrelevant, however, not only for procedural reasons, but also because a miracle is a sign sent by God to the faithful of a certain time and place. Lambertini could thus circumvent the uncertainty and scepticism imposed by the advancement of science: he did not pronounce himself on the nature of the assessed phenomena, but emphasized that they had been substantiated according to rule.<sup>52</sup> His attitude was not an attempt to trump modern anatomy, which he held in the highest regard.<sup>53</sup> Rather, the likelihood of an ulterior retrospective diagnosis demanded the most rigorous application of legal and medical standards of proof, and actually

proposing such a diagnosis strengthened, rather than weakened, past judgments about miraculousness.

Of course, scientific knowledge could work the other way. One of Lambertini's considerations against the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (which the Congregation of Rites refused to authorize in 1729) consisted of countering the proponents' claim that the heart was the "*comprincipium sensibile omnium virtutum & affectionum.*" In the wake of William Harvey, the link of heart and soul was broken. Thus, drawing on Muratori's presentation of the human body in his *Moral Philosophy*, Lambertini explained that recent authors placed the seat of those dispositions in the brain, from where the agitation of the soul and the spirits can spread through the nerves into the heart.<sup>54</sup> Keeping to his usual line, he stated that the Church's role was not to decide among scientific opinions. Implicitly, however, he favoured modern ones and held that, in view of debates about the physiology of emotions, the petition in favour of the devotion should have been withdrawn rather than risk a negative response.<sup>55</sup> Lambertini's argument from science conveniently supported his rejection of the kind of enthusiastic piety practised by Sacred Heart proselytes, and illustrates the unity of his thought and practice.

### Symptoms Rather Than Causes

In the more intractable case of conditions whose symptoms had often been associated with both demonic possession and mysticism, Lambertini gave the procedural dimension an even more significant role. Epilepsy and hysteria provide good examples. Lambertini treated them successively and contrastively in the same chapter.

The paragraphs on epilepsy argue that miraculous healing from the condition is possible.<sup>56</sup> Lambertini reported recent explanations, mentioning among others the English anatomist and physician Thomas Willis (1621–75), who considered epilepsy a disease of the "animal spirits" and located its "primary seat" in the "middle of the brain."<sup>57</sup> Such etiological speculations were for Lambertini less relevant than the fact that "true epilepsy" displays observable and characteristic signs (*signa evidentia and pathognomica*), and that its serious forms can be clearly identified. In addition to the usual criteria, assessing miraculousness required distinct symptoms, and establishing them ended up opening the way for the approval of a proposed miracle, which, as *Promotor Fidei*, Lambertini had initially opposed.<sup>58</sup>

When it came to hysteria, Lambertini once more emphasized the importance of signs. He began as usual by sketching recent theories, which were at the time moving the cause of hysteria from the uterus to the brain and nerves.<sup>59</sup> For example, Willis thought that, like epilepsy, hysteria depended “on the brain and the nervous stock being affected.”<sup>60</sup> Most of Lambertini’s medical authorities still adhered to the uterine etiology. Yet that fact made no difference, since what counted most for him were not the causes, but the symptoms and the prognosis. Lambertini proceeded by way of the same evidentiary reasoning that allowed for miracle cures of epilepsy – but, inversely, to demonstrate that miraculous healing from hysteria was *not* possible. Like epileptics, hysterics suffered from paroxysms; the main difference, according to the physicians Lambertini quoted, was that they remembered the attack as well as the associated sensations and feelings and therefore were not as “alienated from reason” as epileptics.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, although the illness could be dangerous if the symptoms were serious and the fits frequent, it was not incurable.<sup>62</sup>

In themselves, such considerations diminished the chances of a medical miracle. But the decisive factor against hysteria was the difficulty of obtaining empirical evidence. A miraculous cure, Lambertini explained, should result in the definitive expulsion of the *qualitas morbosa*; now, some usually unobservable “natural crises” of women may lead to such perfect healing. Thus, he concluded, it is exceedingly hard to prove that a cure from hysteria constitutes a miracle, and that is why physicians who wished to argue for a miracle in cases of hysteria-like symptoms tried to prove that the illness was of a different nature.<sup>63</sup>

As Roy Porter has observed, “It was during the nineteenth century that hysteria moved center stage.”<sup>64</sup> By then, Duffin notes, “doctors testifying in [miracle] inquiries were expected to clarify whether or not the patient had been hysterical,” and a hysteria diagnosis virtually ruled out miraculousness.<sup>65</sup> The reasons that explain such an embargo are multiple, but they converge on Lambertini. In spite of its capaciousness, instability, and elusiveness, the diagnosis of hysteria did not always seem incompatible with the rigour with which *asserta miracula* had to be examined, and in Lambertini’s own time two cures of uterine suffocation became recognized miracles.<sup>66</sup>

That possibility vanished when the condition came to be seen as suspended between the organic and the psychological and thereby became an instance of the kinds of illnesses Lambertini connected to the imagination. In his time, those illnesses were beginning to be

described as “nervous” or ascribed to “neurosis.”<sup>67</sup> While these terms still denoted immediate causes in the brain and nerves, by the late nineteenth century they, and others such as “neurasthenia” and “nervousness,” denoted psychogenic pathologies – a category that overlapped with the symptomatological field Lambertini had excluded from the scope of medical miracles.

### The Imaginant’s Body

*De servorum Dei* mirrors a moment in which a primarily humoralist outlook was combined or competed with primarily solidist interpretations of illness and body function. Most of Lambertini’s sources belong to the humoralist tradition, but some, such as Lancisi and Muratori, illustrate the emerging blend of humoralism with mechanistic perspectives.<sup>68</sup> To put it very succinctly: In seventeenth-century anatomy and medicine, the body became an essentially mechanic-hydraulic structure. Illness no longer resulted from imbalances of the Galenic humours, and the three systems of solid parts – the trachea and lungs, the heart and blood vessels, and the brain and nervous system – moved centre stage. Nonetheless, since these were circulatory systems, the new medicine continued to pay attention to spontaneous evacuations, which humoral medicine considered crucial to eliminate vitiated matter. Insofar as life consisted in a flux of air, blood, and nervous fluid, obstructions remained pathogenic. As for the interaction of body and soul, the animal spirits retained their powers; however, they no longer resided in the ventricles, but were somehow distilled in the cortex and distributed through the nerves to other solid parts of the brain and the rest of the body.<sup>69</sup>

Like recent anatomists, Lambertini attributed great significance to the nerves as conveyors of the animal spirits and as nexus between soul and body. As he explained, the nerves, “through the instruments of the external senses, when struck and moved by the proper objects, transmit the received impression by the power of the animal spirits through a continuous succession of nerves all the way to the brain, and there ... inform the soul, which rests in its proper seat, of the impression of an external object, and excite it to the perception of that object, as the most celebrated anatomists, Gabrielle Faloppio [1523–62], Malpighi and Willis extensively explain it.”<sup>70</sup> Lambertini also characterized the imagination in cerebral terms, borrowing silently and with omissions from Muratori’s *Moral Philosophy*. He described the imagination as “nothing other than that admirable book of the human brain, in which



there are imprinted now intellectual notions, now images of sensible objects gathered from the senses, and consigned by the animal spirits for transmission through those most delicate channels of the nerves to the emporium of the brain; and thus that fantasy or imagination is not a faculty that understands and animates, and moves by itself, but it is just like the vital spirits and the senses [which] are instruments of the soul."<sup>71</sup> Muratori developed the topic in his 1745 treatise on the power of the human imagination. Together with *De servorum Dei*, this successful book has been justly considered a milestone in the Catholic Enlightenment's revamping of the limits between the natural and the supernatural.<sup>72</sup> In Muratori, the imagination appeared once more as a "corporeal and material" faculty localized in the brain and dependent on the organs of the external senses, the nerves, and the animal spirits.<sup>73</sup>

In this as in other matters, Lambertini's modernized idiom left room for Thomas Aquinas. With regard to miracle cures, the effects of the patient's imagination on his or her own body had long been a crucial problem. Lambertini reported various opinions and observations on this matter, but ultimately referred to the *Summa*. Aquinas asked whether the soul's power can change corporeal matter and prudently concluded "that by a strong imagination the spirits of the body united to the soul are changed."<sup>74</sup> No matter how strong, the imagination cannot modify "corporeal dispositions [such as the shape of a hand or foot] that have no natural relation" to it via the spirits.<sup>75</sup> The principle according to which the imagination could impinge on the body only by way of the spirits and humours, and could therefore not modify solid features or structures had direct application for assessing proposed miracle cures.

Lambertini offered somnambulism as a paradigmatic instance of the imagination's mechanism and effects on the imaginant's body:

During the time of sleep, fantasy alone is operative: and hence it happens that it directs the animal spirits to the representation of objects ... or to the faculty of motion, ... or to the tongue and other instruments of vocalization, so that they articulate things imagined ... [T]he spirits, after they have entered upon those paths which lead to the brain or to the imagination of the sleeping person ... incite certain movements ... and from this derives the fact that somnambulists, though sleeping, rise out of bed, open windows, walk about and carry out other similar things.<sup>76</sup>

In short, as Lambertini emphasized on the basis of authorities from Aquinas to James Blondel (a London doctor who in 1729 contested the

effects of the maternal imagination), the imagination can make sick and can heal the imaginant's body – yet never per se, only *per accidens*, by stirring the spirits and the humours.<sup>77</sup>

### A Modernized Miraculous Body

By Lambertini's time, the corrupt humours that played a basic pathogenic role in the Galenic framework had lost much of their explanatory power. While using examples generated in that framework, Lambertini's miraculous body functioned according to a more mechanical and solidist physiology. As an illustration I shall sketch two *asserta miracula* in which Lancisi was involved as medical expert and reached opposed verdicts.

In one case, Lancisi argued that a proposed cure may have been due to the imagination and was therefore not miraculous. The patient was a French nun whose paralysed right thumb had been supposedly healed by contact with a relic of the Jesuit Jean-François Régis (1597–1640). The record of this proposed miracle, which was finally rejected, shows Lambertini, as *Promotor Fidei*, raising several objections about the gravity and persistence of the condition, as well as about the cure's instantaneity. It includes Lancisi's opinion, which Lambertini quoted in *De servorum Dei*. For the doctor, who shared Lambertini's doubts, the cure "could have arisen without difficulty from the nun's strong imagination."

On the one hand, Lancisi underlined that the imagination acts in the brain so as to move the spirits in all directions, thrusting them "to the affected limbs," and thus encouraging "the languid forces" and giving "motion to the parts." On the other hand, he evoked the early modern trope of "observations of those who through the force of imagination alone have been freed either from simple sorrow, or from despondency," and recalled that "these things can happen more easily in women than in men."<sup>78</sup> Lancisi thought that the nun had been cured via the imagination, which did not act directly on the diseased thumb, but propelled the spirits towards it. His opinion was consistent with the tradition that, as in Aquinas and many others, decoupled the imagination from solid corporeal structure.

After quoting Lancisi, Lambertini concluded with Muratori's warning in *Moral Philosophy* that, in witnessing an extraordinary cure,

one should not immediately rush to yell *Miracolo Miracolo*. The fantasy alone, strongly moved by the desire and the hope of recovering health,

conceiving the help of God, who can [do] everything, and the intercession of a good Servant of His, is naturally capable of sending the animal spirits forcefully through the pathways, glands and pores of the body, [which are] hampered by some stagnation and obstruction of the humors, in such a way that, after all obstacles are overcome, the fluids circulate again and the nerves, muscles and tendons [again] exert their functions, which were before made sluggish, or [were] completely forsaken by the lively and very necessary influence of the spirits themselves.<sup>79</sup>

This is a clear illustration of the psychophysiology that framed Lambertini's arguments and of its characteristic mix of early modern views about the circulation of the fluids with a new emphasis on solid parts.

In the second example, on the contrary, Lancisi was *in favour* of accepting a proposed miracle. Juan de Prado (1563–1631) was a Franciscan missionary killed in Morocco. Among the miracles that had been examined by the time Lancisi entered the scene was a lame priest's sudden and complete healing through contact with a small piece of Juan's habit.<sup>80</sup> Lambertini asked whether the cure could not be attributed to the patient's "vehement hope and imagining of obtaining health" through Juan's intercession. Since physicians believed in a miracle, but had not considered that possibility, Lancisi was asked for an opinion. He justified his conclusion that the healing was miraculous, saying that, since "whatever can be suddenly removed by the motion of the spirits and nerves ... will be more or less under the power of our imagination," when the disease derives from a body "that is dried out and immobile, then indeed the bare imagination accomplishes nothing."<sup>81</sup> And that was the case of the patient's condition, which was a paralysis due to the state of the solid parts of the body. In *De servorum Dei*, this and other *asserta miracula* were meant to illustrate the fact that the imagination affects the body only through the spirits.<sup>82</sup>

### A Paradoxical Outcome

The paradoxical outcome of Lambertini's "On the Imagination and Its Powers" was that the *exclusion* of the imagination followed from the *actuality* of its therapeutic power. For, as he put it, the chief difficulty lies in figuring out "whether the force of the imagination is so great that one can ascribe to it a cure characterized by all those qualities with which we said healing ought to be endowed to be reckoned among

miracles."<sup>83</sup> Lambertini's verdict involved two convictions. On the one hand, the imagination's inherent properties are such that in cases where the movement of the spirits is involved, healings may look miraculous – and indeed they might be, even though that *cannot* be empirically demonstrated. On the other hand, insofar as the imagination does not act directly on the solid parts of the body, it plays no role in the cases that *can* be submitted to empirical scrutiny. Thus Lambertini redrew the boundaries of medical miracles, eliminating an entire universe of potential false positives and increasing the likelihood that approved miracles would indeed be true.

While doing so, Lambertini established a continuity of content and interpretation going back to scripture. He combined biblical examples with theologians' opinions; he then integrated them into early modern doctrines (which themselves referred to stories and authors from antiquity onward) found not only in medical literature, but also in theological and legal discourses about demonology, magic, mysticism, saint-making, and the discernment of spirits; finally, he blended the newer mechanistic-hydraulic views of the body, health, and disease into those broad traditions, and he supported his arguments with jurisprudential material from reported cases of *asserta miracula* and decisions made in past canonization trials.

In his redescription of the miraculous body, Lambertini psychologized neither pathogenic nor therapeutic phenomena, and he did not replace anatomic-physiological explanations with psychological ones. As in earlier centuries, the physical and the moral remained undifferentiated; now, however, the imagination was no longer localized in one of the cerebral ventricles or functioned by way of the humours, but was localized in the cerebral substance and worked by way of the nerves and the spirits. The time had not yet come when a physiologist could justify dealing with the imagination by saying that, though a purely "intellectual" faculty, "its effects upon the body are so remarkable, that it will be proper to take some notice of them."<sup>84</sup> By 1800 the explanation of those effects could be couched in terms of "mere Imagination," an expression suggesting the absence of physical causes.<sup>85</sup> In twentieth-century terms, it might be said that "both psychosomatic and somatopsychic effects were commonly taken into account" in early modern discourses of the imagination.<sup>86</sup> But the dichotomies implied in such vocabulary did not belong to Lambertini's settecento.<sup>87</sup> It was his emphasis on sympatmatology, pathognomonic evidence, and the limitations of diagnostic judgment that pushed the imagination into the

realm of the psychological. The imagination retained its organic nature and its traditional extraordinary powers. However, the Galenic crisis metamorphosed into a psychical event, and these powers became, in practice if not yet in theory, mental. That sufficed to exclude their effects from the realm of potentially miraculous phenomena and to turn future *miraculés* into bodies without imagination.

## NOTES

- 1 Alessandrini, “*Creder tutto ... creder nulla,*” cxvii; Gorce, *L’Œuvre médicale de Prospero Lambertini*, 114.
- 2 Lambertini, *De servorum Dei beatificatione, et beatorum canonizatione*, Vol. 4. Unless otherwise indicated, “*De servorum Dei*” refers only to Book IV.I. “*DSD*” stands for *De servorum Dei*, and “*DI*” for *DSD*, Liber IV, Pars I (In qua agitur de Miraculis), caput ultimum (De Imaginatione, et ejus viribus).
- 3 Consistorial advocates plead causes before ecclesiastical courts. The *Promotor Fidei* (“devil’s advocate”) used to examine and question the evidence on virtues and miracles submitted in beatification and canonization processes. Its function was redefined in John Paul II’s 1983 apostolic constitution *Divinus Perfectionis Magister* and the accompanying *New Laws for the Causes of Saints*, which eliminated the adversarial character of the canonization process and downgraded the Promotor of the Faith’s role to that of a sort of secretary.
- 4 Maragi, “*Psichiatria e guarigioni miracolose,*” 214.
- 5 Haynes, *Philosopher King*, 1.
- 6 Duffin, *Medical Miracles*, 89–90, 96–9.
- 7 Vidal, “Prospero Lambertini’s ‘On the Imagination and Its Powers.’”
- 8 In the saint-making process, candidates go through different stages. A “Servant of God” (*servus Dei*) is a person whose life and works are being investigated with a view to *beatification*. After the “heroic” character of the candidate’s virtues is proven, he or she is proclaimed a “Venerable.” If the Venerable was not a martyr, he or she may become a “Blessed” (*beatus*) only after it is proven that two miracles (only one since John Paul II) took place through his or her intercession. Two additional miracles (currently one) may promote a Blessed to the status of “Saint.” *Beatification* was formally introduced as a separate procedure only in the second half of the seventeenth century. It does not differ essentially from *canonization* (the term I will generally use), but while the former permits a local cult (limited to a diocese or order), the latter creates an obligatory cult for the entire Roman Catholic Church.

- 9 Aquinas, *Contra Gentiles*, book 3, ch. 101, n4. This classification, based on Aquinas, was systematized by one of Lambertini's main authorities: Zacchia, *Quaestiones*, Liber IV, Titulus I, Quaestio II.
- 10 Zacchia, *Quaestiones*, IV.I, Quaestio VIII. Cf. *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 8, § 2.
- 11 Duffin, *Medical Miracles*, ch. 3; Parigi, *The Rationalization of Miracles*, Table 2.3.
- 12 DI, § 34.
- 13 Rosa, "Prospero Lambertini" and "The Catholic Aufklärung."
- 14 Antonelli, *De inquisitione*; case study in Pomata, "Malpighi and the Holy Body."
- 15 Matta, *Novissimus ... tractatus*, Pars Tertia, ch. 18.
- 16 *DSD*, IV.I, chs 9–19.
- 17 Siraisi, "History and Histories;" Pomata, "Sharing Cases" (196–7 on "epistemic genre") and "Observation Rising;" De Renzi, "Medical Expertise, Bodies, and the Law."
- 18 See Gianna Pomata's chapter in this volume.
- 19 Derham, *Physico-Theology*, ch. 7. Cf. *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 21, §§ 23 and 28.
- 20 Rosa, "The Catholic Aufklärung," 218.
- 21 Imbruglia, "Muratori;" Continisio, "Governing the Passions."
- 22 Dini, "Muratori e la medicina."
- 23 Rosa, "The Catholic Aufklärung," § 2; Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*, ch. 2; Petruzzi, "Muratori e la 'regolata' predicazione."
- 24 See Soli Muratori, *Vita del proposto Lodovico Antonio Muratori*. On the correspondence, see Paoli, "'Lavorare a tempo rubbato.'"
- 25 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 18, § 22; ch. 22, §§ 6 and 8.
- 26 Reference to *Antiquitates italicæ mediæ ævi* (1738–42) in *DSD*, IV.II, ch. 27, §§ 18 and 16.
- 27 DI, §§ 21 and 23.
- 28 Preti, "Lancisi."
- 29 Cunningham, *The Anatomist Anatomis'd*, 204; Donato, *Morte improvvisa*, ch. 4.
- 30 Donato, "The Mechanical Medicine of a Pious Man of Science," 319.
- 31 Lancisi, *De subitaneis mortibus* (*On Sudden Deaths*).
- 32 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 16, § 17.
- 33 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 19; the relevant section begins on § 16. Lancisi is summarized in §§ 17–20; a case from *De subitaneis mortibus* is cited in § 21; and § 26 refers to Lancisi's *De motu cordis* in connection with Neri.
- 34 Lancisi, "De Sede Cogitantis Animæ" (1722), in Grondona, "La dissertazione di G. M. Lancisi."
- 35 See Gianna Pomata's chapter in this volume.

- 36 Lancisi's testament, quoted in Crescimbeni, *Vita di Monsignor Gio. Maria Lancisi*, 129, 148.
- 37 As Lambertini states in *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 19, § 17.
- 38 The same applies to Lambertini's action as pope: Rosa, "Benedetto XIV" and "Tra Muratori, il giansenismo e i 'lumi.'" "
- 39 DI, § 1.
- 40 DI, § 11.
- 41 DI, § 1. "Imaginant's body" translates *corpus imaginantis*.
- 42 Duffin, *Medical Miracles*, ch. 3.
- 43 Duffin, "Pneumonia."
- 44 Hajdu, "A Note From History."
- 45 Belloni, "L'aneurisma di Filippo Neri," 675. On Neri's autopsy, see Andretta, "Anatomie du Vénérable;" Santing, "De affectibus cordis et palpitatione" and "Secrets of the Heart"; Siraisi, "Signs and Evidence."
- 46 Bacci, *Vita di S. Filippo Neri*, Book I, ch. 6, § 11.
- 47 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 19, §§ 23–24.
- 48 Lancisi, *De motu cordis*, Propositio XLVIII.
- 49 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 19, § 26.
- 50 Belloni, "L'aneurisma di Filippo Neri," 680.
- 51 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 19, § 27.
- 52 Ocular testimony was here essential, as it also was in the case of Lambertini's acceptance of Joseph of Cupertino's flights; see Vidal, "Miracles, Science, and Testimony," 490–1.
- 53 Dacome, "The Anatomy of the Pope;" Messbarger's chapter in this volume.
- 54 *DSD*, IV.II, ch. 31 § 25: Muratori, *La filosofia morale*, ch. 2. Lambertini's position reflects seventeenth-century developments associated with figures such as René Descartes, William Harvey, John Locke and Thomas Willis, which contributed to place the physical seat of the self in the brain. However, as demonstrated by the very debate on the Sacred Heart, such developments did not do away with the heart's symbolic significance – which the brain never acquired. See Stevens, "Sacred Heart and Secular Brain."
- 55 *DSD*, IV.II, ch. 31, § 25. While opposing a public cult, Benedict XIV actually supported private devotion; see on this point Menozzi, *Sacro Cuore*, 33–34.
- 56 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 13, §§ 1–10; Willis is mentioned at the end of § 3.
- 57 Willis, *An Essay*, ch. 2 (Of the Epilepsie), 13–14. See also Temkin, *The Falling Sickness*; Eadie and Bladin, *A Disease Once Sacred*.
- 58 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 13, §§ 7–10. On the case (a nun who cured of epilepsy through the intercession of the Franciscan tertiary Hyacintha Mariscotti), see Vidal, "Miracles," 492–5.
- 59 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 13, § 12.

- 60 Willis, *An Essay*, ch. 10, 71. To enter this vast topic, see Rousseau, "'A Strange Pathology'" and Scull, *Hysteria*, ch. 2.
- 61 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 13, § 11. In his opinion on the cure attributed to Mariscotti's intercession (n. lviii above), Lancisi (*Medicae Animadversiones*, 30) contrasted the reported epileptic symptoms with those of hysteria, in which there was neither *memoriae laesio* nor foaming of the mouth. Lambertini quoted other portions of Lancisi's opinion in *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 13, § 7.
- 62 *DSD*, IV.I, ch. 13, § 13.
- 63 *Ibid.*, § 14.
- 64 Porter, "The Body and the Mind," 227.
- 65 Duffin, *Medical Miracles*, 98, 99.
- 66 *Ibid.*, 97.
- 67 López Piñero, *Historical Origins*, ch. 1.
- 68 Muratori, of course, was neither a physician nor an anatomist, but his *La filosofia morale*, especially ch. 2 (on the body), was a popularization Lambertini found useful.
- 69 On the revamping of the sciences of the soul, see Vidal, *The Sciences of the Soul*; in connection with Lancisi, see Donato, *Morte improvvisa*, ch. 4.
- 70 *DI*, § 5. This passage seems to abbreviate Muratori, *La filosofia morale*, 21.
- 71 *DI*, § 9; cf. Muratori, *La filosofia morale*, ch. 6, 65. The metaphor of the brain as book in which the soul reads appears earlier, in ch. 2, 31, and later, for example, in ch. 17, 212.
- 72 Brambilla, "La fine dell'esorcismo," 141.
- 73 Muratori, *Della forza della fantasia umana*, 9. There is a modern edition, with an introduction by Claudio Pogliano (Florence: Giunti, 1995.)
- 74 *Summa theologica*, First Part, Question 117, Article 3, Reply to Objection 2, translation modified.
- 75 *Ibid.*, Third Part, Question 13, Article 3, Reply to Objection 3.
- 76 *DI*, § 20.
- 77 *DI*, § 21.
- 78 *DI*, § 23.
- 79 *Ibid.*; translated from Muratori, *La filosofia morale*, 68.
- 80 *DI*, § 30. Details in Diaz, *Vita*, 132–6.
- 81 *DI*, § 30.
- 82 *Ibid.*
- 83 *DI*, § 29. "Quapropter verus difficultatis cardo in eo situs est, ut videatur, an tanta sit vis imaginationis, ut ei adscribi possit sanatio omnibus illis qualitatibus induta, quibus affici debere diximus sanationem, ut inter miracula recenseatur."
- 84 Bostock, *An Elementary System of Physiology*, 768.



- 85 John Haygarth, usually considered the first to have demonstrated the placebo effect, wrote in 1800 that his clinical trials “clearly prove what wonderful effects the passions of hope and faith, excited by mere Imagination, can produce upon diseases;” *Of the Imagination*, 29.
- 86 Jackson, *Care of the Psyche*, 227.
- 87 This point runs throughout Haskell, *Diseases of the Imagination and Imaginary Diseases*.

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## **PART III**

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### **Benedict's Response to Challenges to Church Authority**

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## 7 Benedict XIV and the Natural Sciences

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JOHN L. HEILBRON

Among the many virtues ascribed to Pope Benedict XIV as a man of the Enlightenment was an informed and sympathetic interest in the natural sciences. In fact, he had little taste or time for most of the subjects cultivated by the academies of science proliferating in the Age of Reason.<sup>1</sup> He said as much himself, in his courteous acknowledgment of some books on natural philosophy sent him by the flamboyant professor of physics at the Lutheran University of Wittenberg, Georg Matthias Bose. Benedict forwarded the heretic's books to the Academy of Sciences in Bologna and ordered a letter of thanks. The letter volunteered that, although His Holiness devoted all the time he had for study to ecclesiastical subjects, he welcomed books outside his interests even by authors outside his religion.<sup>2</sup> From which, with a little exaggeration, we might conclude that the natural sciences and mathematics were as far from Benedict's tastes as the reformed Church from the true one. To this exaggeration a serious exception must be made for his close study of the nature, cause, and course of disease. Benedict was interested not in doctoring – “we have little faith in medicine and hold that one lives and dies when God wishes” – but in distinguishing the natural from the supernatural among the accomplishments of candidates for canonization.<sup>3</sup>

Benedict's need for medical advice in making this distinction lay behind his important gifts to the Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Bologna and his improvements in the teaching of science at the Sapienza in Rome. His promotion of the careers of practical mathematicians such as the Jesuit Roger Boscovich and the Minims François Jacquier and Thomas Leseur may also be assigned more probably to his need for their advice than to his love of their science. Being a clever man and



a quick study, he picked up enough knowledge about the sciences in which he had an intellectual or financial investment to discuss them intelligently. For example, after listening to the astronomer Charles-Marie de La Condamine analyse morbidity from inoculation against smallpox, the pope had the presence of mind to remark that it resembled "the yield from the pawn shop, three percent." Still, he did not add La Condamine's books to his large library but shipped them off, as he did Bose's, to the Academy in Bologna.<sup>4</sup>

Benedict's reform of the censorship and the removal of the blanket prohibition against Copernican writings from the *Index of Prohibited Books* may be considered as contributions to natural science, although that was not their main purpose. In this reckoning, however, we must not omit his acquiescence in the condemnation of Montesquieu's *L'Esprit des lois* in 1752 and his retention of Galileo's *Dialogo* on the *Index* of 1758.<sup>5</sup> These apparent inconsistencies reflect the policy of compromise that enabled Benedict to quiet some major controversies within the Roman Catholic Church and between Rome and other states and buy himself some time for his own scholarly work. This drew on the historical sciences, which at the time had something in common with the natural ones. Consequently, it may be said without paradox that, although Benedict did not have a strong interest in the natural sciences, he was a devoted cultivator of science.

A brief sketch of Benedict's involvement with the historical sciences (§1) will help to situate his legal-theological-medical handbook for judges of miracles (§2). Just as the preparation of this huge work benefited institutions that studied human anatomy, so Benedict's reform of the censorship and other administrative innovations benefited physics and astronomy. A few of these incidental improvements are presented in §3 in connection with the career of Roger Boscovich, the most conspicuous representative of the exact sciences in Benedict's Rome.

## Historical Sciences

The rigid separation between the historical and the natural sciences, which is the default opinion in our time, is singularly inappropriate to Benedict's. Despite their great disparity in subject matter, the two sets of sciences then had much in common in spirit and purpose. Both eschewed traditional authorities in favour of physical evidence or artefacts. The natural sciences increasingly defined their problems by data obtained in experiments with new instruments: telescopes, microscopes,

air pumps, barometers, and electrical machines. The historical sciences, which included chronology, geography, climatology, numismatics, and diplomatics, had recourse to information from original manuscripts, coins, inscriptions, seals, and meteorological records. When Benedict's avatar Prospero Lambertini was amassing knowledge and offices in the first decades of the eighteenth century, Jean Mabillon's *De re diplomatica* (1681), which gave rules for analysing, authenticating, and dating medieval manuscripts, and Isaac Newton's *Principia mathematica* (1687), which gave rules for computing the world system, were at the cutting edge of science.<sup>6</sup> Lambertini adopted Mabillon's approach, befriended Mabillon's successor, Bernard Montfaucon, and admired the bold histories of Mabillon's chief Italian disciple, Ludovico Antonio Muratori.<sup>7</sup> This admiration extended to quoting Muratori on medical matters relating to the making of saints.<sup>8</sup>

As this example may suggest, the up-to-date historian and natural philosopher might be one and the same person. The high end of both subjects, ancient and/or ecclesiastical history on the one hand and mathematics on the other, went particularly well together. For example, Lambertini's friend and colleague Celestino Galiani was the first to promote Newtonian physics and cosmology in Rome. He did his promoting while holding the chair of ecclesiastical history at the Sapienza, which he obtained in 1718 with Lambertini's support.<sup>9</sup> Further evidence of Galiani's easy transition among the sciences was a choice of projects urged on him by Cardinal Giovanni Antonio Davia: Galiani was needed to prepare a good edition of the *Septuagint* or to direct a major undertaking in hydraulic engineering. Eustachio Manfredi, who taught Galiani mathematics, once said that, although mathematics was Galiani's weakest subject, he was the best mathematician in Italy.<sup>10</sup> A cynic might interpret this remark as an unfriendly evaluation of Italian mathematics. In fact, Italy then boasted several quite good mathematicians, including the brothers Manfredi in Bologna, the Roman minims, and Boscovich, Guido Grandi, and Francesco Bianchini, all friends or acquaintances of Lambertini.<sup>11</sup>

Although Lambertini respected the mathematical attainments of friends like Galiani, it was their historical work that claimed his interest. For example, although Grandi had earned election to the Royal Society of London for his mastery of higher geometry and had introduced the Leibnizian calculus into Italy, Lambertini esteemed him as an ecclesiastical historian, another Mabillon or Muratori in his propensity to cancel saints, even of his own order, who did not pass the test of his

historiography. Lambertini thought Grandi's historical work so important that he procured for him a papal licence to read and retain any prohibited books he required. According to the editor of the correspondence between Grandi and Lambertini, they shared a "passion for archival research, an entirely Galilean creed of historical truth."<sup>12</sup> They also shared a passion for the scientific investigation of the credentials of saints.

Bianchini provides a similar case. A long-time associate of Galiani, Bianchini brought personal knowledge to bear on the promotion of Newton's cause in Rome. He had visited Newton in London in 1713 and, on the great man's nomination, was soon elected a fellow of the Royal Society. Their bond probably was a shared interest in dating ancient history astronomically. On returning to Italy, Bianchini resumed his position as Rome's leading astronomer and major authority on Roman ruins, Latin inscriptions, and early Church history.<sup>13</sup> It was in this second capacity that Bianchini interested, and probably guided, Lambertini.

Bianchini served and helped design the cultural politics of their patron in common, Clement XI. The policy underwrote the study of ecclesiastical history, especially of Church councils, and called for the preservation of the monuments of paleo Christianity and contemporaneous Latin antiquities, partly for polemical purposes, but largely to show (and to try to regain) Rome's prominent position in European culture after the effective loss of its temporal power in the Thirty Years' War. Lambertini threw himself energetically into the work of the *Congregazione de' Concili*, studying documents concerning relations between the Vatican and the Holy Roman Empire, evidence for the ascendancy of the Roman popes over other bishops and over the states of the Church, and the basis for the assertion of papal infallibility. When he became pope, Lambertini made use of these studies in dealing with the election of emperors, appointment of bishops, retention of territory, and determination of saints. Benedict also realized the great project of the Christian museum designed by Bianchini, and he multiplied Clement's apparatus for the study of ecclesiastical history.<sup>14</sup>

Within a month or two of his election, Benedict created three academies concerned with ecclesiastical history, ancient pagan history, and liturgy, and revived the old *Congregazione de' Concili*, whose purview included medieval and early modern history. He regarded these four institutions as a first essential step in reversing the decay Rome had suffered under his immediate predecessors.<sup>15</sup> At the head of the

academy for ecclesiastical history Benedict placed Bianchini's nephew, the Oratorian Giuseppe Bianchini, who produced a *Demonstratio historiae ecclesiasticae*, a masterwork in four folio volumes whose splendid illustrations did truly demonstrate its subject.<sup>16</sup> The first volume deals mainly with chronology and includes Francesco Bianchini's exhaustive unpublished analysis of the Farnese globe. The remaining volumes contain a detailed description, and extraordinary engravings, of a virtual museum derived from drawings made by the elder Bianchini for the *Museo ecclesiastico* he proposed to Clement, who regretted that he did not have the money to pay for it.<sup>17</sup>

Although Benedict's museum and academies had a mission, they were conducted scientifically, in the spirit of Mabillon, Bianchini, and Muratori, giving priority to the original documents and following where they led. Benedict did not set up a parallel academy for any natural science in Rome. Although the pre-existing Bologna Academy can be considered the missing jewel in his academic crown, his reasons for supporting it were quite different from his motives in setting up the Roman academies. The Bolognese covered art, applied mathematics, and the natural sciences, and ran itself. The Roman did history, pure and applied, and met regularly in the Quirinale so that he could participate in their proceedings and keep an eye on them.<sup>18</sup> For the historical sciences, if pursued where the sources point, can be dangerous to established authority and belief.

Under his eye, Benedict's academic workshops produced solid, conservative contributions like Giuseppe Bianchini's *Demonstratio*, Giacomo Acami's confirmation by numismatics of papal temporal dominion, and young Giuseppe Garampi's welcome disproof, also based in part on coins, of the tale of Pope Joan.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps Benedict's supervised historians also deserve partial credit for uncontroversial archaeological picture books like Giambattista Piranesi's *Antichità romane* (1756).<sup>20</sup> Left to themselves, however, historians can be quarrelsome as well as subversive, and Benedict's more conservative successors shut his Roman academies down.<sup>21</sup> The Academy of Sciences in Bologna, which dealt with the innocuous subjects – physics and anatomy, astronomy and botany – remained and still exists. By setting up his academies and chairs for history, by collecting and ensuring the collection of historical books, and by protecting, if not always agreeing with, outspoken independent historians such as Muratori and Scipione Maffei, Benedict had acted in the spirit of Enlightenment science.<sup>22</sup> In the second half of his reign, however, alerted by Montesquieu's historically grounded

*L'Esprit des lois* and other alarms from France, he came to recognize where this spirit listed, and he retrenched.<sup>23</sup>

Benedict devoted his historical work primarily to practical or institutional matters important to the Catholic Church. He wrote on the development of liturgy, the implementation of the disciplinary measures mandated by the Council of Trent, the operation and decisions of synods, the administration of dioceses, and so on.<sup>24</sup> These subjects did not lend themselves to narrative. An account of the medical parts of Lambertini's most important work, his handbook on beatification and canonization, will suggest his method of treating historical materials.

### Doctors and Saints

In 1701 the new pope, Clement XI, appointed Lambertini an advocate in the Congregazione dei Riti (Congregation of Rites). This congregation, established in 1588, operated on the shifting sands between science and faith, whence it issued judgments about the reputed miracles of candidates for beatification and canonization. Theirs was not the awkward job of the censors who occasionally felt obliged to decide whether an assertion of natural knowledge opposed scripture or the opinions of the Fathers, but the rewarding task of applying up-to-date scientific information, usually in the form of written reports by physicians of the first rank, to confirm or deny the supernatural character of extraordinary events.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps 90 per cent of these events were cures claimed on behalf of persons displaying "heroic virtues."<sup>26</sup> Most of the rest concerned extraordinary physical feats performed by them.

The first test for a miraculous cure was the seriousness of the disease, the *gravitas morbi*; unless the doctors could affirm that the disease would end in death in the ordinary course of nature, it was not safe to suppose supernatural intervention in case of recovery. Of course, doctors often disagreed about the likely course of an illness and, even when they concurred, often erred. In contrast, investigation of extraordinary physical feats – levitation, prolonged fasting, superhuman endurance, ecstasy, incorruptibility of the body after death, odour of sanctity – could be pursued by anatomizing the cadavers of possessors of heroic virtues. Here doctors could discern with accuracy and consensus the presence or absence of structures that might explain the facts and determine whether survival with such abnormalities required suspension of the ordinary course of nature. In contrast, autopsies on beneficiaries of miraculous cures could not have much probative value, since the

standard criteria required that a miraculous release from life-threatening illness be instantaneous, complete, and lasting.<sup>27</sup> In any case, the procedure of Rites required the independent testimony of doctors, given without reference to theological considerations.<sup>28</sup> The members of the Congregation took a wider view.

A brief consideration of the cases of Saints Ignatius Loyola and Filippo Neri, both canonized in 1622, will put some flesh on these bones. The famous physician Realdo Colombo discovered stones in the corpse of the founder of the Jesuits; Andrea Cesalpino and the other distinguished doctors who cut into the founder of the Oratorians found a pathologically enlarged heart embedded in preternaturally dry tissue. The Jesuits claimed that Loyola's stony constitution had withstood three rocks in his liver, with which he could not have lived without divine help. The Oratorians interpreted Neri's large heart and desiccated tissues (and also a broken rib) as evidence of the supernatural ardour with which he habitually prayed. The wise men of the Rites did not rate Ignatius's rocks very highly, and they sanctified him on other grounds, whereas Neri's holy pathology figured positively in deciding his canonization.<sup>29</sup>

These processes were adversarial affairs in which the proponents of the candidate for beatification or canonization did battle with the *Promotor Fidei*, or "devil's advocate," who opposed the proposal on all the theological, philosophical, and medical grounds he could think of. Clement appointed Lambertini to this demanding post in 1708.<sup>30</sup> Two of his early cases deserve notice here. The earlier concerned the monk Giuseppe da Copertino, who used to levitate during Mass and at other inconvenient times. His brothers argued that the intense heat of his devotions and his invocation, "Giesù, Giesù, tirami la sù," propelled him. Despite this convincing argument and the eyewitness of Urban VIII, Lambertini shot Giuseppe down. Spontaneous soaring of a heavy body violated the laws of physics: Giuseppe's miracle would have been *contra naturam* and thus harder to credit than a cure *supra naturam*: there is nothing intrinsically miraculous in recovering from an illness. When pope, Benedict accepted a couple of miraculous cures performed by Giuseppe and beatified him.<sup>31</sup>

The other case of interest resulted in the canonization of Catherine de' Vigri of Bologna. At Clement's request, Lambertini replaced the ailing procurator of Rites as her chief advocate.<sup>32</sup> Catherine's case resembled Giuseppe's in that the popular proof of her sanctity did not survive the scrutiny of Rites. The proof was her incorruptible corpse. Eight doctors

of Bologna who examined her in 1671, two centuries and more after her death, found evidence of decay, but were not allowed to prosecute their inquiry into her private parts. Five Bolognese gentlewomen took over, looked, and corroborated Catherine's reputation. The doctors who testified during the conclusive review under Lambertini threw out the proof by preservation but credited Catherine with two miraculous cures that Rites accepted.<sup>33</sup>

Lambertini got to know many of the doctors called on by the Congregation of Rites, and one of them, Giovanni Maria Lancisi, became a close friend. Lancisi was a member of Galiani's circle, and Muratori ranked him with Bianchini among the leading modernizing intellectuals in Rome.<sup>34</sup> Lambertini would quote extensively from Lancisi's sober opinions about the supernatural in his handbook on beatification and canonization. He learned a lot from the living Lancisi, and perhaps even more from Lancisi when dead; for, as the deceased doctor's literary executor, he edited and published a posthumous treatise, *On the Motion of the Heart and Aneurysms*. In this endeavour, for which his attendance at Georgius Baglivi's anatomy lectures at the Sapiientia may have been helpful, he collaborated with the papal physician Antonio Leprotti.<sup>35</sup>

In 1712, the year in which Catherine achieved sainthood, Clement asked Lambertini to apply his wide learning in canon law and Church history and his hands-on experience as devil's advocate to compose an authoritative guide for the Congregation of Rites. He made good progress with this work of supererogation and had a draft in hand before Clement died in 1721. It provided for three volumes, all dealing with law and liturgy.<sup>36</sup> Apparently, the medical part of the great handbook was composed, and perhaps planned, during Lambertini's years as archbishop of Bologna, where he had access to the many doctors associated with the university and the academy. Hence, as indicated earlier, his well-known provisions and benefactions to these institutions – he ensured a supply of cadavers, commissioned wax models, established an anatomical museum and a school of surgery, supplied books, instruments, and a mummy, created opportunities for research (the *accademici benedettini*), and (as a consummate administrator) provided for maintenance and repairs – may be regarded as acknowledgments, and perhaps also as solicitations, of help from Bolognese doctors.<sup>37</sup> Probably he would have preferred to put his efforts and resources into rebuilding the law faculty, on which the fame of its university had rested, but it had decayed more than St Catherine, and its professors did not know enough to buy, let alone read, Lambertini's *Opera omnia*. In contrast, the

academy had achieved international recognition in the natural sciences and he needed its advice. And so he neglected the lazy literati of the university and advanced the academy's study of the foundational science of human anatomy.<sup>38</sup>

Lambertini's handbook, which extends to over 3,000 double-column pages, appeared in four volumes in five parts in Bologna between 1734 and 1738. The medical part of the work depends substantially on a treatise by Paolo Zacchia, *Quaestiones medico-legales*, which dates from the time of Urban VIII.<sup>39</sup> Lambertini updated Zacchia with medical reports from the Rites' archives and the works of Marcello Malpighi, Thomas Willis, the Paduan school, and other anatomists. A Bolognese doctor, Ippolito Francesco Albertini, advised about bibliography, and another, Gian Giacinto Vogli, read drafts of the medical chapters.<sup>40</sup>

Lambertini often asked the doctors of Bologna how well earlier theories of bodily processes agreed with modern ones. At least once he put the same question to the entire Bolognese academy. Does modern medicine accept the views of Zacchia and other older writers about prolonged fasting? How long can abstinence from food and drink persist in *rerum natura*? At what point does survival require a supernatural act? The academy returned a lengthy answer, pulled together by Jacopo Bartolomeo Beccari. It was exactly what the archbishop wanted. He appended it to his handbook, "so that it will be obvious to everyone that the city of the mother of universities does not lack eminent men, and also so that ... I will not be taken as a plagiarist."<sup>41</sup> Should Lambertini ever become a candidate for beatification, heroic fasting will not be claimed on his behalf. Following medical advice, he did not abstain even on fast days, but consumed a little less of his ordinary diet: breakfast of bread and chocolate; dinner of soup, a roast, a sweet, and a pear; and supper of a glass of water.<sup>42</sup>

"The order of all nature created by God is two-fold, one natural, by which this visible world is directed and governed, the other supernatural, which relates to Grace and the Glory of Saints."<sup>43</sup> Thus, at the outset of the medical volume of *The Beatification of the Servants of God and the Canonization of Saints*, Lambertini divided the world into the parts whose junction he would explore using concepts from physics (in its wide, old meaning of all qualitative natural knowledge) and theology. In neither domain did he follow a system. His method was not deductive but agglutinative; he considered all respectable opinions irrespective of the date and circumstances of their authors and seldom resolved in favour of any.<sup>44</sup> Thus, although he often cited and approved modern



medical authorities, he referred frequently to the ancients, to Galen and also to Hippocrates, whom he quotes in more than seventy places.<sup>45</sup> The juxtaposition and, if possible, resolution of discordant authorities of equal weight from different times were standard practice in scholastic theology. Lambertini's recurrent concern to adjudicate between ancient and modern medical opinion in effect brought the treatments of the natural and supernatural into parallel.

Regarded as a scientific treatise, Lambertini's *Beatification and Canonization* may be placed formally in the same genus as Joseph Priestley's *History and Present State of Electricity* (1775). Priestley's history also juxtaposes conflicting phenomena and interpretations so as to give a full accounting of the subject matter – a method unsatisfactory for a textbook, but advisable where foundations are not firm enough to support safe identifications of spurious facts and misguided theories.<sup>46</sup> In the same way, Lambertini's knowledge of the world order did not allow him to determine whether an extraordinary cure was supernatural. Of course, it had to be "difficult, unusual, and marvelous," *arduuum, insolitum, admirandum*, the manifest effect of an occult cause, "occult not just to some people but to everyone."<sup>47</sup> This definition is too wide, however, as it would have included electricity, magnetism, and much of chemistry in Lambertini's time, and maybe in ours, except that the "little miracles" (as Benedict's correspondent Bose described electrical phenomena) of the laboratory can be reproduced under the same conditions, whereas the big miracles needed for beatification or canonization appear uncertainly and capriciously.<sup>48</sup>

Claims established by experiment can be destroyed by experiment. During a visit to Italy during which he stopped off to see Benedict, the Parisian academician and expert on electricity Jean-Antoine Nollet examined the odd phenomenon, attested to by doctors in Bologna and Venice, that persons suffering from certain diseases might recover merely by touching an electrified globe containing the appropriate medicine. Nollet's debunking of this immaculate therapy satisfied Zacchia's three criteria of a miraculous recovery. It was swift, complete, and lasting.<sup>49</sup> Benedict knew of at least one electrical cure, accomplished by a bishop. He was not impressed. He suffered illness from time to time despite being constantly electrified by bad news, unpleasant audiences, and a tangle of unrelated business.<sup>50</sup>

Lambertini's task in exposing spurious phenomena was more demanding than Nollet's. To determine whether a manifest effect had a cause hidden from everyone, he had to know the full range of relevant causal explanations proposed by competent authorities. For bodily

processes both natural and supernatural he relied primarily on the four humours and the vital spirits of the ancients modified as needed to suit the anatomical discoveries of the moderns. His description of the cerebellum, where he located the power of imagination, suggests that he paid particular attention to it during the anatomies he attended in Bologna. The imagination was his key to the lock between mind and body, the agent of psychosomatic illness and its reversal.<sup>51</sup>

These concepts allowed Lambertini to narrow the field of the miraculous, or widen the range of doubt. Following Zacchia, he dismissed all apparently supernatural cures preceded by a crisis marked by fever, vomiting, sweating, or hemorrhaging, which he construed as evidence of a natural purging of the humours.<sup>52</sup> Conditions arising from the constriction of spirits in the nerves were curable naturally if the obstruction originated within the nerves but not if imposed externally.<sup>53</sup> Unfortunately, diagnostic technique did not permit a secure decision until after death, but death in itself was proof enough that no saint had taken a sufficient interest in the case.

It would be unjust to Lambertini's exhaustive method to omit his concern that a devil, infidel, heretic, or anti-Christ himself might successfully counterfeit a miracle.<sup>54</sup> St Thomas had made clear the competence of evil demons to work wonders. They manipulate our animal spirits only too easily! "How difficult it is to decide, and definitely determine, whether [visions] are from God, or from the devil, or from natural and material causes!" This perplexity, advertised in an earlier volume of *Beatification and Canonization*, made cases involving the imagination particularly hard. How to know whether an ecstasy is natural and, if supernatural, whether devilish or divine? Great abstraction, such as that practised in their different ways by Archimedes and Aquinas, can bring on an ecstasy naturally, especially, as Saint Augustine observed, in people who can wiggle their ears. Diabolical ecstasy may be detected by several signs, which it is not in the public interest to disclose.<sup>55</sup> But it may be conjectured that the lady who appealed to Robert Bellarmine to convert her condition, which offended her modesty, to another more accessible to medical inspection, owed the transformation of her hemorrhoids to arthritis to the beneficent intercession of the devil.<sup>56</sup>

### Parochial Activities

The greatest service a bishop could perform for the Vatican, according to Lambertini, was to identify responsible, intelligent, moderate, and

educated people and send them to Rome.<sup>57</sup> The right man in the right place was the key to a good administration as well as to the sound development of ideas. As cardinal and as pope he kept his eye open for promising people and supported them when he found them. He gets high marks for his choices of the cultivators of natural philosophy: besides those already mentioned, there were the prodigies Laura Bassi and Maria Agnesi, able to compete with the best despite the handicap of being women.<sup>58</sup> Choosing good people is one thing, taking their advice another. Benedict had this quality of a good administrator – indeed, some of his detractors charge that he listened too much to a few opinionated cardinals in political and ecclesiastical affairs. But in less important matters like natural philosophy he sought advice vigorously and took it prudently. He seized the opportunity of Nollet's visit to Bologna and Rome to ask how the Bologna Institute's apparatus for science measured up. Nollet told him frankly what was missing or outdated, and Benedict implemented his suggestions.<sup>59</sup>

One source of good men was the Society of Jesus. Benedict used it sparingly. He deplored its rigidity, its internal bickering, and its rejection of external advice. In a matter in which he was the greatest expert in the universe, beatification, they refused to listen to him: "To say the truth, docility is not in their character." Their candidate was Bellarmine, their method whining. "They only know how to bewail, implore, and beg."<sup>60</sup> Still, there were Jesuits of great merit, "neither fanatical nor violent," with whom he perforce collaborated, "as they know everything."<sup>61</sup> He got on well with their general, Ignazio Visconti, whose administrative style he rated as prudent, responsible, and gentle; indeed, to some senior Jesuits, it was far too lax. He hunted out the best Jesuit in Italy, Egidio Maria Giuli, "excellent in maxims and very moderate in opinion," and placed him in the Holy Office; appointed several lesser Jesuits to his old bailiwick at Rites; and, coming closer to natural science, salvaged the career of a professor of philosophy at the Roman College, Carlo Benvenuti.<sup>62</sup>

Benvenuti had studied mathematics under Boscovich and introduced his master's novel natural philosophy, based on Newton's treatment of gravity, into his courses. The Jesuit superiors tolerated Boscovich's Newtonianizing, with its proscribed Copernican suppositions, as mathematics, which, as everyone knew, had nothing to do with the truth; but they demurred when Benvenuti started to teach it as physics within the philosophy curriculum. They decided to get rid of him, not in the rough old way, but by sending him to teach in one of their smallest

and most remote colleges. When he became acquainted with the case and learned that Benvenuti was reasonable, able, and open-minded, Benedict blocked the rustication. Benvenuti would stay in Rome, where he might be useful, though not in philosophy. He was transferred to sacred rites, where, it was thought, he could do no lasting damage.<sup>63</sup>

Benedict liked to say that his pen was his best friend. He indulged this friend whenever he could, sometimes, perhaps, as the famous pasquinade, *magnus in folio minus in solio*, had it, to the neglect of duty.<sup>64</sup> He snatched time for writing whenever he could. Early in his reign, in 1743, his “fertile and learned pen,” together with an editor or two, managed to publish a new edition of *Beatification and Canonization*, enlarged with material to which only a pope had access. “People will not marvel at what I’ve written,” Benedict said in his self-deprecating manner, “but that I found time to write it.” Writing began early in the morning, the pope at his desk wielding his pen before his amanuenses appeared.<sup>65</sup> In short, he was an author and felt himself at one with other serious authors, at least with respect to their infatuation with writing and publishing.

The idea of using the censorship system to silence opponents was anathema to Benedict. One of his loftiest letters was a rebuke to the Grand Inquisitor of Spain for allowing himself to ban a book under pressure from the Jesuits. Never, so Benedict wrote, never should a censor condemn a book just because it goes against one or another theological school. And even if a book contained some things not entirely acceptable to a strict constructionist, it should not be condemned if the author was a serious scholar and a good Catholic: “How many times have we ourselves found here or there in Muratori and other respectable writers opinions that are certainly condemnable; but, in the interest of peace and scholarship, we have done nothing about it!”<sup>66</sup>

When Benedict took office, the censorship system was urgently in need of reform. Arbitrary readings by a few influential consultants and decisions by ignorant cardinals had produced so many ridiculous decisions that Galiani could joke, during the reign of the modernizing Clement XI, that Romans soon would have nothing to read but *Don Quixote* – spared, no doubt, because an addlebrained knight attacking a windmill was a perfect model of a censor attempting to quash the circulation of ideas. An example that provoked peals of gallows laughter from Galiani’s group was the banning, by the ever-innovative Inquisitor of Spain, of an English book recommending civic baths as a public health measure. If not a formal heresy, cleanliness of the body was bad

hygiene for the soul.<sup>67</sup> While Lambertini was enjoying the company of the learned in Bologna, his friends in Rome were deploring the ignorance of Roman prelates and literati. The cardinal prefect of the Vatican Library cannot conjugate a Latin verb; the blockheads parading as intellectuals quarrel rather than think; the thought police oppose natural history for fear that it might discover a naturalistic explanation of earthquakes and diminish God's opportunities for miracles. "[Rome] is in decadence."<sup>68</sup>

The Dominicans controlled the dysfunctional censorship quagmire and employed it to harass the Jesuits. When the indomitable Spanish Inquisitor condemned the first volumes of the measured hagiographies published by the Jesuits (the Bollandist histories), they begged Benedict to free them from Dominican oversight.<sup>69</sup> The fight between the orders came to focus on Jansenism, which the Jesuits bitterly opposed and high officials in the Holy Office and the Index tolerated. The forces at play and their power over Benedict appear from the successful attack by the Jansenizing side on the naturalistic account of religion in Montesquieu's *L'Esprit des lois*. Montesquieu assumed that Benedict would preserve the book apart from a few passages. However, the pope was not able to resist pressures from within the Vatican and from anti-Enlightenment forces in France. He delayed condemnation by ordering a second review of the book, but he had to allow the Index to act when an Italian translation came out in 1751.<sup>70</sup> No doubt there were good reasons for condemnation. Montesquieu treated Christianity as a joint product of the environment and the state. From this point of view there was little to choose among the Christian Churches or among religions in general.<sup>71</sup>

While the censors were suffocating *L'Esprit des lois*, Benedict was busy reforming their work habits. His commonsensical improvements, which he imposed in 1753, called for consultors to read the books they judged, and to interpret them in the most favourable light. In case the first consultor made a negative recommendation, others should read the book, and if the recommendation remained negative, the author should be given a chance to defend himself and make changes before the Congregation of the Index acted. (This privilege was not extended to Montesquieu.) To obtain fairness for the individual and enrich the republic of letters, the bias should be in the author's favour throughout the process. Like Benedict's academies of history, the right of authors to be heard in their defence did not survive him for long. It returned explicitly only in 1965 under Paul VI.<sup>72</sup>

A writer by preference and circumstance, Benedict strove to distinguish the moral quality of authors from the inevitable faults in their work. Even if, after due consideration, some of these faults be judged inimical to the Church, the disapproval should not extend to the author: "It is very painful that even one book should be condemned without the author's being able to defend it, however estimable the prelate who denounced it; for the condemnation will be a black mark on the author and those who approved him."<sup>73</sup> The Holy Office should conserve on condemnations just as Rites conserved on miracles. Censors should be lenient towards distinguished Catholic authors. "The work of great men must not be prohibited ... even if some regrettable things are found in them that would merit prohibition if written by others."<sup>74</sup> Benedict practised this preaching in favour not only of friends like Muratori, but also of disobliging people like the Jesuit Isaac Joseph Berruyer, whose right to be heard, despite Berruyer's invincible contumacy, he upheld "at any cost."<sup>75</sup>

In 1753 Benedict promulgated his reform of the censorship, drawn up with the help of the Dominican secretary of the Index, Tommaso Agostino Ricchini. Five years later, helped again by Ricchini and benefiting from a report by the Jesuit Pietro Lazzari, who taught critical history and natural philosophy at the Roman College, Benedict issued a revision of the *Index of Prohibited Books*.<sup>76</sup> Its most conspicuous feature was the silent removal of the blanket proscription against all books endorsing the Copernican system – an edict that in any case had proved impossible to enforce. However, the special condemnation of Galileo's *Dialogo* remained, perhaps because Benedict did not want to cancel a determined decision by a predecessor pope and certainly because he did not have the heart for the inevitable fight with conservative elements in the Vatican and the major orders.<sup>77</sup> In any case, Galileo could not profit from retrospective liberation from the *Index*, whereas all current and future authors could enjoy the new freedom.

Benedict's relationship with one of these authors, Roger Boscovich, illustrates several of the modes in which his discharge of his administrative duties impinged on the course of natural science. Born in the city state of Ragusa and educated by the Jesuits there and in Rome, Boscovich became professor of mathematics at the Roman College in the same year that Lambertini rose to head the Roman Church. Soon after his inauguration Benedict visited the College, where his one-time coach, Orazio Borgondio, "il famoso ... dottissimo matematico,"

had just been appointed rector. On this occasion the pope offered the College an observatory. The task of planning it fell to Boscovich, since Borgondio preferred to devote his efforts to persuading his colleagues to accept a chair of ecclesiastical history – another instance of the connection of Church history and mathematics. Boscovich made plans and a model, but the observatory was never constructed.<sup>78</sup>

Boscovich continued to come to Benedict's attention through Valenti Gonzaga, who, as a former student of Galiani, had a cultivated interest in natural philosophy. Boscovich became a protégé of the powerful cardinal secretary of state, for whose instruction he composed a dissertation on the use of telescopes and from whom, eventually, he received a large quadrant in return.<sup>79</sup> He was intimate enough with the cardinal's household to have a place in the famous painting by Giovanni Paolo Pannini of Valenti Gonzaga's picture gallery.<sup>80</sup> In 1743, at the cardinal's suggestion, Benedict appointed Boscovich, along with Jacquier and Leseur, to review the opinion of architects about cracks that had appeared in the dome of St Peter's.<sup>81</sup> And again, on Valenti Gonzaga's initiative, Benedict commissioned Boscovich and another hardy Jesuit mathematician to repeat and extend the trigonometric survey of the Papal States begun by Bianchini under Clement XI.<sup>82</sup> Having proved himself an able and responsible applied mathematician, Boscovich was engaged (on Benedict's recommendation) to advise the Republic of Lucca in a dispute over water works with the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. The resolution of the squabble required a trip to Vienna.<sup>83</sup> Boscovich was seldom in Rome again.

Benedict may have suggested that Boscovich leave town to allow the irritation of the Jesuit hierarchy over the Benvenuti affair to subside. The Jesuit general suspected that Boscovich had alerted the pope to the business; for by 1757 Boscovich had obtained access to Benedict not only as an applied mathematician but also, and perhaps more securely, as a facile Latin poet. Boscovich was the leading versifier for the Accademia degli Arcadi, of which Lambertini also was a member. One of Boscovich's many assignments as an Arcadian was to compose a get-well poem during Benedict's serious illness of 1756. It worked; the pope recovered and received Boscovich and, perhaps, discussed with him the then impending revision of the *Index of Prohibited Books*.<sup>84</sup>

Despite this access, Boscovich was not a favourite or a protégé of the pope. Benedict advanced rival mathematicians as much as or more than Boscovich, for example, Leseur and, especially, Jacquier, in

whom he saw “a true religious savant, of a probity proof against every test,” an excellent and conscientious teacher, “very diligent in everything concerning his assignments,” and, moreover, a strong opponent even in theology of the old-fashioned foundations of knowledge favoured by the Jesuits. “Students should ... not bother much with the usual questions about essential qualities, for from these little that is useful can be expected.”<sup>85</sup> Boscovich had too much Jesuit tradition and pushiness about him to earn full marks from Benedict. Jacquier, who had been a professor of sacred scripture, received a new chair of experimental physics, and Leseur acquired a new chair of higher mathematics, both at the Sapienza, as part of Benedict’s efforts to persuade the professors there to teach their courses and stick to their subjects.<sup>86</sup> These institutional improvements, though significant in their place, did not raise Rome to international standards in mathematics and natural philosophy. Boscovich was surprised and depressed during a tour of France and England to discover that the Roman Jesuits were far behind the D’Alemberts in mathematics and the Nollets in physics. Or, as he expressed the reckoning, the Parisians were as far ahead of him as he was of other Jesuits. While visiting the astronomer royal James Bradley in Greenwich, he made the uncomfortable discovery that, as he wrote to his brother, he was no astronomer: “*vidi astronomum et astronomus non sum.*”<sup>87</sup>

The removal of the blanket proscription of Copernican books from the *Index* in 1758 doubtless also removed scruples that had inhibited astronomers constrained by oath or conscience from confessing their adherence to the heliocentric system. It allowed Boscovich to publish his *Theoria philosophiae naturalis* in 1758 and, eventually, to apologize for earlier works in which he had strained to accommodate the facts to the world system preferred by the Church.<sup>88</sup> But again, the consequences are too easily exaggerated. Boscovich’s theory did not have the historical importance now often attributed to it, and Catholic mathematicians, even Jesuit ones, had long since found ways to teach and practise sun-centred astronomy.<sup>89</sup> Like his support of institutionalized science in Rome and Bologna and his intervention in the Benvenuti case, Benedict’s reform of the censorship and issuance of a new *Index* may be regarded as fulfilments of the duties of a vigilant vicar.<sup>90</sup>

As a vigilant vicar, as an administrator, Benedict was effective, conscientious, judicious, and tireless. The quasi-science of administration, which is universally despised by university professors, keeps people,



including professors, from living by the law of the jungle. Benedict was particularly good at resolving oppositions, settling controversies, reconciling enemies, and arranging concordats – in short, clearing a peaceful domain in which he could strengthen the cultural and spiritual institutions for which he was or felt responsible.<sup>91</sup> In some instances, such as restoring ancient churches, repairing roads, protecting cultural heritage, consulting historical precedent, regularizing beatification and canonization, and revitalizing liturgy, episcopal performance, and parochial service in the light of the Council of Trent, strengthening meant fresh importations from the past. A good many of these he collected into five volumes of reforming edicts he issued as archbishop of Bologna.<sup>92</sup> In other respects, such as support for the new sciences both historical and natural, strengthening meant cautious entertainment and tentative adoption of new ideas and methods percolating among Catholics at home and abroad.

Benedict's good sense and moderation placed him at the modernizing edge as well as at the top of the Vatican.<sup>93</sup> Compared with Clements XII and XIII, who respectively preceded and followed him, he was a tower of tolerance and enlightenment. But when he judged the Church's interests to be imperiled, his actions blended perfectly with theirs. He repeated Clement XII's condemnations of Masonic and other secret societies, and his prohibitions of Montesquieu and Voltaire led logically to the banning of Rousseau's *Émile* and the *Encyclopédie* under Clement XIII.<sup>94</sup> Benedict's views on usury and his policy towards the Jews were far from enlightened, and his easy acquiescence in forced baptism would have shocked St Thomas.<sup>95</sup> He believed in holy relics and the residual powers of saints and martyrs. His annual gifts to the diocese of Ancona, where he served his first stint as bishop, frequently included reliquaries, at least one of which contained the oddly personalized present of some bits of saints he himself had canonized.<sup>96</sup>

In carrying on the business of the Roman Catholic Church and the Papal States with the help of the able and reliable men he could muster, Benedict had to placate or isolate various incompetent, backward-looking, uncooperative, and treacherous cardinals, bishops, prelates, and generals.<sup>97</sup> As he was only a pope, he could not work miracles. His accomplishments under the constraints he faced were nonetheless admirable; and among his accomplishments his encouragement to the sciences and his gifts to scientific institutions, whatever their motivations, must be numbered.

## NOTES

- 1 Estimates of Benedict's degree of enlightenment have lowered over the last few decades; the literature is reviewed in Fattori, *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV*, xiv–xxiv.
- 2 Bose to Benedict, 1 kal. December 1748, Benedict to Tommaso Emaldi, 17 January 1749, and Valenti Gonzaga to Bose, 3 kal. February 1749, in Mercati, "Il fisico tedesco G.M. Bose e Benedetto XIV," 62–6.
- 3 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, discussed further below; Gorce, *L'oeuvre médicale de Prospero Lambertini*, 13, 19; Santing, "Tirami sù," 86–7, 92; Benedict to Tencin, 12 January 1746, in Heeckeren, *Correspondance de Benoît XIV*, 1: 248 (quote).
- 4 Benedict to Tencin, 25 June and 9 September 1755, in Heeckeren, *Correspondance de Benoît XIV*, 2: 442, 457.
- 5 Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*; Galilei, *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi*.
- 6 Mabillon, *De re diplomatica*; Newton, *Principia mathematica*.
- 7 Pastor, *Benedict XIV*, 27, 197–200; Valenti, *Papa umoristico*, 200, 273–4.
- 8 For example, see Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 18.22: 237, citing Muratori, *Del governo delle pesta ... trattato* (1714); Muratori, *Filosofia morale* (1738) is also mentioned, in connection with cures effected by the imagination (Kirchmayr, "Medizinische," 117–18).
- 9 Nicolini, "Tre amici bolognesi," 90–1; Caffiero, "Scienza e politica a Roma," 312–13.
- 10 Davia to Galiani, 3 and 17 September 1722, in Nicolini, "Tre amici bolognesi," 107–8, and *ibid.*, 88–9 (about Manfredi). Davia also was a polymath; he took a strong interest in Newtonian physics (*ibid.*, 105–6) and in many other sciences (Arecco, "Il linguaggio di uno scienziato all'alba dell'Illuminismo," 183–4).
- 11 Bottari to Grandi, 7 June 1726, in Niccola Carranza, "Prospero Lambertini e Guido Grandi," 238n.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 213–15, 234 (quote), 237–42, and Lambertini to Grandi, 4 September 1728, *ibid.*, on access to prohibited books.
- 13 Bianchini, "Iter in Britannium," 39, 57–8, 63, 67–9; Newton to J.B. Menke, 1724, in Newton, *Correspondence*, 7: 255 (ed. A.R. Hall and Laura Tilling, 1959).
- 14 Garms-Cornides, "Storia, politica e apologia in Benedetto XIV," 150–1, 153, 155–7, 160.
- 15 Benedict to Paolo Magnani, 25 September 1743, in Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al marchese Paolo Magnani*, 112.
- 16 Morello, "Il 'Museo Cristiano,'" 2: 1120–1; Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 263–4; G. Bianchini, *Demonstratio historiae ecclesiasticae quadripartitae*.

- 17 Sölch, "Das 'Museo Ecclesiastico,'" 179–84, and "Bianchini e l'inizio dei musei pubblici a Roma," 315–20; Morello, "Il 'Museo Cristiano,'" 1124–30.
- 18 Benedict to Tencin, 29 September 1745, in Heeckeren, *Correspondance*, 1: 213.
- 19 Acami, *Dell'origine ed antichità della zecca pontificia*; Garampi, *De nummo argenteo Benedicti III*. Acami belonged to the academies of ecclesiastical history and liturgy; Garampi later became a cardinal. Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 35: 185–8, lists many historical works commissioned by Benedict, some of them published in the *Giornale de' letterati*, which was refounded during Benedict's pontificate with his blessing; Donato, "Gli 'strumenti' della politica di Benedetto XIV," 45, 48.
- 20 Rosa, *Riformatori e ribelli*, 70; Piranesi, *Le antichità romane*.
- 21 On litigious letterati, Leprotti to Galiani, 21 June 1731, in Nicolini, "Tre amici bolognesi," 128.
- 22 Garms-Cornides, "Storia, politica e apologia," 150–1.
- 23 Donato, "Gli 'strumenti' della politica," 51–2; Garms-Cornides, "Storia, politica e apologia," 147.
- 24 Cf. Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 67–74, 141–51; and Maragi, "Psichiatria e guargioni," 199–200.
- 25 On this role of physicians, see Gianna Pomata's chapter in this volume.
- 26 Duffin, *Medical Miracles*, 32.
- 27 Kirchmayr, "Medizinische," 42–7, 102–5; Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 8.2, 8.4, 93–4.
- 28 Duffin, *Medical miracles*, 114–19; Maragi, "Psichiatria e guargioni miracolose," 203.
- 29 Andretta, "Anatomie du vénérable dans la Rome de la Contre-Réforme," 263, 266–74, 277–9; Haynes, *Philosopher King*, 127–8.
- 30 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, 2: iv–v, itemizes Lambertini's obligations to Clement.
- 31 Santing, "Tirami sù," 90–2, 94–8; Haynes, *Philosopher King*, 34–5.
- 32 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, 2: vii–viii; Pomata, "Malpighi and the Holy Body," 584.
- 33 Pomata, "Malpighi and the Holy Body," 571–2, 578–82, 585.
- 34 Vincenzo Ferrone, *The Intellectual Roots of the Italian Enlightenment*, 4–8, 125. Maragi, "Psichiatria e guargioni miracolose," 205, mentions the anatomy lectures; Baglivi died in 1707.
- 35 Lancisi, *De motu cordis et aneurysmatibus*; Kirchmayr, "Medizinische," 7; Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol 4, pt 1, 19.17: 258–9.
- 36 Saccenti, "La lunga genesi dell'opera sulle canonizzazioni," 3–6, 17–18, 121–2; Haynes, *Philosopher King*, 80–1, on Benedict's supererogatory labour over *De servorum Dei*.

- 37 On Lambertini/Benedict's benefactions to the natural sciences in Bologna, see Martinotti, *L'insegnamento dell'anatomia*, 6–8, 32–7; Dacome, "The Anatomy of the Pope," 357–60; Prodi, "Papa Lambertini nelle lettere," xxxv–xxxix; Benedict to Innocenzo Storani, 12 May 1742, in Moroni, "Lettere, di Benedetto XIV all'arc," 726 (the mummy).
- 38 Martinotti, *Prospero Lambertini*, 40; Valenti, *Papa umoristico*, 235–40; Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*, 20–51, and her chapter in this volume.
- 39 Zacchia, *Quaestiones medico-legales*.
- 40 Schleyer, "Die Weisungen Benedict XIV," 316–17; Saccenti, "La lunga genesi," 6, 144–5; Gorce, *L'oeuvre médicale de Prospero Lambertini*, 26–30; Duffin, *Medical Miracles*, 21–5.
- 41 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 27.16: 384, and appendix, i–xxxvii; Kirchmayr, "Medizinische," 69–70.
- 42 Benedict to Tencin, 25 March 1744, in Heeckeren, *Correspondance de Benoît XIV*, 1:127.
- 43 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 1.1: 2.
- 44 Cf. Gorce, *L'oeuvre médicale de Prospero Lambertini*, 36, 43–5.
- 45 Cf. Kirchmayr, "Medizinische," 33–5, 64–5, 170n162.
- 46 Heilbron, "Physics and Its History," 56–62.
- 47 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 1.3: 2–3, citing St Thomas on miracles; cf. Kirchmayr, "Medizinische," 52–6.
- 48 Heilbron, *Electricity in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, 264.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 354. Gorce, *L'oeuvre médicale de Prospero Lambertini*, 44, points to a similar effect – a cure by merely looking at the medicine – that Lambertini took from Montaigne (Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 33.26).
- 50 Valenti, *Papa umoristico*, 226.
- 51 Gorce, *L'oeuvre médicale de Prospero Lambertini*, 34–5, 71, 114–15; Kirchmayr, "Medizinische," 73–7, 109–13, 120–3; Fernando Vidal's chapter in this volume; Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 33.4; 33.7; 33.21: 463, 473–4.
- 52 Kirchmayr, "Medizinische," 78–9, 131–4; Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 8.26: 109–10.
- 53 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 9.9: 20, referring to blindness; and *ibid.*, 33.30: 480–1, referring to the cases of Catherine and Pius V.
- 54 Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei*, Vol. 4, pt 1, 3.1: 29–31.
- 55 Benedict XIV, *Heroic virtue*, 3: 240–2, 247–52, 310, 315, and, on devil-induced ecstasy, 260, 274–8.
- 56 Gorce, *L'oeuvre médicale de Prospero Lambertini*, 30. Zacchia accepted miracles of transference if the victim wanted it and the saint acted promptly. As Bellarmine was not yet a saint when Zacchia wrote, we may doubt the story.

- 57 Lombardo, "Benedetto XIV e gli ordini religiosi," 536; Romani, "Tipografia e commercio librario nel settecento romano," 2: 1081.
- 58 Findlen, "Calculations of Faith," 264, 269–71; Ceranski, "Und sie fürchtet sich vor niemandem," 66, 103–5, 126.
- 59 Nollet, entry of 5 September 1749, *Journal du voyage de Piedmont et d'Italie 1749*.
- 60 Benedict to Tencin, 21 February 1748 and 25 July 1753, in Heeckeren, *Correspondance de Benoît XIV*, 1: 386 and 2: 281.
- 61 *Ibid.*, 13 September 1752, 2: 213.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 16 February 1746, 7 May and 3 December 1755, respectively 1: 247 and 2: 410, 459; Lombardo, "Benedetto XIV e gli ordini religiosi," 578–82; Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 264.
- 63 Benedict XIV to Tencin, 18 September 54, in Baldini, *Saggi sulla cultura della Compagnia di Gesù*, 282–8.
- 64 The pen friend is a quip in Testoni, *Il cardinale Lambertini*, 43; "great in books less in office," in Romani, "Tipografia e commercio librario," 2: 1182.
- 65 Audierne, *Lettres curieuses, utiles et théologiques*, 1: iii (first quote); Valenti, *Papa umoristico*, 197 (second quote); Benedict to Peggì, 21 March 1742, in Kraus, *Briefe Benedicts XIV*, 6, and to Cardinal Prefect Vincenzo Petra, 14 January 1742, in Metzler, "Benedetto XIV e Propaganda Fide," 1: 704; Saccenti, "La lunga genesi," 24–6.
- 66 Pastor, *History of the Popes*: 35: 196–200, 347–53; Del Re, "Benedetto XIV e la curia romana," 2: 656; Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 278–83.
- 67 Galiani to Leprotti, 25 August 1714 (on Don Quixote), in Caffiero, "Scienza e politica," 335; Leprotti to Galiani, 25 January 1737, in Nicolini, "Tre amici bolognesi," 136 (on bathing).
- 68 Leprotti to Galiani, 9 September 1730, 21 July 1731, 13 September 1735 (quote), and Cardinal Davia to Galiani, 27 September 1732 and 12 September 1733, in Nicolini, "Tre amici bolognesi," 126, 128, 132, 119–20.
- 69 Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 35: 247–53.
- 70 Rosa, *Riformatori e ribelli*, 91–3, citing Montesquieu to the French ambassador to Rome, 26 January 1750; Montesquieu, *L'Esprit des lois*, especially books 24–6.
- 71 Rosa, *Riformatori e ribelli*, 99–108, 112–13; Garms-Cornides, "Storia, politica, e apologia," 158–9.
- 72 Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 35: 196–200, 347–53; Del Re, "Benedetto XIV e la curia romana," 656; Rosa, *Riformatori e ribelli*, 70, 93.
- 73 Benedict to Tencin, 16 November 1746, in de Heeckeren, *Correspondance de Benoît XIV*, 1: 281–2.
- 74 Benedict to Muratori, 25 September 1748, in Mauro, "Benedetto XIV," 192.

- 75 Benedict to Tencin, 11 June and 12 November 1755, in Heeckeren, *Correspondance de Benoît XIV*, 2: 418, 454.
- 76 Del Re, "Benedetto XIV e la curia romana," 657; Baldini, *Saggi sulla cultura della Compagnia di Gesù*, 303, and 307–28 (a reprint of Lazzari's report); Maria Pia Donato's chapter in this volume.
- 77 Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 35: 247–53; Mauro, "Benedetto XIV," 176–83; Benedict to Tencin, 16 November 1746 and 3 October 1753, in Heeckeren, *Correspondance de Benoît XIV*, 1: 281–2, 2: 295.
- 78 Leopardi, "Storia dell'astronomia," 296; Donato, "Profilo intellettuale di Silvio Valenti Gonzaga," 82–4, 87–8; Villoslada, *Storia del Collegio Romano*, 187–8, 240, 252; Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 35: 379–82.
- 79 Boscovich to his brother, 5 May 1760, in Boscovich, *Edizione nazionale della corrispondenza*, 268.
- 80 Cormio, "Il cardinale Silvio Valenti Gonzaga," 51–5, 64n43; Donato, "Gli 'strumenti' della politica di Benedetto XIV," 58n4; Paoli, *Ruggiero Giuseppe Boscovich*, 86–90.
- 81 Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 35: 163–4; Mercati, "Lettere di scienziati dell'Archivio Segreto Vaticano," 5: 104–7, 128.
- 82 Heilbron, "Meridiane and Meridians," 390–6.
- 83 Paoli, *Ruggiero Giuseppe Boscovich*, 85–6, 91–9; Barsanti and Rombai, *Leonardo Ximenes*, 46–51.
- 84 Vale, "La corrispondenza del PP. Benedetto XIV," 2: 402, 404; Choiseul to Rouillé, 20 and 24 November, 22 and 29 December 1756, in Boutry, *Choiseul à Rome*, 194–205; Boscovich, *Pro restituta valetudine Benedicto XIV*.
- 85 Jacquier, quoted in Fejér, *Theoriae corpusculares typicae*, 6.
- 86 Benedict to Tencin, 18 February 1747, in Heeckeren, *Correspondance de Benoît XIV*, 1: 305 (Jacquier); Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 35: 189–90; Cormio, "Il cardinale Silvio Valenti Gonzaga," 53. Boscovich refers to Jacquier as a rival in Boscovich to Garampi, 4 December 1766, in Mercati, "Lettere di scienziati dell'Archivio Segreto Vaticano," 143–4.
- 87 Boscovich to his brother Bartolomeo, 14 and 29 January, 18 February, and 24 March 1760, in Boscovich, *Edizione nazionale della corrispondenza*, 203–4, 215, 223, 241. Cf. Galiani to Leprotti, 12 December 1732, on how much better the sciences were faring in Naples than in Rome, in Caffiero, "Scienza e politica," 343.
- 88 Dedić, "Bošćović and the Question of the Earth's Motion," 135–7.
- 89 Heilbron, "Censorship of Astronomy in Italy after Galileo," 279–80, 303–8.
- 90 Cf. Cennachi, "Benedetto XIV e l'Illuminismo," 2: 1083.

- 91 Rosa, *Riformati e ribelli*, 55–66; Del Re, “Benedetto XIV e la curia romana,” 650–3; Cenacchi, “Benedetto XIV e l’Illuminismo,” 2: 1083–4.
- 92 Cenacchi, “Benedetto XIV e l’Illuminismo,” 2: 1081, 1083–4; Rosa, *Riformati e ribelli*, 50–1; Garms-Cornides, “Storia, politica e apologia,” 146.
- 93 Cf. Cenacchi, “Benedetto XIV e l’Illuminismo,” 2: 1093; Mezzardi, “Papa Benedetto XIV e il Giubileo del 1750,” 147.
- 94 Rosa, *Riformati e ribelli*, 117–18; Rousseau, *Emile*; Diderot and d’Alembert, *L’Encyclopédie*.
- 95 Greco, “Il pontificato di papa Benedetto XIV,” 132–8; Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 35: 219–22; Caffiero, *Forced Baptisms*, 46–58.
- 96 Benedict to Innocenzo Storiano, 3 April 1748, in Moroni, “Lettere di Benedetto XIV all’arc,” 764.
- 97 Prodi, “Papa Lambertini nelle lettere,” xviii–xix, xxvi; Rosa, *Riformati e ribelli*, 54–5. Cf. Choiseul, in Boutry, *Choiseul à Rome*, 276–7.

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## 8 Benedict XIV and the Galileo Affair: Liberalization or Carelessness?

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MAURICE A. FINOCCHIARO

### Introduction

In 1633, at the conclusion of one of the most famous trials in history, the Roman Inquisition convicted Galileo of “vehement suspicion of heresy.” This was a religious crime intermediate in seriousness between formal heresy and reckless temerity. The alleged crime had been committed by writing and publishing a year earlier a book entitled *Dialogue on the Two Chief World Systems, Ptolemaic and Copernican*, in which Galileo defended the Copernican theory of the earth’s motion, thus denying the astronomical authority of scripture. He was condemned to perpetual house arrest, and the book was banned. Such a book was problematic partly in light of the fact that in 1616 the Church’s department of book censorship (Congregation of the Index) had declared the earth’s motion false and contrary to scripture and had banned Nicolaus Copernicus’s own book *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*, published in 1543.<sup>1</sup>

Although the condemnation of 1633 ended the original Galileo affair, it gave rise to a new controversy that continues to our own day. This subsequent Galileo affair is a controversy about his trial – its facts, causes, consequences, and lessons – for example, about whether, how, and why his condemnation was right or wrong, and about whether or not it proves the incompatibility between science and religion. Such controversial issues are discussed in a voluminous interdisciplinary and international literature, which includes commentary by astronomers, physicists, theologians, churchmen, historians, philosophers, cultural critics, playwrights, novelists, and journalists. The issues and the commentaries are aspects of the rich and fascinating history

of the repercussions of Galileo's trial in modern western culture, and an important series of such historical repercussions consist of various actions taken by the Catholic Church in the four centuries since the trial. Benedict XIV and his papacy are connected with two important episodes among such historical repercussions.<sup>2</sup>

In 1740, about a century after Galileo's condemnation, Prospero Lambertini was elected pope; he reigned as Benedict XIV until 1758. It was during his papacy that the following two developments in the subsequent Galileo affair occurred: in 1744 Galileo's *Dialogue* was republished for the first time with the Church's approval as the fourth volume of the Padua edition of his collected works, and in 1758 the new edition of the *Index of Prohibited Books* dropped from the list the general entry "all books teaching the earth's motion and the sun's immobility." These two episodes are the focus of this chapter. They are as significant as they are little known.<sup>3</sup>

To begin with, the study of these episodes promises to be instructive because they appear to be instances of enlightenment or liberalization, and because they seem to fit a relatively well-known pattern of behaviour on the part of Benedict XIV. In fact, it is well known that he was widely respected and liked by Catholic, non-Catholic, and non-Christian rulers, scholars, and common people. Jean d'Alembert was one of them, as can be seen from his article on Copernicus in the fourth volume of the French *Encyclopédie*.<sup>4</sup> Another was Voltaire, who exchanged letters, compliments, and gifts with Benedict.<sup>5</sup> Other instances of the pope's liberal attitude also can be mentioned. For example, he intervened to defend a leading Italian intellectual named Ludovico Muratori from unfair religious criticism of his book entitled *De ingeniorum moderatione in religionis negotio* (1714).<sup>6</sup> Another example is the liberal-minded letter Benedict wrote in 1748 to the grand inquisitor of Spain, advising caution and tolerance with regard to Cardinal Noris's controversial works, which had been placed on the Spanish *Index* by the Spanish Inquisition.<sup>7</sup> And in 1754 he came to the defence of a professor at the Jesuit Roman College (named Carlo Benvenuti), who had sponsored a student thesis and public discussion about advocating an approach to natural philosophy that was Newtonian and independent of metaphysics.<sup>8</sup>

### **The 1744 Edition of Galileo's *Dialogue***

In 1741 Padua's inquisitor wrote to the Inquisition in Rome to ask its opinion on a projected publication by the press at Padua's seminary

of Galileo's complete works, including the *Dialogue*.<sup>9</sup> The editors had promised to revise this book to make it "hypothetical," to have the revision done by persons who were both learned and of proven Catholic faith, and to include Galileo's abjuration and any other declaration required by the authorities. The Inquisition promptly approved the project so described.<sup>10</sup>

However, in February 1742 the Paduan inquisitor wrote again to Rome explaining some delays and difficulties encountered by the project, as well as some changes.<sup>11</sup> The editors were now planning to leave the text of the *Dialogue* unchanged, but to add an apologetic editorial preface, as well as the Inquisition's 1633 sentence and Galileo's abjuration. Moreover, they were also planning to include his *Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina*, which he had written in 1615 to defend the earth's motion from the biblical objection and to show that scripture is not an astronomical authority. The proposed preface gave a cryptic account of the trial reminiscent of that which Vincenzo Viviani had advanced in his biographical sketch, written in 1654 and first published in 1717.<sup>12</sup> This time the Inquisition asked two consultants to study the question and write reports. One report summarized the developments of the previous year regarding this editorial project. The other consultant wrote a report that reads like a summary of the minutes of the Inquisition meeting of 16 June 1633, which had been chaired by Pope Urban VIII and at which he had decided how to bring Galileo's trial to a conclusion.<sup>13</sup> On the basis of this report, the Inquisition approved the revised project.

But once again, other changes were in store before the edition finally appeared. In May 1742 the Paduan inquisitor again wrote to Rome with a slightly different proposal.<sup>14</sup> The editors still did not think it feasible or appropriate to change the text of the *Dialogue*, but they now suggested that they were ready and willing to make deletions and changes in the marginal postils that dotted the pages of the book and that read like a running interpretive commentary by the author about the topics being discussed by the three interlocutors in the dialogue. Moreover, the editors had dropped the idea of including Galileo's *Letter to Christina*; instead, they were planning to include an already published essay in Italian by French Benedictine monk and biblical scholar Augustin Calmet<sup>15</sup> that presumably defended the geostatic world view on the basis of scripture. They were still thinking of reprinting the text of both the Inquisition's sentence and Galileo's abjuration. Finally, they were willing to rewrite an appropriate editorial preface.

The Inquisition resorted again to a consultant for a report and a recommendation. The four-page opinion was researched and written by someone named Luigi Maria Giovasco.<sup>16</sup> It focused on the distinction between a thesis and a hypothesis generally adopted by Catholics after the Index's decree of 1620, which promulgated the needed corrections of Copernicus's book *On the Revolutions*.<sup>17</sup> This consultant applied the distinction to claim that Copernicanism was prohibited and condemned if treated as a thesis, but allowed if treated as a hypothesis. Giovasco made an attempt to clarify this distinction by associating a thesis with a family of notions such as "absolute" and "doctrinal," and a hypothesis with the cluster of "to better know the revolutions of the heavenly spheres," "more useful for contemplating ... phenomena," "imagined," and speaking "problematically." The last notion is especially interesting because it is reminiscent of a concept used by French aristocrat Nicolas Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580–1637) in 1634 when he made a plea for Galileo's liberation, defending the *Dialogue* as a *scherzo problematico*, which I interpret as a "philosophical play."<sup>18</sup> However, Giovasco did not distinguish between the instrumentalist or fictionalist notion of hypothesis and the probabilist or fallibilist conception, which was crucial for understanding, let alone evaluating, the Galileo affair.

Giovasco's report cited a 1734 work by G.D. Agnani entitled *Philosophia neo-palaea* as a source where one can read the story of the affair, as well as a justification of the condemnation based on the thesis-hypothesis distinction. Besides being a useful and responsible reference, this citation may also be a confession by the consultant that he largely relied on Agnani's account, but had not examined the primary sources and documents. In fact, the report is also full of inaccuracies, for example, the publication dates of works such as Galileo's *Dialogue*, Copernicus's *Revolutions*, Diego de Zúñiga's *Commentaries on Job*, and the authorship of the 1620 Index decree.

On the basis of Giovasco's report, the Inquisition approved the second revision of the project. Without further complications, the edition in four volumes was finally published by Padua's seminary in 1744. It was edited by Giuseppe Toaldo,<sup>19</sup> who had conceived, nurtured, and executed the project. The *Dialogue*, with related material, was in the fourth volume. The edition had the usual ecclesiastic imprimatur by the local Paduan officials, with one noteworthy difference. There were two, rather than just one, sets of imprimaturs: one set in Volume 1, applying to everything included in this edition and dated June and July 1742,



and another set in Volume 4, applying specifically to the *Dialogue* and dated May and June 1743.<sup>20</sup>

The text in the body of the *Dialogue* had indeed been left intact. Only the marginal postils had been “corrected”: sixteen of them were deleted and forty-six edited to qualify the earth’s motion as “hypothetical.”<sup>21</sup> The Inquisition’s sentence of 1633 and Galileo’s abjuration preceded the text; they were printed in Latin, having been taken from Giovanni Battista Riccioli’s *Almagestum novum* of 1651.<sup>22</sup> Also preceding the text, in accordance with the latest approved plan, were Calmet’s essay on biblical exegesis and an editorial preface by Toaldo.

Toaldo’s preface of one page mostly echoed Galileo himself rather than Viviani (as the earlier proposed preface had done).<sup>23</sup> Thus, the published preface stated that it endorsed Galileo’s own “retraction and qualification.” It declared that the earth’s motion was nothing but a “pure mathematical hypothesis,” which was Galileo’s own phrase in the preface to the *Dialogue*. It mentioned the removal or emendation of marginal postils that were not “indeterminate,” which was the term used by Galileo in the full title of his book to describe the type of discussion he had sought to devise.

Calmet’s introduction was entitled “Dissertation on the World System of the Ancient Jews.”<sup>24</sup> It was lengthy, being twenty pages of small print; it was scholarly, having about ten citations per page; and it was erudite, including many biblical verses quoted in Hebrew. In the opening section, Calmet elaborated the theme of epistemological modesty<sup>25</sup> and partial revelation by God through his work,<sup>26</sup> which Galileo himself had mentioned on the last page of the *Dialogue* and which stemmed from the biblical verses in Ecclesiastes 3:10–11.<sup>27</sup> Calmet formulated and discussed the principle of accommodation,<sup>28</sup> which Galileo had also espoused, although it was not at all original with him. Moreover, Calmet criticized with clarity and forcefulness the common abuse of reading one’s own preconceptions in scripture, which Galileo had also criticized. And Calmet proposed a relatively novel approach, which would pay more attention to the historical and intellectual context of the writers and audience.

In the central part of the essay, Calmet described in more detail his contextual, historical, and comparative approach, which led him to conclude that the biblical world view was very different from the modern one. This conclusion was elaborated with scholarly erudition and scriptural quotations. It claimed that the biblical world view was that of a flat earth capped by a tent-like heavenly vault. It followed, of course,

that Aristotelian cosmology and the Ptolemaic system were as contrary to scripture as Copernicanism was. Thus, if the choice was between Ptolemy (or Tycho<sup>29</sup>) and Copernicus, scripture did not favour the former any more than the latter, or conversely did not undermine the latter any more than the former. The point was that the biblical world view was scientifically (or philosophically) untenable, and so one should not regard scripture as a scientific (or philosophical) authority. This final conclusion, of course, had been Galileo's own view of the matter.

Calmet stated as much in the epilogue of his essay. It is very revealing that there he also quoted a passage from St Augustine that had also been quoted and capitalized upon by Galileo in his *Letter to Christina*.<sup>30</sup> This is the same Augustinian passage that would be quoted and stressed later by Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* (1893), in order to justify the principle that scripture is not a scientific authority.<sup>31</sup> Calmet also rejected and criticized the argument stemming from Riccioli that scriptural authority had to be upheld in astronomy because otherwise its authority would dissolve in other, more spiritually relevant, subjects.<sup>32</sup>

The factual, interpretive, and historical details just related raise some critical, evaluative, and philosophical issues. However, before discussing them, let us relate the main details of the second episode.

### **The 1758 Edition of the *Index of Prohibited Books***

By contrast with his indirect involvement in the 1744 publication of Galileo's *Dialogue*, Pope Benedict's involvement in the revision of the 1758 *Index of Prohibited Books* was explicit and direct. In July 1753 he issued a bull, entitled *Sollicita ac provida*, on the reform of the criteria for the censure and prohibition of books in the *Index*.<sup>33</sup> The following year, the secretary of the Congregation of the Index proposed to the pope some additional reforms involving the restructuring of its contents and the possibility of removing the prohibition of some books after proper correction; among these were mentioned the works of Descartes, Copernicus, and Galileo. The pope approved the secretary's proposal, and the Congregation began working on the publication of a restructured and reformed *Index*.

During such work, as part of the analysis of the Galilean question, in December 1755 the proceedings of Galileo's trial were removed from volume 1181 of the Inquisition archives (where they had been kept since the trial), and they were placed into a self-contained free-standing

file, which began to acquire a life of its own.<sup>34</sup> More important, this relocation spared the file from the destruction which most Inquisition archives underwent as a result of Napoleon's removal to France of all Vatican archives in 1810.<sup>35</sup> Subsequently, the Congregation of the Index commissioned one of its consultants to make a recommendation about the prohibition that was formulated in terms of the general clause "all books teaching the earth's motion and the sun's immobility." This clause stemmed from the anti-Copernican decree of 1616 and had been included in all subsequent editions of the *Index*.

The consultant was Jesuit Pietro Lazzari,<sup>36</sup> professor of Church history at the Roman College. He wrote a lengthy memorandum full of arguments in favour of removing from the *Index* the general anti-Copernican clause.<sup>37</sup> The memorandum is twenty-four pages long and strikes me as well argued, impressively nuanced, and often insightful, although of course it is not beyond criticism. Lazzari tried to show that although the prohibition was originally justified, it should now be removed.

According to him, the prohibition was originally justified because at that earlier time Copernicanism was generally regarded as (I.1) false, as (I.2) contrary to scripture literally interpreted, and as (I.3) not supported by any argument having demonstrative force. Lazzari went on to argue that the general prohibition should now be removed because (II) it was no longer justified and (III) it was indeed expedient to remove it. It was no longer justified because the earth's motion was now (II.1) generally accepted by astronomers and natural philosophers, it was (II.2) generally regarded as consistent with scripture literally interpreted, and it was (II.3) supported by demonstration. It also was practically expedient to abolish the general prohibition because keeping it (III.1a) did not do any good but (III.1b) did harm, and because removing it (III.2a) would do no harm but (III.2b) would rather do good. The last part of the argument, as befits its practical nature, was a cost-benefit analysis, so to speak. The prohibition did no good because it had become ineffective. Its harm involved actions such as encouraging Catholic disregard of ecclesiastic decrees; encouraging duplicity on the part of Catholics, by way of the subterfuge involving the dichotomy between thesis and hypothesis; and encouraging non-Catholics to extend their rejection of Catholic ideas from questions of natural philosophy to questions of faith and morals. To show that no harm would come from removing the prohibition, Lazzari argued that it is a virtue to admit one's errors and revise one's ideas.

In April 1757, on the basis of Lazzari's recommendation and with the approval of Pope Benedict, the Congregation of the Index decided to drop from the forthcoming edition of the *Index* the entry that read, "all books teaching the earth's motion and the sun's immobility." But it should be noted that Galileo's *Dialogue* (together with Copernicus's *Revolutions* and other particular Copernican works) was left on the list of prohibited books. Nevertheless, the 1758 *Index* represented some relaxation of the Church's anti-Copernican ban and hence of its alleged anti-scientific animus.

### **Poupard's Favourable Assessment: Statement and Criticism**

There have been two opposing assessments of these actions about the Galileo affair during the papacy of Benedict XIV. The first assessment is an excessively positive and favourable account. It was advanced by Cardinal Paul Poupard in his 1992 final report as chair of the Vatican Commission on Galileo.

Regarding the first episode, Poupard says that "in [1741–2], in the face of the optical proof of the fact that the earth revolves round the sun, Benedict XIV had the Holy Office grant an imprimatur to the first edition of the *Complete Works of Galileo*."<sup>38</sup> By the optical proof of the earth's motion, Poupard seems to have in mind James Bradley's discovery of the aberration of starlight (in 1729). However, we have seen that the primary rationale underlying the imprimatur for Galileo's *Dialogue* was the plan to change its geokinetic language from categorical or thesis oriented to conditional or hypothetical. Hence, this imprimatur was not, as Poupard goes on to say in the next paragraph, an "implicit reform of the 1633 sentence," but rather a kind of reaffirmation of it, by "correcting" the *Dialogue* in the way that the Index's decree of 1620 had "corrected" Copernicus's book.<sup>39</sup>

Regarding the second episode, Poupard states that "this implicit reform of the 1633 sentence became explicit in the decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Index that removed from the [1758] edition of the Catalogue of Forbidden Books works favoring the heliocentric theory."<sup>40</sup> However, we have seen that the 1757–8 decision was still implicit and indirect, so much so that Galileo's *Dialogue* was left on the *Index*.<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, it must be stressed that this decision and action consisted of dropping the clause "all books teaching the earth's motion and sun's immobility" from the *Index*. Now, to describe this as a "decree ... that

removed ... works favoring the heliocentric theory" amounts to a sophisticated use of equivocation; for what was being removed was not the listed heliocentric works (which would imply removing Galileo's *Dialogue*, Copernicus's *Revolutions*, etc.), but rather the clause "all heliocentric works" (which in fact left those specific works in the *Index*). Unfortunately, Poupard is not alone in committing such a fallacy of equivocation, and he is essentially echoing other apologetic writers.<sup>42</sup>

### Mayaud's Negative Assessment

At the opposite end of the evaluative spectrum, a severe criticism of Benedict's actions has been advanced by a French Jesuit named Pierre-Noël Mayaud. It is based on the existence of two problems, each relating to one of the two Galileo-related episodes.

The problem raised by the 1744 edition of the *Dialogue* is this: in light of the content of Calmet's hermeneutical essay, it is difficult to think of a more pro-Galilean introduction to the *Dialogue*. Even if Toaldo had printed Galileo's own *Letter to Christina*, as envisaged at one stage of the negotiations, it might have not been equally effective, since Calmet was a highly respected biblical scholar. However, this pro-Galilean statement does not seem to have been deliberate. For during the negotiations for the imprimatur Calmet's dissertation was described as progeostatic and anti-Copernican by all involved; it was supposed to be one of several means designed to neutralize the text of the *Dialogue* (together with the revision of the marginal postils and the reprinting of the 1633 sentence and abjuration). In reality, the essay neutralized the latter documents.

Thus, the question arises of whether the 1744 re-edition of the *Dialogue* was really a sign of enlightenment, or whether instead it may have been the result of incompetence. Mayaud, who for the first time has published the relevant documents and who has tried to analyse them critically, stresses on several occasions the "incompetence" of the officials involved.<sup>43</sup> He also suggests the possibility of what might be called bureaucratic overwork when he points out, for example, that at the Inquisition's meeting of 13 June 1742, when the cardinal-inquisitors gave their final approval, this project was the *tenth* case they had deliberated upon in the *first part* of that meeting,<sup>44</sup> and they met several times a week.

The problem with the 1758 *Index* is different. It stems from the fact that, as already mentioned, although this edition of the *Index* removed

from the list of prohibited works the general clause “all books teaching the earth’s motion,” it continued to list as prohibited five particular Copernican works: Copernicus’s own book *On the Revolutions* (1543), Kepler’s *Epitome of Copernican Astronomy* (1618), Galileo’s *Dialogue*, and two other works censured in the anti-Copernican decree of 1616. Now, the same Mayaud finds it “illogical”<sup>45</sup> that the Church should have eliminated the general prohibition of “all books teaching the earth’s motion,” but kept the ban on these five particular well-known Copernican works.

Mayaud’s criticism has some *prima facie* plausibility. For it seems undeniable that on the surface these two episodes appear to be signs of enlightenment. The 1744 republication of the *Dialogue* was significant because the condemnation of Galileo, ever since its occurrence, had come to be widely seen as “the greatest scandal in Christendom,”<sup>46</sup> symptomatic of the incompatibility between science and Catholicism and more generally between science and religion; thus, to allow the appearance of a banned book by a convicted “suspected heretic” seemed to be a sign of liberalization and a step towards the reconciliation of two cultures allegedly at war with each other. And the 1758 revision of the *Index*, by dropping the prohibition against “all books teaching the earth’s motion,” looks like a relaxation of the anti-Copernican decree of 1616. Therefore, it may be regarded as an admission by the Church of having committed an error on a scientific subject and hence as a step towards relinquishing its authority over science and towards the separation of Church and science.

Now, if Mayaud is right, the reality behind such appearance is very different. That is, the 1744 edition of the *Dialogue* was supposed to display a tolerant attitude towards a classic scientific text, as long as it was accompanied by rigorous reaffirmation of theological, biblical, and ecclesiastic authority. But the actual content of Calmet’s hermeneutical introduction suggested that Galileo may have been hermeneutically and theologically right, besides being scientifically and astronomically correct; conversely, in the original Galileo affair the Church may have been wrong not only scientifically, but also theologically. Similarly, the 1758 elimination of the *Index*’s anti-Copernican ban against “all books teaching the earth’s motion” suggested that the ban against the books by Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo should also be eliminated. Yet in both cases the Church was far from accepting or even making explicit such implicit suggestions. So one may be inclined to conclude that in these two episodes the Church officials

did not know what they were doing and instead displayed incompetence or carelessness.

### Criticism of Mayaud's Negative Assessment

Nevertheless, although I do not deny that Mayaud's criticism has some *prima facie* plausibility, I think that it is not really justified. To begin with, despite his impressive archival work, Mayaud did not take into account Lazzari's report, perhaps because he was not aware of its existence or for some other reason. In fact, the Lazzari document appears to have been discovered by the Italian scholar Ugo Baldini, who transcribed it and first published it in 2000, three years after the publication of Mayaud's book.<sup>47</sup>

It is clear that Lazzari was not addressing the issue of the 1633 condemnation of Galileo; rather, he was concerned with the question of the 1616 prohibition of Copernicanism. Because of the way Lazzari approached issue, his conclusions about it had no obvious implications for the former issue. Now, the importance and relevance of Lazzari's report is that he was as clear and forceful in arguing that the general anti-Copernican prohibition was no longer justified as he was in maintaining that originally it was reasonable and prudent; this was so because of the increase in scientific knowledge between Galileo's time and Benedict's. Lazzari's argument obviously implied that to remove those five earlier Copernican books from the *Index* might have tended to suggest that they did not deserve to be prohibited at that earlier time, whereas to keep them was a reminder that the original prohibition was justified. This point would later (in 1820) be explicitly made by Maurizio Olivieri (the commissary general of the Inquisition) during the Settele episode of the subsequent Galileo affair.<sup>48</sup> Thus, we may consider that Pope Benedict and the Index officials followed Lazzari's line of reasoning, and there is no illogicality, carelessness, or incompetence in doing so.

Regarding the 1744 *Dialogue*, I would say this: it is true that Church officials did not seem to explicitly understand and appreciate the real content, significance, and implications of Calmet's introduction. But there is no reason to attribute to them a total unawareness about the subject. After all, at one stage of the negotiations, editor Toaldo in his second proposal had planned to include Galileo's *Letter to Christina*, and the Congregation of the Holy Office had approved that action. So perhaps the tolerant and liberal climate created by Pope Benedict XIV

was partly responsible for Calmet's introduction finding its way to the introductory material of the *Dialogue*. For example, towards the issue of the scientific (or philosophical) authority of scripture Benedict's enlightenment may have encouraged Church officials to adopt an instrumentalist attitude similar to that adopted towards the issue of the earth's motion. That is, for the latter, one paid lip service to the hypothetical character of Copernicanism, but then elaborated the Copernican system in any way allowed by observational evidence and physical theory; similarly, for the former, one would pay lip service to biblical literalism or fundamentalism, but in reality develop new methods of biblical interpretation and new exegeses. The episode thus may be viewed as a small, compromise oriented, and incomplete step towards the liberalization of hermeneutics, and there is nothing illogical, incompetent, or careless in that.

### A More Nuanced Critique

However, this is not to say that these ecclesiastical actions are beyond criticism. With regard to the 1744 edition of the *Dialogue*, the Church officials involved (including the editor Toaldo) may be criticized for excessive timidity and/or for lack of transparency. That is, they were unwilling or unable to admit clearly and explicitly that Galileo had been on the right track hermeneutically and theologically, besides astronomically and scientifically. If Bradley's discovery in 1729 of the aberration of starlight contributed significantly to proving Galileo astronomically right, Calmet's analysis in the book's introduction contributed equally significantly to proving him theologically right.

With regard to the 1758 relaxation of the *Index*, one could begin by accepting consultant Lazzari's distinction between the state of knowledge in Galileo's time and that in Benedict's. But then one should make a similar distinction between the situation in 1632–3, after Galileo had published his *Dialogue*, and the situation in 1616, when the anti-Copernican decree of the Index was issued, or the situation in 1543, when Copernicus's book was published. One also should consider the possibility that there had been progress in the intervening sixteen years and certainly in the intervening ninety years. Similarly, one also should consider the possibility that this progress was accomplished largely because of Galileo's own *Dialogue*. I believe that these possibilities were actually the case. Therefore, perhaps this book should never have been banned in the first place. Lazzari's report does not draw such a further



conclusion, which retains the spirit although not the letter of his line of reasoning, but it certainly invites and suggests it. One may criticize him for his failure to draw it, just as one may criticize Church officials for joining him in this failure.

Thus, in both episodes we have an unwillingness on the part of the Church to draw further, more liberal conclusions and thus take more radical steps. There is no incompetence or illogicality here. Perhaps there is not even timidity and/or lack of transparency, as I suggested earlier. Perhaps there is simply conservatism, at least in the sense of shying away from changing things too radically and drastically, and wanting to make changes in a gradual, piecemeal, and minimal manner.

In fact, we know that it was another seventy-seven years following the death of Benedict before the prohibition against the books by Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo was lifted, with the publication of the 1835 edition of the *Index*.<sup>49</sup> And it was another century and a half before the issue of the theological hermeneutical rehabilitation of Galileo was seriously tackled, by Pope Leo XIII in 1893, with the encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*.<sup>50</sup> However, if these two subsequent nineteenth-century episodes accomplished what the two eighteenth-century actions of Benedict XIV did not, it would be a mistake to hail the former as displaying enlightenment and exemplifying liberalization of an essentially or qualitatively superior kind. Instead, I would say that those nineteenth-century episodes show the same type of gradualist, reformist conservatism.

For example, one could criticize Leo's *Providentissimus Deus* for failing to even mention Galileo, while advancing a hermeneutical position essentially identical to that found in the *Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina*. Thus, Leo's theological hermeneutical rehabilitation of Galileo was implicit, in the sense that experts acquainted with both documents could see the similarity of the conclusions and of the arguments. So it should not be surprising that almost another century would elapse before the Church made explicit what had been implicit in Leo's *Providentissimus Deus*. It happened during Pope John Paul II's re-examination of the Galileo affair. The following declaration by John Paul from his 1992 speech on the subject is worth quoting: "the new science, with its methods and the freedom of research that they implied, obliged theologians to examine their own criteria of scriptural interpretation. Most of them did not know how to do so. Paradoxically, Galileo, a sincere believer, showed himself to be more perceptive in this regard than the theologians who opposed him."<sup>51</sup>

However, in the case of John Paul II, the same pattern repeated itself in other ways. That is, on the one hand, as just mentioned, John Paul was clear and explicit about the hermeneutical rehabilitation of Galileo. And the pope even addressed the issue of the pastoral dimension of the affair, stating that Galileo's position was as reasonable as that of his ecclesiastic opponents. On the other hand, as those of us who have lived through the process know first-hand, John Paul's re-examination was unsatisfactory in several ways. For example, he seemed to want to uphold the paradox, stemming from Pierre Duhem, that from the point of view of epistemology and methodology Galileo's position was flawed and in any case not as sound as that of his ecclesiastic opponents, such as Cardinal Robert Bellarmine. Another example is that early on in his efforts to rehabilitate Galileo, John Paul decided that there would be no judicial re-examination of the trial proceedings.

In short, it would be naive, unfair, one-sided, and excessive to give a totally negative view of John Paul's re-examination efforts, as many critics have done, for those efforts did produce some rehabilitation. However, the rehabilitation was informal, incomplete, not unopposed, and not unprecedented. Indeed, it was the sort of rehabilitation one should have expected in light of the previous four centuries of the Galileo affair: an incremental, small, conservative step in the right direction of liberalization and enlightenment, very much like those undertaken by Benedict XIV two and a half centuries earlier.

## Conclusion

I have sketched the main details of two episodes that occurred during the papacy of Benedict XIV and relate to the Galileo affair. The first is the republication with ecclesiastic approval of Galileo's *Dialogue* in 1744; the second is the publication in 1758 of a revised *Index* that no longer listed the entry "all books teaching the earth's motion." I have argued that these developments are significant both historically and philosophically. Historically speaking, they are important milestones in that ongoing cause célèbre of modern western culture that consists of the attempt to come to terms with the trial and condemnation of Galileo in 1633. Philosophically speaking, these episodes raise issues about the relationship between science and religion and between individual freedom and institutional authority.

In particular, I have focused on the question of whether, how, or why these episodes can be viewed, alternatively, as signs of enlightened

liberalization, or inadvertent liberalization, or careless conservatism, or enlightened conservatism. The assessment of enlightened liberalization may be attributed to Cardinal Paul Poupard, and I have criticized it as completely unfounded. The assessment of inadvertent liberalization and/or careless conservatism may be attributed to Jesuit Pierre-Noël Mayaud; it has some merit and apparent plausibility, but I have argued that it does not survive critical scrutiny. The most plausible account is one that assesses these Galilean episodes as examples of what may simultaneously be called enlightened conservatism and prudent liberalization.

## NOTES

- 1 For details on these documents and events, see the following books by Maurice A. Finocchiaro: *The Galileo Affair, Retrying Galileo*, 7–25, *Defending Copernicus and Galileo*, 137–54, *The Routledge Guidebook to Galileo's Dialogue*, 31–50, and *The Trial of Galileo*; see also Fantoli, *Galileo*, 125–344, and *The Case of Galileo*, 5–214; Galilei, *The Essential Galileo*, 1–17, 168–78, 272–94; Heilbron, *Galileo*, 200–317.
- 2 For a survey of these events, issues, and commentaries, see Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo, Defending Copernicus and Galileo*, 155–314, and *The Routledge Guidebook to Galileo's Dialogue*, 305–27; Fantoli, *Galileo*, 345–74, and *The Case of Galileo*, 215–47.
- 3 See Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 126–53; Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres coperniciens*, 119–212. These episodes seem to be little known, since they are not even mentioned in Pastor, *The History of the Popes*, Vols 35 and 36 (*Benedict XIV, Clement XIII*); Haynes, *Philosopher King*; or Wood, *The Beautiful Light*.
- 4 D'Alembert, "Copernic"; cf. Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 120–6.
- 5 Haynes, *Philosopher King*, 180.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 184.
- 7 Benedict XIV, *Bref au Grand Inquisiteur d'Espagne*; also *Observations sur le Bref de N.S.P. le Pape Benoit XIV au Grand-Inquisiteur d'Espagne*, 4 March 1749, Bodleian Library, Oxford, shelf mark: Mason II 124(30).
- 8 Baldini, *Saggi sulla cultura della Compagnia di Gesù*, 283–95.
- 9 Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 130–1.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 131–2.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 135–7.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 136–7, trans. in Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 127–8. Cf. Viviani, *Racconto storico della vita di Galileo*, 19: 599–632, and *Racconto storico della vita di Galileo*, 397–431.

- 13 Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 137–9, trans. in Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 128–9. For the Inquisition minutes of 16 June 1633, see Galilei, *Le opere di Galileo Galilei*, 19: 282–3, trans. in Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 247; also trans. in Finocchiaro, *The Trial of Galileo*, 132–3.
- 14 Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 144–6.
- 15 Calmet (1672–1757) was the author of some monumental works of biblical scholarship, such as the following: *La sainte Bible en latin et en français avec une commentaire littéral et critique* (1707–16); *Dissertations qui peuvent servir de prolégomènes de l'Écriture Sainte* (1720); and *Prolegomena et dissertationes in omnes et singulos Scripturae libros* (1734). The 1734 work is a Latin translation of the 1720 work, which was also translated into English, Italian, German, and Dutch. Cf. Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 120n2, 152n51; and Brandmüller and Greipl *Copernico e la Chiesa*, 104n39.
- 16 Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 146–9, trans. in Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 130–1.
- 17 Galilei, *Le opere di Galileo Galilei*, 19: 400–1, trans. in Finocchiaro, *The Galileo Affair*, 200–2.
- 18 Cf. Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 52–6.
- 19 At the time, Giuseppe Toaldo (1719–97) taught mathematics and literature at the Padua seminary, where he had entered at age fourteen and become a priest. Later, in 1762, he became professor of astronomy at the University of Padua, specializing in geophysics, meteorology, and atmospheric electricity. In these fields, he acquired an international reputation, and sought to apply scientific theories to practical problems. For example, he adopted Benjamin Franklin's view of electricity and advocated the use of lightning rods to protect buildings; he also advocated the reform of clock time and time-keeping in Italy, to improve accuracy and conformity with the rest of Europe. Cf. Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 121n3; Heilbron, *The Sun in the Church*, 267–8; Besomi and Helbing, *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo, tolemaico e copernicano* 2 : 955–6n68; and "Giuseppe Toaldo," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14749a.htm>, consulted on 17 July 2014.
- 20 Galilei, *Opere*, unnumbered page following 1: 601; *ibid.*, 4: unnumbered last page of book; Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 120.
- 21 Besomi and Helbing, *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo, tolemaico e copernicano*, 2: 955–9.
- 22 Riccioli, *Almagestum novum*, 2: 496–500.
- 23 In Galilei, *Opere*, Vol. 4, trans. in Fantoli, *Galileo*, 353–4.
- 24 Galilei, *Opere*, 4: 1–20. Cf. Calmet, "Dissertation sur le système du monde des anciens hébreux," in Calmet, *Dissertations qui peuvent servir de*

*prolégomènes de l'Écriture Sainte*, 1: 438–59, and *Prolegomena et dissertationes in omnes et singulos Scripturae libros*; Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 122–3; Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 133–7.

- 25 Epistemological modesty is the cognitive attitude that on the one hand recognizes the value of the human mind and senses in providing true and useful knowledge of the world, but on the other also recognizes that such knowledge as we may acquire is at best limited, incomplete, susceptible to revision, and infinitesimally small compared with the knowledge we lack.
- 26 That is, God has revealed himself to mankind in part through his work, that is, the universe he created, and so we can have some knowledge of it; but such knowledge is always incomplete, imperfect, and difficult to acquire.
- 27 Ecclesiastes, 3:10–11 (King James Version): “I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart; so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.”
- 28 This is the principle that, on questions about physical reality biblical texts adapt what they say to the common language and beliefs of the people to whom those texts are addressed.
- 29 The Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546–1601) elaborated a world view according to which the planets revolve around the sun, but the sun together with all the planets revolves daily from east to west and yearly from west to east around the motionless earth at the centre of the universe.
- 30 Galilei, *Nov-antiqua Sanctissimorum Patrum*, 15, and *Le opere di Galileo Galilei*, 5: 318; Finocchiaro, *The Galileo Affair*, 95, and *The Trial of Galileo*, 55; Motta, *Galileo Galilei*, 99.
- 31 Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus*, 2: 334, para. 18; cf. Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 263–6. The key part of the passage reads: “briefly, it should be said that our authors did know the truth about the shape of heaven, but that the Spirit of God, which was speaking through them, did not want to teach men these things which are of no use to salvation” (in Augustinus, *De Genesi ad litteram libri duodecimi*, bk 2, ch. 9, in *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, 28: pt 1, 46).
- 32 Cf. Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 79–85.
- 33 See Maria Pia Donato’s chapter in this volume.
- 34 Beretta, “Le procès de Galilée et les archives du Saint-Office,” 465–6; Baldini, *Saggi sulla cultura della Compagnia di Gesù*, 304–6.
- 35 For the details of this fascinating story, see Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 175–92.
- 36 Pietro Lazzari (1710–89) was the first to hold the professorship of Church history created by Benedict XIV at the Jesuit Roman College, from 1742 until

- 1773, when the Church suppressed the Society of Jesus; Benedict appointed him consultant to the Index in 1753; cf. Baldini, *Saggi sulla cultura della Compagnia di Gesù*, 301–2n43. The Worldcat catalogue lists Lazzari for several works, notably, as author of an unpublished manuscript entitled “*Institutiones historiae ecclesiasticae*,” and, intriguingly, as editor of a 622-page collection of letters by various famous men such as Dante, Petrarch, and Gian Galeazzo Visconti, published in Rome in 1754.
- 37 In Baldini, *Saggi sulla cultura della Compagnia di Gesù*, 307–28, trans. in Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 139–51.
- 38 Poupard, “‘Galileo Case’ Is Resolved,” 8, sec. 3.
- 39 For more details, see Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 20–4.
- 40 Poupard, “‘Galileo Case’ Is Resolved,” 8, sec. 4.
- 41 And Settele’s *Astronomy* in 1820 could run into serious difficulties; cf. Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 193–221.
- 42 Such as Jacqueline, “The Church and Galileo,” 136; Brandmüller and Greipl, *Copernico e la Chiesa*, 36; Brandmüller, *Galilei e la Chiesa*, 161–2.
- 43 Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 142, 159, 161.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 149n48, 161.
- 45 *Ibid.*, 189.
- 46 A few days after Galileo’s death on 8 January 1642, these words were uttered by Pope Urban VIII to the Tuscan ambassador, as a reason to veto the plan to erect an honorific mausoleum for Galileo in the church of Santa Croce in Florence; see Niccolini to Gondi, 25 January 1642, in Galilei, *Le opere di Galileo Galilei*, 18: 378–9, trans. in Finocchiaro, *The Trial of Galileo*, 150–1. In that context, the phrase had an anti-Galilean connotation, but later it acquired an anti-clerical meaning; cf. Koestler, *The Sleepwalkers*, 495, and “The Greatest Scandal in Christendom.”
- 47 In Baldini, *Saggi sulla cultura della Compagnia di Gesù*, 307–28, trans. in Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 139–51.
- 48 Cf. Maffei, *Giuseppe Settele*, 499–500; Brandmüller and Greipl, *Copernico e la Chiesa*, 373–4; Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 214. In the Settele episode, the ecclesiastic censors in Rome initially refused the imprimatur to an astronomy textbook by Giuseppe Settele, a priest and professor at the University of Rome, which presented the earth’s motion as an established fact of modern astronomy; after a year of discussions and proceedings, the Inquisition overruled the book censors and allowed its publication; see Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 193–221.
- 49 Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres*, 271–4.
- 50 Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus*; cf. Finocchiaro, *Retrying Galileo*, 263–6.
- 51 John Paul II, “Faith Can Never Conflict with Reason,” 1–2, sec. 5.

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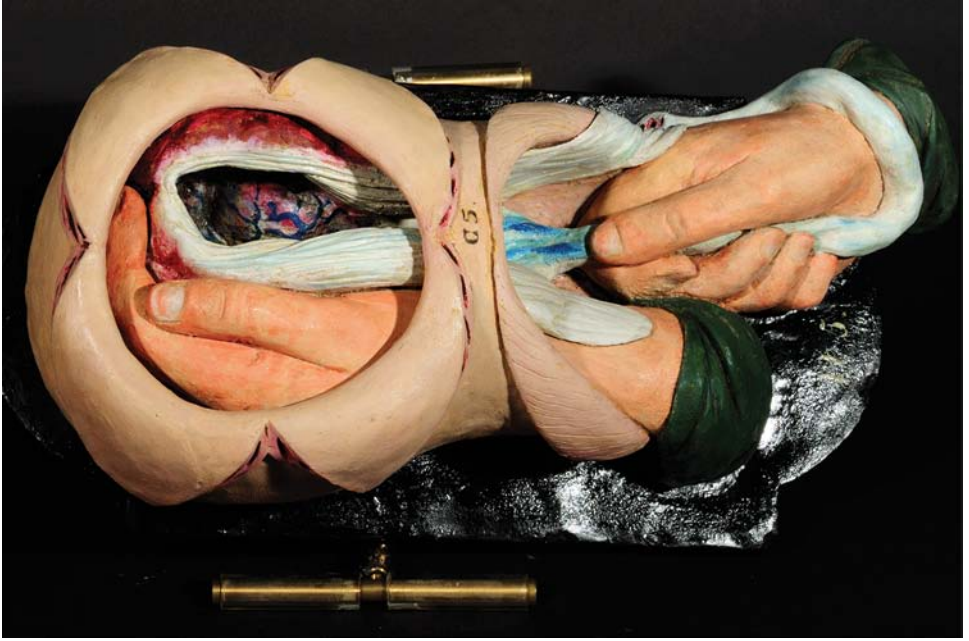
Plate 1 Pierre Subleyras, *Pope Benedict XIV*, 1741. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art. Photo: Art Resource, New York.



Plate 2 Laura Bassi defends her philosophical theses in Palazzo Pubblico in the presence of the cardinal legate and Cardinal Lambertini, archbishop of Bologna (1732), miniature of Leonardo Sconzani. Bologna, Archivio di Stato, Anziani Consoli, Insignia, vol. 13, c. 94.



Plate 3 Giuseppe Maria Crespi, Portrait of Cardinal Prospero Lambertini. Bologna, Collezioni Comunali d'Arte.



Plates 4–6 Giovanni Battista Sandri, obstetrical models for G.A. Galli's Obstetrical School, clay. Courtesy of the Poggi Museum, Bologna.

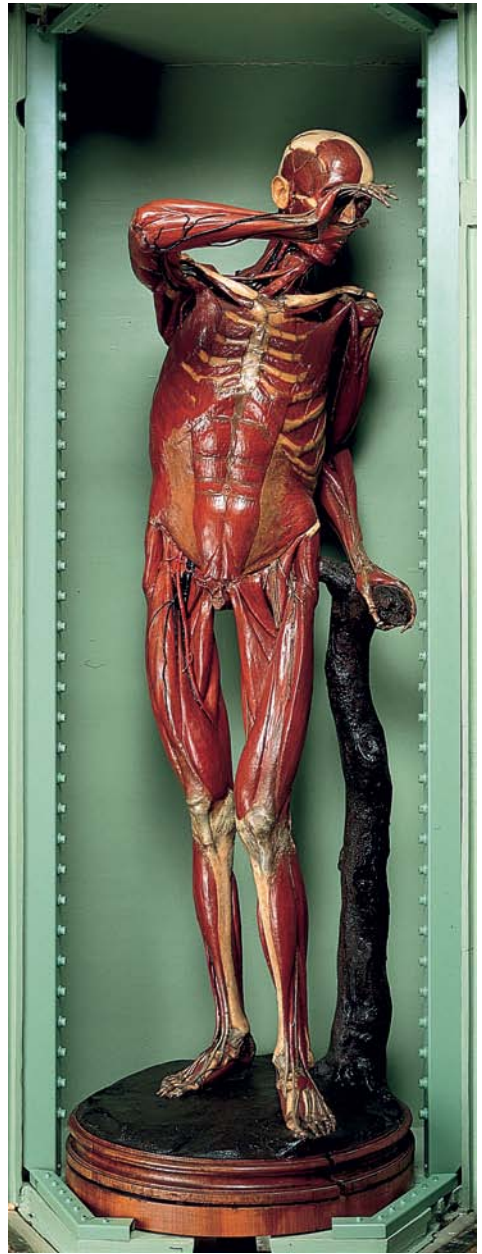






Plate 7 Ercole Lelli, Adam and Eve, wax on bone. Courtesy of the Poggi Museum, Bologna.





Plates 8–9 Ercole Lelli, Écorché, demonstrating progressively the surface to deep musculature, wax on bone. Courtesy of the Poggi Museum, Bologna.

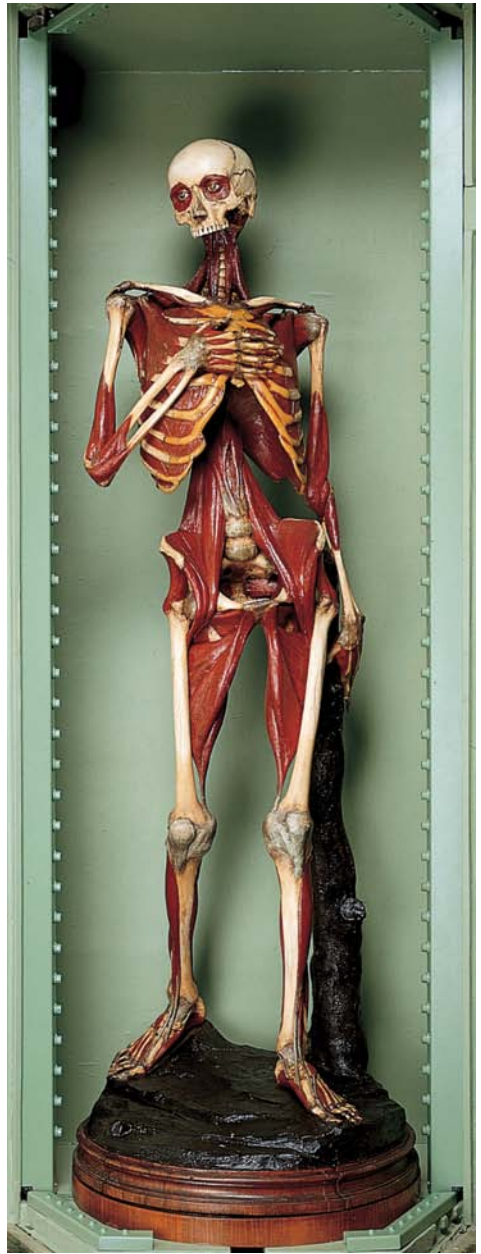




Plate 10 Ercole Lelli, male and female skeletons, bones and iron. Courtesy of the Poggi Museum, Bologna.



Plate 11 Anna Morandi Manzolini, self-portrait, wax. Courtesy of the Poggi Museum, Bologna.

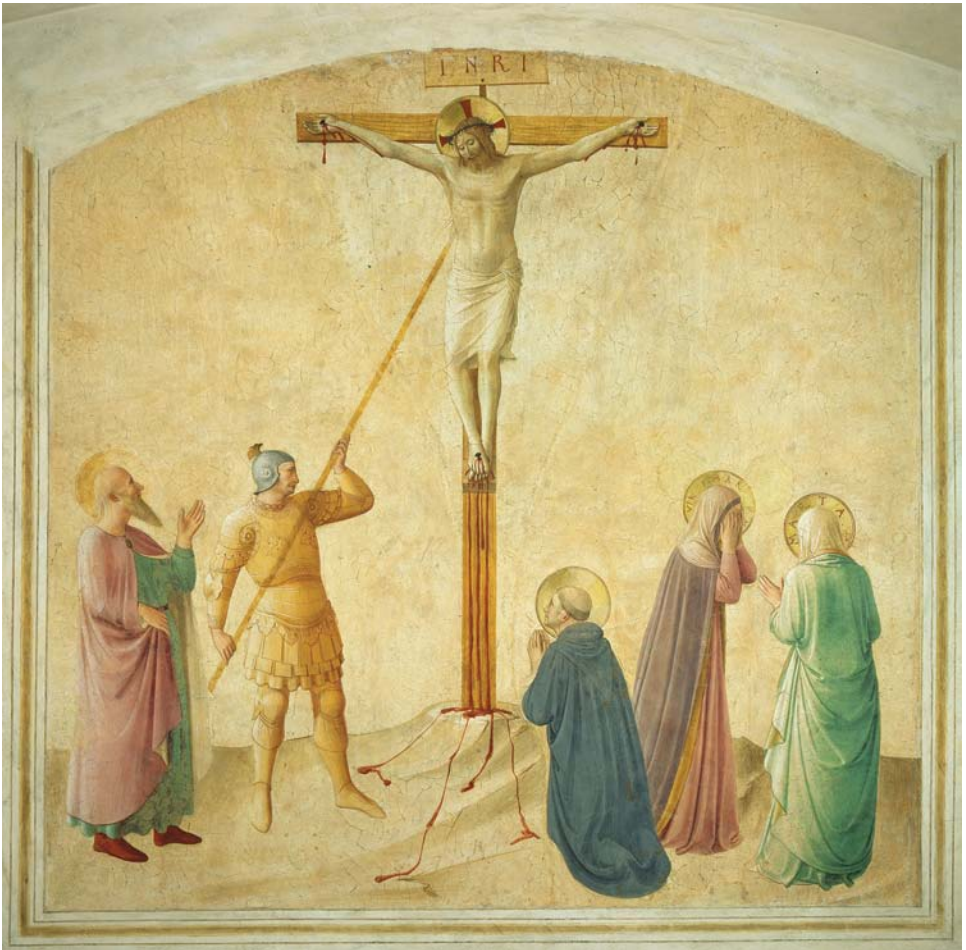


Plate 12 Fra Angelico, *St. Dominic with the Crucifix – Piercing of the Christ's Side*, ca. 1450, fresco, 233 × 183 cm. Museo di San Marco, Cell 42. Art Resource, New York.



Plate 13 Giambattista Piazzetta, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, ca. 1715, oil on canvas, 100 × 126 cm. Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, inv. 318 (1980.75), on loan to Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.



Plate 14 Giovanni Paolo Panini, *Interior of a Picture Gallery with the Collection of Cardinal Silvio Valenti Gonzaga*, 1749, oil on canvas, 198 × 268 cm. Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art. The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund.



Plate 15 Pietro da Cortona, *Rape of the Sabines*, ca. 1630–1. Oil on canvas, 280.5 × 426 cm. Rome, Pinacoteca Capitolina.





Plate 16 Peter Paul Rubens and workshop, *Romulus and Remus*, ca. 1612–14. Oil on canvas, 213 × 212 cm. Rome, Pinacoteca Capitolina.



Plate 17 Pompeo Girolamo Batoni, *Benedict XIV presenting the Encyclical ex omnibus to comte de Stainville, later duc de Choiseul*, oil on canvas, 1757. Minneapolis Institute of Arts.



Plate 18 Meissen porcelain, vessels from the Lambertini Service, ca. 1743.  
Bamberg, Historisches Museum.



Plate 19 Ferdinando Fuga, View of the interior of the West Pavilion of the *Caffèaus*, 1741–3. Rome, Quirinal Caffèaus. Photo by Giuseppe Schiavinotto.



Plate 20 Agostino Masucci, *Pasce Oves Meas*, oil on canvas, 1742–3. Rome, Quirinal Caffeaus. Photo by Giuseppe Schiavinotto.



Plate 21 Gian Paolo Panini, *View of the Piazza del Quirinale with the Palazzo della Consulta*, oil on canvas, 1733. Rome, Quirinal Caffeaus. Photo by Giuseppe Schiavinotto.



Plate 22 Gian Paolo Panini, *View of the Piazza di Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, Quirinal Caffeaus*, oil on canvas, 1742. Rome, Quirinal Caffeaus. Art Resource, New York.



Plate 23 Pompeo Girolamo Batoni, *Christ Delivering the Keys to St Peter*, oil on canvas, 1743. Rome, Quirinal Caffeaus.  
Photo by Giuseppe Schiavinotto.





Plate 24 Placido Costanzi and Jan Frans van Bloemen, called Orizzonte, *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, oil on canvas, ca. 1742. Rome, Quirinal Caffeaus. Photo by Giuseppe Schiavinotto.



Plate 25 Gian Paolo Panini, *King Charles VII of Naples Arriving at the Caffeaus to Meet Pope Benedict XIV*, 1745. Naples, Museo di Capodimonte. Art Resource, New York.



Plate 26 Aula Magna (main reading room) of the Instituto delle Scienze e delle Arti, Palazzo Poggi, Bologna (now Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna), constructed 1741–4 to designs by Carlo Francesco Dotti, with walnut bookshelves completed in 1756 to designs by Ercole Lelli. Photo by Jeffrey Collins.



Plate 27 Room below the new library, previously used as the Stanza dell' Antichità (Fig. 16.1, #18), assigned in 1757 for the display of casts (labelled in Fig. 16.3 as "Altra Galleria delle Statue"), now used as a departmental library at the University of Bologna. Photo by Jeffrey Collins.



Plate 28 *Pighini Meleager*, moulded in Rome for Filippo Farsetti ca. 1754, cast in Venice ca. 1756, and installed ca. 1758 in the middle of the northwest wall of the first room of Bologna's *gipsoteca* (Fig. 16.1, #15; Plate 27), now in the main hall at the Accademia delle Belle Arti, Bologna. Photo by Jeffrey Collins.



Plate 29 *Santa Susanna*, after François Duquesnoy, moulded in Rome for Filippo Farsetti ca. 1754, cast in Venice ca. 1756, and installed ca. 1758 in the middle of the northwest wall of the fourth room of Bologna's *gipsoteca* (Fig. 16.3, "Galleria lunga delle Statue già Chimica"), now in the main hall at the Accademia delle Belle Arti, Bologna. Photo by Jeffrey Collins.



Plate 30 Attr. Giuseppe Castiglione and other court painters, detail of *Portrait of Qianlong Hunting a Wolf* (1742), hanging scroll, ink and colours on silk, 259 × 172 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing.



Plate 31 Ignatius Sichelbarth, detail from *Ten Fine Dogs* (ca. 1745–58). Album of ten leaves, colour on paper, each 24.5 × 29.3 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing, Xin146201,1–10.





Plate 32 Jean-Denis Attiret, Giuseppe Castiglione, Ignatius Sichelbarth, and Chinese court painters, *Imperial Banquet in the Garden of Ten Thousand Trees* (1755), affixed hanging, ink and colours on silk, 221.5 × 419 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing, Gu6275.

## 9 Reorder and Restore: Benedict XIV, the Index, and the Holy Office

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MARIA PIA DONATO

Since the eighteenth century, Benedict XIV has been the object of different, if not contrasting appraisals: “*ennemi du fanatisme [et] de la superstition,*” the embodiment of the (conciliatory) Italian spirit, a perfect exemplification of moderation, Philosopher King, a reformer without reformism yet open to the dialogue with contemporary lay culture, a model of pastoral virtue, a canonist and intellectual.<sup>1</sup>

In the late 1960s, the Italian historian Mario Rosa paved the way for a more balanced interpretation of Benedict XIV through a fine-grained evaluation of his complex personality and exceptionally active government.<sup>2</sup> More recently, historians have emphasized the continuity of Benedict XIV with his late seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century predecessors in the line of a distinctly Roman conservative reformism.<sup>3</sup>

The aim of this chapter is to probe the connotations of Benedict XIV as “conservative reformer” through his actions on, and by means of, the Holy Office of the Inquisition and the Congregation of the Index (of Prohibited Books), that is, the two Roman bodies that were especially meant to defend orthodoxy through control of persons and censorship of books, both created in the sixteenth century. Since the opening of the archives of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1996, a mass of original documentation has become available, and new studies have come to light. The Inquisition thus provides an original, if peculiar, stance from which to appraise Lambertini’s pontificate. Three “reforms” that have been variously assessed in past historiography need to be reconsidered: the reordering of book censorship, the revision of the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, and the restriction of the Inquisition’s privileges.

These reforms were not meant to change institutions that represented and preserved a uniform and centralized Catholicism, but rather were aimed at restoring their image and power. They must be seen on the background of the evolution that had reshaped the Congregations of the Index and the Holy Office with respect to their objects, procedures, and composition from the late seventeenth century. Lambertini personally witnessed this evolution and considered it detrimental to the authority of Rome.

At the same time, Benedict's "reforms" reflect a vision of the problems of the Church in terms of decadence from a pristine integrity and the idea that their solution consisted of the reinvigoration and clarification of historically founded norms. Such an attitude was reflective of the rigorist currents that called for an internal ecclesiastic reform in order to cope with the shrinking of the Church after Westphalia.<sup>4</sup> In the Roman, so-called neo-Tridentine version, the veneration of tradition did not refer exclusively to the Primitive Church but included the magisterium of the popes and the Council of Trent and a clear assertion of the primacy of the pontiff, with whom all other institutions were made to coincide. Other distinctive, though not necessarily coherent, values of neo-Tridentine Catholicism were a rigid ideal of ecclesiastic discipline and social order, as well as a cultural *koiné* favouring historical erudition in all fields, including theology, and, as a consequence of the rejection of late scholasticism, moderately open to modern (non-Aristotelian) natural philosophy.

### **The Reordering of Book Censorship: A Second Look**

There is no doubt that giving new force to censorship was an early and major concern of Benedict XIV and that restoring the Congregation of the Index's reputation was a principal aim of his reform project. His intentions are stated explicitly in a letter of 26 April 1741 to the Congregation's secretary, the Dominican Giuseppe Agostino Orsi, in which the pope laments the institution's discredit and inactivity and asks the secretary to search the archive "to see whether something was done in the past that is no longer in use" and prepare a plan.<sup>5</sup>

Orsi collected archival material for this purpose and formed a commission of consultants esteemed by the pope for their learning and experience, including Domenico Giorgi, the Somasque Gian Francesco Baldini, the Benedictine Fortunato Tamburini, and Giovanni Bottari, who advised the pope to allow Catholic authors to defend themselves

when put under scrutiny by the Index. They also recommended that the sequence of the Congregation's meetings be altered to better manage the revision of books, and they emphasized the need for more knowledgeable revisors.<sup>6</sup>

Similar concerns surrounded the Holy Office, which also had the power to condemn books. Benedict XIV saw the authority of this Sacred Tribunal jeopardized by the lack of theological expertise of the cardinals, which left them "wrapped in darkness" and made them the easy prey of the *qualificatores* (i.e., the experts that had to "qualify" theological ideas and propositions in respect to what they considered orthodoxy) from the regular clergy "because they do not even grasp what is in debate."<sup>7</sup> Hence, a memorandum was prepared on the *Style of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office in Revising Books, Either Printed or to Be Printed*.<sup>8</sup>

In an initial phase, however, the effort to revitalize both congregations was implemented through the nomination of new members whom the pope esteemed. Beginning with the promotion of cardinals in 1743, respected and experienced theologians and canonists were appointed, including Fortunato Tamburini, Filippo Maria Monti, the Cistercian Gioacchino Besozzi, Francesco Landi, and Raffaele C. Girolami. Promotions also allowed younger prelates to be inserted into the key positions of secretary of the Index and assessor and commissar of the Holy Office.

This patronage system was typical of the papal monarchy: a new pope brought new curial personnel and "advancements." Nevertheless, the system had changed considerably over time. Especially in the late seventeenth century, the recruitment of decent, learned, capable men was put forward as a principal means of defending the authority of Rome.<sup>9</sup> The same need was deeply felt by Pope Lambertini, himself a model of the rigorist ideal of the respected and learned prelate. He reproduced the same model through his curial nominations, giving special regard to historical expertise. Indeed, given the view of tradition as inherently intertwined with the defence of the Roman Church, and given the restoration of ancient customs as the only mode of conceiving reforms, historical expertise was prized by the Church and by the State. Lambertini therefore held in high esteem those men who could master both sides of erudition, sacred and profane.

The same agenda shaped Benedict XIV's cultural politics. A few months after his election in 1740 he founded four academies: the Councils, Sacred History, the Liturgy, and Roman History. Like the original

Academy of the Councils created by Giovanni Giustino Ciampini in 1671, of which Lambertini had been a member, their purpose was to train and promote younger ecclesiastics under the tutelage of more experienced men, while preparing materials based on historical arguments for the defence of the Roman Church and the pontiff.<sup>10</sup> History provided an arsenal for ideological warfare with the confessional monarchies, and in subsequent years the pope commissioned historical works to support papal infallibility, the spiritual and temporal prerogatives of the Holy See, and the moral superiority of the court of Rome.<sup>11</sup>

The first positive measures for censorship were taken only in 1750, when the Holy Office formally introduced a third referee in the case of disagreement between cardinals and consultants.<sup>12</sup> Three years later, a more comprehensive reform of censorship was set forth in the bull *Sollicita ac provida*. The bull considered several aspects of the book revision procedures of both congregations, ultimately reinforcing the pope's supervision of their work. The most important points regarded the *sensum auctoris*: censors were required to consider all meanings of a book rather than single sentences, and Catholic authors were allowed to present a self-defence. Until then, Roman censors had judged the evident meaning of suspect texts without consideration of authorial intent. The bull now introduced a principle of caution.<sup>13</sup> A third revision was established in the case of disagreement between consultants, which made official what was already common practice by the end of the seventeenth century. All were reminded of their oath of secrecy. Last but not least, the bull stated what should have been an obvious principle – that is, that censors “only have before their eyes the dogmas of the Holy Church, and the common doctrine of Catholics, as it is preserved in the decrees of the General Councils, the constitutions of the Roman Pontiffs, the Orthodox Fathers and the consensus of Doctors.”<sup>14</sup> The rest of the bull treats the choice of referees and the attitude they should keep.

Much has been written about Benedict's respect for the learned and his intention to protect the honour of Catholic authors put under the scrutiny of Rome and to open up theological inquiry.<sup>15</sup> As a lawyer by education and mentality, he undoubtedly approved the idea of greater guarantees for writers under examination, as already suggested by the 1741 commission. But other concerns had to be considered, too, namely, the reliability of the congregations of the Index and the Holy Office.

Lambertini knew how imprecise the examination of a book could be “either because the revision was sometimes commanded by men

without knowledge of the topic, or because no good conclusion was drawn from the revision, albeit one prepared by a learned man."<sup>16</sup> He knew the mechanisms for obtaining prohibitions by assigning judgment to theologians whose opinions *pro* or *contra* were already known and was aware of how pressure could be exerted by circulating letters, notes, and even libels. It must be remembered that in 1702 Lambertini had been appointed a consultant for the Index and in 1713 for the Holy Office; he had also been a cardinal member of both. Several times he had acted as third revisor when members of different tenets disagreed, an all too common occurrence.<sup>17</sup>

As a matter of fact, since the seventeenth century, a process of change and internal diversification had affected both institutions. The original preponderance of Dominicans had given way to a plurality of religious orders and competition among them. A tacit principle of representation of all theological traditions profoundly changed the composition of the congregations and their proceedings. Because of such plurality, the external tensions among schools, orders, and nations echoed loudly in the congregations that were meant to discern and judge. Sudden shifts in their doctrinal orientations reflected the balance of powers at the papal court and eventually resulted either in paralysis, leaving the thorniest issues pending for decades, or in changing decisions that undermined both congregations' authority. The instrumental use of accusations and the circulation of defensive or offensive memoranda through friends and protectors within the congregations became commonplace and potentially reflected differences with the theological and political positions of the pope. At the end of the seventeenth century, the condemnation of Molinos's quietism nearly resulted in the formal accusation of Pope Innocent XI.<sup>18</sup>

While a member of the Holy Office and the Congregation of Rites, Lambertini was personally engaged in the controversy over the Malabar rites, ongoing since the 1640s, and he knew that members went so far as to publish their opinions in print, which broke their oath of secrecy.<sup>19</sup> There had already been unresolved matters, such as the protracted controversy *de auxiliis* of Divine Grace to man's will spanning the years 1588 to 1611, but the situation worsened in the late seventeenth century because of Rome's increasing involvement in the theological warfare among Catholics that ensued from Europe's religious stability after Westphalia.<sup>20</sup>

In the eyes of Benedict XIV, in doctrinal and theological-political matters there was "nothing evil and prejudicial to the Holy See that

does not come from, or has not protections in Rome,” and the struggles in the congregations hindered sound resolutions because of the “factious spirit,” the “scandalous disunion” in the Sacred College of Cardinals, and “[the Roman prelates’] private aims, besides the lack of doctrine.”<sup>21</sup> The effort to keep to a middle way by hitting the opposing parties alternatively – a tactic often used by Rome in moral controversies in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries – seemed no longer suitable. In fact, the uncertainties resulting from the intricate, discordant, and, in the end, tractable practices of the various Roman congregations meant that opponents often bypassed them and turned directly to the pope.

In a word, what was at stake was the authority of the pope as repository and interpreter of the Catholic doctrine that the Inquisition and the Index were meant to serve. Benedict XIV tried to contain the situation by actively supervising the work of both congregations.<sup>22</sup> On the one hand, in regard to single affairs he promoted the persecution of recidivist authors who refused to comply with Roman judgments; on the other hand, he avoided those doctrinal controversies that his most trusted counsellors considered irresolvable “snarls.”<sup>23</sup> Nonetheless, as years went by, the pope persuaded himself of the necessity of rules “without which it seems difficult to Us to preserve [the Index’s] credibility, and the justice of the prohibitions.”<sup>24</sup>

Given this background, it is easier to understand why half of the 1753 bull is devoted to the selection of censors from the orders and to the process of assigning them cases. To combat the “friars’ excessive ardor,” in the words of cardinal Gentili,<sup>25</sup> around 1746 the idea circulated within the pope’s inner circle of publishing a bull prohibiting controversial personal attacks. The project was aborted, but the draft passed into the 1753 bull.

“It is high time for these games [i.e., futile controversies] to end, and for Catholic theologians to write against materialists, atheists, deists, who seek to tear our Holy Religion from its foundations,”<sup>26</sup> wrote the pope to cardinal Tencin on 3 May 1752, the same year that Montesquieu’s *L’Esprit des lois* and Voltaire’s *Lettres philosophiques* were placed in the *Index of Prohibited Books*.<sup>27</sup> Theological controversies did not, in fact, come any nearer to an end, but in the second half of the eighteenth century censorship proved a more compliant instrument in the hands of the papacy and was turned against Enlightenment culture and politics.<sup>28</sup>

### The Revision of the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, or a Brief Intermezzo on Books and the Book

The *Sollicita ac provida* exposed the need to update the *Index librorum prohibitorum* that was to remain the indispensable guide for Catholics' assessment of the swiftly growing mass of printed books. The last official *Index* dated from 1681, and, because subsequent prohibitions circulated only in separate leaflets or unauthorized publications, mistakes and inaccuracies multiplied.

It was rather easy for cardinals and consultants to agree on formal improvements, such as the alphabetization of the list and the elimination of redundant information.<sup>29</sup> The re-examination of past prohibitions proved much more laborious: should the *Index* be amended or reformed? The debate brought to light different positions on the canon of modern Catholic culture and ambivalent attitudes regarding lay readership.

One supporter of reform was the *Index*'s new secretary, Tomaso Agostino Ricchini, OP. In 1754 he presented a draft for a new *methodus expurgatorius*. According to him, a lot of books "useful and beneficial," even those written by heretics, could circulate if dangerous passages were not actually corrected but simply signalled by typographical marks. In his note, he listed several "books that might be allowed once corrected and purged." The list ranged from canon and civil law (Pufendorf, Grotius, Sanchez) to ecclesiastical history (Thiers, Vossius, Beveridge), scriptural scholarship and ancient languages (Scaliger, Scapula, Whalon, Buxtorf, Pearson, Fabricius), speculative and positive theology (Annat, Budde), and philosophy and natural philosophy (Copernicus, Galileo, Malebranche, Le Clerc, Descartes, Cluver, Locke).<sup>30</sup>

Ricchini's memorandum encapsulates the erudite, "modern" Christian culture of the late seventeenth-century Republic of Letters favoured by anti-scholastic Catholic intellectuals in Italy and in Rome.<sup>31</sup> A similar canon inspired Lambertini's own scholarly work and patronage of science; therefore, the pope showed interest in Ricchini's project, praising his proposal.<sup>32</sup> Yet expurgation, not even in the simplified form proposed by Ricchini, was not viable to the *Index* cardinals and the plan was discarded.

Failure did not discourage Ricchini, who some time later presented a more ambitious report on *Some Books the Prohibition of Which Could Be Lifted or Moderated in the New Index*, in which he recommended that the



prohibition on vernacular Bibles and scriptural compendia be softened. The first reform plan was instrumental to Catholic scholarship and was directed more narrowly to the milieu of clerics; the second regarded the general Catholic readership. Of course, Ricchini's support for learning remained strong in the second plan, as demonstrated by his insistence on the general usefulness of erudite books by both Catholics and heretics (a few of whom he had already praised in his first plan); however, in this plan, the reading of the Bible had broader relevance for the faithful.<sup>33</sup>

There is no need to recall that the interdiction of all translations and compendia of the scriptures had been in force since the *Index Clementinus* of 1592.<sup>34</sup> At the beginning of the eighteenth century, vernacular Bibles were a crucial point of the bull *Unigenitus* condemning Jansenism and the French Jansenist theologian Pasquier Quesnel, which had increased friction with the French episcopate. Authorized versions of the scriptures could be admitted in France and in other countries where non-Catholic confessions were tolerated, but not in Italy and Spain.

On this point, Benedict XIV maintained a conservative position. In 1748 he refused to allow the publication of an Italian translation of Paul's Epistles by Cardinal Annibale Albani.<sup>35</sup> On that occasion the Holy Office assessor, Pier Girolamo Guglielmi, retrieved the few existing decrees concerning vernacular Bibles, underscoring that they had "the sole aim of preventing the greater evil that came from those versions already printed and published by heretics,"<sup>36</sup> and the pope maintained the interdiction. Only some time later, during the final rush for the revision, Ricchini's idea of softening the prohibition of vernacular Bibles was resumed. In spite of the contrary opinion of other consultants, the cardinals approved it in the meeting of 30 June 1757, when they waived the new *Index*.

During this period, other proposals were advanced, incongruous with one another regarding the moderation or reinforcement of censorship. On the one hand, some consultants recommended extending the prohibition to the complete works of non-Catholic authors such as Bayle and Grotius, of whom only specific books were listed in the *Index*, and to the works of Catholics such as Thiers, Baillet, and Dupin, of which only single volumes were banned.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, the Jesuit Pietro Lazzari advanced his *Considerations on the article Libri omnes docentes mobilitatem terrae et immobilitatem Solis* to lift the general interdiction on Copernican books inserted after 1616.<sup>38</sup>

In Lambertini's time, the Copernican question led the Roman Curia to hesitations, notwithstanding – or possibly because of – the

benevolent attitude of the pope and his closest ministers with regard to heliocentrism.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, in his note, Lazzari sketched the development of modern astronomy, explained why the censors' practice of tolerating heliocentric works (provided that they mentioned the word *hypothesis*) was detrimental to Rome, and argued that the revision of the *Index* offered a good opportunity to circumvent the problem with "little dishonor."

It is not necessary to treat this well-documented episode in detail. Nevertheless, some points in Lazzari's note should be underlined. His main argument concerns the historical and contingent nature of past condemnations. He does not propose a formal reconsideration of past judgments, yet he insists that, although the general anti-Copernican prohibition had been taken in 1616 "with good reason and prudence," for heliocentrism seemed then impossible to prove, these reasons were "no longer valid to keep it."<sup>40</sup> Like Ricchini, Lazzari, who taught sacred history at the Roman College, remarks that the Roman Church had abandoned doctrines "according to the observations of learned heretics,"<sup>41</sup> but his proposal is designed not to recover this or that past scholarly work like Ricchini's, but rather to prevent further controversial affairs. Apologetic in scope and tactical in nature, Lazzari's plan essentially suggested adaptation in line with the Society of Jesus's modernism. But on one thing the Jesuit agreed with the Dominican: both recommended simplifying and lightening the system of penalties in force for the various classes of prohibited books, an issue that had been raised recurrently in the Congregation since the 1730s with no solution.<sup>42</sup>

Benedict XIV approved the new *Index librorum prohibitorum* in December 1757. When it came off the press in 1758, it featured a delicate mixture of rigidity and mitigation.<sup>43</sup> None of the works suggested by Ricchini was rescued. Quite the contrary – the prohibition was extended to books by suspect authors not previously mentioned and the penalties remained unchanged. Two changes were noticeable, though: the allowance for bishops to permit the reading of vernacular Bibles and the disappearance of the anti-Copernican general rule. Yet Galileo's *Dialogue* remained expressly banned, as did Copernicus's *De revolutionibus*, the work of Foscarini and Zuñiga, and other writings of biblical exegesis related to science, such as Thomas Burnet's *Telluris theoria sacra*.

The inconsistency of the criteria concerning the Bible and heliocentrism caused misunderstandings and led to the incrimination of incautious men, who considered Copernicanism to have been rehabilitated

and went so far as to contest the relevance of the scriptures for natural philosophy.<sup>44</sup> It is true, however, that in the context of late eighteenth-century science, the revision of both general interdictions contributed to the quieting of Copernican and biblical questions in Catholic culture, if only momentarily.

### **Reform of the Inquisition? The Patentees' Privileges and Other Facts**

Other challenges beyond book censorship came before the Roman Inquisition in the time of Benedict XIV. Its very existence was under threat in most Italian states. Since the end of the seventeenth century, the duke (then king) of Savoy had rejected the nomination of non-national inquisitors and in the 1720s and 1730s vigorously sought to extend the jurisdiction of bishops and state magistrates over a vast range of offences qualified as heresy. Contrary to the pope's wishes, the Concordat signed in 1741 between Savoy and the Holy See did not mention the Inquisition, though it reinstated ecclesiastical law on a number of crimes, and in 1748 Turin advanced a reform project that substantially reduced the Inquisition's powers.<sup>45</sup> In 1737 the Lorraine Regency in Florence imposed *exequatur* (a legal instrument issued by secular authorities in Roman Catholic territories to bestow legal force upon papal decrees within their jurisdiction) for arrests and cancelled the right of inquisitors to extend their personal privileges to their servants; six years later, following a scandal in Siena, the Inquisition's jails were closed. In the same year the inquisitors' censorship was transferred to a state magistrate, a measure that the Holy Office in Rome declared heretical.<sup>46</sup> An even harsher conflict then opposed Rome to Naples. In 1746, when Archbishop Giuseppe Spinelli tried to extend the inquisitorial procedure to all trials in matters of faith, the king and his ministers seized the opportunity to abolish it while imposing the royal *exequatur* on all diocesan tribunals.<sup>47</sup>

In response to this defiance of the authority of the Inquisition and to sustain diplomatic negotiations, the Inquisition's assessor mined the archive. In 1749 he presented the pope with several volumes on the *Origins, jurisdictions and privileges of the Inquisitions*, which compiled all existing decrees and documents for each local tribunal, a survey of decrees and papal acts on the procedures of the central Roman court,<sup>48</sup> and a collection of the *Ordinary and Extraordinary Faculties Given to Ambassadors, Bishops, etc.*<sup>49</sup> The archive was even shown to the Florentine

ambassador, Saint-Odile, to prove that all local inquisitions, including the more independent one in Venice, referred to Rome.<sup>50</sup>

It took ten years to restore the Inquisition in Tuscany. The Florentine-Austrian government obtained the appointment of civil officers in the jury, except for cases of *sollicitatio ad turpia* (the sexual molestation of penitents when confessing). Although the end of the conflict was regarded with moderate satisfaction by Rome, it did eventually lead to a decrease in prosecutions.<sup>51</sup> The king of Sardinia withdrew the 1748 project but never gave up the right to redirect cases from inquisitors to bishops and secular magistrates. As for Naples, there was nothing left for the pope but to lament, "We do not have the strength to impose [the Holy Office] in spite of the King."<sup>52</sup>

In fact, by opposing not only secular to ecclesiastical justice, but also bishops to inquisitors, mid-century regalism reopened an old conflict and furthermore created contradiction in Benedict XIV's equally important sollicitudes of reinstating the superior authority of Rome while reinforcing the power of bishops. The difficult balance was made manifest in his letter *On the Extraction of Offenders from Immune Places* of 22 February 1751, which distinguished between the rights of the inquisitor and those of the bishop in extracting offenders from immune places according to the charge, trying to protect the dignity of both, and calling for cooperation.<sup>53</sup>

In truth, judicial immunities stirred problems even in the Papal States, as the assessor summarizes: "There are very frequent instances presented by the Inquisition's officers appealing for the protection of their rights against arrest and mistreatment that they suffer from bishops and local governors; conversely, there are continuous complaints from those [local authorities] against the feigned abuse of patentees and the exaggerated expansion of privileges."<sup>54</sup> Because of recurrent litigation, the number and personal, fiscal, and legal rights of, respectively, "privileged" and "plain" patentees (i.e., those officials attached to the Inquisition, such as local inquisitors, their notaries and a long list of other officers and servants, and who therefore benefited from judicial and fiscal immunity) had already been fixed in 1735, apparently with little result.<sup>55</sup>

The pope considered the number of patentees in want of a reduction, though no more than other categories of immune people.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, in February 1743 the cardinal inquisitors sent a new memorandum to all inquisitors and bishops, reiterating the existing norms and asking for detailed information on local officers.<sup>57</sup> A survey in the archive in Rome ascertained 300 local offices in the Papal States only.<sup>58</sup>

The pope's idea was to reduce patentees "to the due number of necessary officers, who will be punished by the [common] tribunal if they commit crimes." In March 1743 he believed he had done the most possible by reducing the patentees to three for each local inquisitor, whose list would also be known to the local bishops and governors. But he also realized how difficult it was to overcome resistance to any reform in the Holy Office itself, "as the cardinals consider the main prerogative of their tribunal to exempt a mass of useless and dishonest ministers from the jurisdiction of their natural judge."<sup>59</sup>

The congregation did, in fact, resist. In 1745 the assessor prepared a report, numbering the patentees at 3,019 in a population of 2 million and arguing that their further reduction was inconceivable, "given the circumstances of today's libertinism."<sup>60</sup> Hence, in 1746 Benedict XIV continued to observe that the Inquisition's officers were in want of reform, and he contemplated issuing a bull reordering the whole system of personal immunities.<sup>61</sup>

Such a bull never saw the light of day. The only practical outcome was instead a more accurate register of patents.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the clarifications of 1743 on the distinction between privileged and plain patents did not suffice to prevent further lawsuits. In 1748 a minor episode involving the farmer of an officer of the Inquisition in Petrignano near Assisi – a village of less than 300 souls – renewed the dispute.<sup>63</sup> This time forces in favour of a reduction of the inquisitors' immunities seemed to prevail, but the Holy Office succeeded in rebutting what it considered an undue interference on the basis of previous papal decisions. The final result was the bull *In supremum* of 7 July 1755, which essentially confirmed the patentees' civil and criminal rights as fixed in 1735 and deferred to an indefinite future "the most useful work of reducing the number of vicars."<sup>64</sup>

A similarly limited reform was undertaken for the only other territory under Roman jurisdiction, Malta, where the inquisitor recurrently clashed with the Knights Hospitallers. A formal decree, however, was not issued before 1760.<sup>65</sup>

Meanwhile, much effort was also spent in settling pending doctrinal issues, clarifying norms, reiterating commands in those matters and controversies that incessantly returned to the desks of the cardinal inquisitors. Lambertini knew most of them first-hand through his experience in the Holy Office and the Congregations of Rites and of the Council. Hence, the controversy over the Catholic rites in China and Malabar were settled by the *Ex quo singulari* (1742) and *Omnium*

*sollicitudinum* (1744); both bulls, which condemned ritual adaptations, were inspired by the ideal of a uniform Catholicism under the control of Rome.<sup>66</sup> Marriages between Catholics and Protestants or Catholics and Muslims or Jews and the discipline of the Oriental Churches were addressed too.<sup>67</sup>

Recurrent controversies over the relationship between Christians and Jews, and more particularly over the separation of Hebrew children from their families to be 'offered' to the Catholic faith and baptized, were considered in two letters, *Postremo mense* of 1747 and *Probe te meminisse* of 1751. On this topic, Marina Caffiero underscores Benedict XIV's conservatism and harshness: as a consultant, Lambertini already had put forward the primacy of the Catholic religion over any natural or civil rights of the Hebrew; as pope, he affirmed the *favor fidei*, that is, the principle that everything that was in favour of the Catholic Church could be exploited.<sup>68</sup>

Last but not least, the repression of "disordered devotions" and mystical pretenses, especially in women, was also pursued with reinvigorated zeal. Lambertini had already given proof of his distrust for the ardent spiritual life of nuns and pious women according to the tenets of a regulated, mildly rationalistic piety that he had shared with significant parts of the Church and Curia since the late seventeenth-century "twilight of mysticism"<sup>69</sup> and on the basis of his suspicions of any devotional innovation.<sup>70</sup> On the papal throne, under pressure from Spain and the Franciscans, he consented to the beatification process of Mary of Jesus of Agreda, whose *Mística ciudad de Dios* had been condemned by the Holy Office in 1681 but approved by the Spanish Inquisition, only to entrust it to a commission of rigorist prelates and eventually refuse to validate her revelations.<sup>71</sup> In 1744 the case of another visionary nun, Crescentia of Kaufbeuren, instigated Benedict's bull *Sollicitudini nostrae*, prescribing the correct iconography of the Holy Spirit.<sup>72</sup>

It should be noted that at least seven women were sentenced for affectation of holiness by the Sacred Tribunal under Benedict XIV.<sup>73</sup> Not all those charged for this offence were females, but women (most religious) outnumbered men and also formed the majority of those charged with molinism, quietism, and other "mystical heresies." Between 1745 and 1750, for instance, twelve were sentenced for this offence.<sup>74</sup>

In total, the cases judged from 1745 to 1750 by the Holy Office in Rome included the abuse of sacraments (5 cases), "heresy" (55 cases, of which 21 were accused of blasphemy), *matrimonialia* (14, plus 9 cases of

polygamy), magic (10), *sollicitatio ad turpia* (20), and four cases of clerics *not promoted to the celebration of the Mass*; more than one-third of the prosecutions concerned male and female religious.<sup>75</sup> A complete survey of the prosecutions by the Roman tribunal in the eighteenth century is not available, yet these partial findings are in line with the trends of local branches for the same period, when the peripheral inquisitors concentrated on disordered matrimonial and monastic conduct, abuses of sacraments, curses, and blasphemy.<sup>76</sup> Of course, such evolution was the effect of the ecclesiastical, administrative, and judicial reforms that were being implemented in the Italian states, which eroded the Inquisition's power, but Rome's greater severity in regard to clerical misconduct also played a part. After all, numerous bulls were directed at these problems (e.g., *Ubi primum* 1740, *Apostolicae Servitutis* 1741, *Sacerdos in aeternum* 1744); to the same end, all three assessors of the Holy Office during Lambertini's reign were promoted as secretaries of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

It must also be noted that an extra twenty-nine proceedings examined by the Roman Congregation in the same five-year span were not criminal cases but *Dubia et postulata*. As a matter of fact, the ordinary activity of the Holy Office in the eighteenth century was increasingly sustained by doctrinal solicitations by other congregations, especially the Propaganda Fide. This congregation, created in 1622 as the supervising organ for missions and missionaries, had been subordinated to the Holy Office by Alexander VII, but only in the eighteenth century did it abandon its defensive attitude *vis-à-vis* the Inquisition and advance a growing number of queries regarding the ever-changing needs for pastoral care in the (expanding) mission territories. Hence, missionary matters took on greater importance in the archival series of the *Doubts on Sacraments* that were being recast in those years.<sup>77</sup>

The reordering of the Inquisition's archive in Rome was a significant innovation in the time of Benedict XIV. The archive, established in 1593, was then increasing at an exponentially fast pace, and the need of a new organization had been underscored under Clement XII. On the basis of a project of Raffaele Girolami, the assessor then in charge, an employee named Francesco Pastore, "a silent minister and man of great learning," had the task from 1738 of "keeping together all doctrinal matters, that were once dispersed here and there, and that were impossible to reunite when needed."<sup>78</sup> Pastore and his successor, Pietro Paolucci, compiled subject indexes of the Congregation's decrees, cross-referenced the originals and the excerpts, and rearranged and indexed the volumes of doctrinal

materials in order to have an open, extendable series of *Doubts* for dogmatic, liturgical, and disciplinary topics;<sup>79</sup> 250 volumes of legal and theological matters were moved from the chancellery into the archive.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, Benedict XIV (who personally knew the archive)<sup>81</sup> required the merging of a similar series from the Propaganda Fide with that of the Inquisition.<sup>82</sup> Meanwhile, the assessor and his employees caught up with twenty-eight years of unregistered decrees.<sup>83</sup>

The reordering of the archive, completed only in the following decades, was intended to accelerate the passing of judgments. Forming an accessible body of jurisprudence, the new archival series would help the cardinal inquisitors respond to doctrinal queries on the basis of tradition and precedents, this being an inherent source of authority regarding doctrine and liturgy in the eyes of Benedict XIV. The importance of the doctrinal part of the archive would become truly apparent in the nineteenth century, when the Inquisition, after the suppression of its criminal jurisdiction, shifted into a court of last instance for ecclesiastics and for the resolution of doctrinal issues of the universal Church.

### Some Concluding Remarks

It has been written that Lambertini's pontificate saw the ultimate attempt to reform the Church along the lines sketched at Trent, but the centrifugal forces liberated in this process pushed Rome to withdraw into the defense of Catholicism as an intangible, fixed body of institutions, devotions, and doctrines.<sup>84</sup> His reign marked the climax of Tridentine Catholicism as well as its end, for the failure to accomplish substantial autonomous reforms spurred more radical reformism, drawn either from Jansenism or from the Catholic Enlightenment, but in any case critical of Rome.<sup>85</sup>

Furthermore, from the standpoint of the Inquisition, Benedict XIV's pontificate does appear to be the apex of late seventeenth-century neo-Tridentinism. His unflinching belief in a centralized Church under the control of the Roman pontiff, his clear adherence to tradition, his rigid model of clerical discipline, and his great historical and canonical learning – that same ideology that made Lambertini insensitive to the requests for adaptation coming from the missionary world, to innovations in cult and piety, and to secular Enlightenment culture – did not fail to inform his politics on, and in, the Index and the Inquisition.

Benedict XIV was aware of the shortcomings of the Roman Church in exerting a firm command over the changing society and politics



of his day. He considered reforms of the practices and “abuses” of the Roman congregations necessary to restore their authority. Like most aspects of his politics, this one is marked by an effort to reinforce papal control over the curial apparatus while strengthening the role of the pope as head and supreme judge of the universal Church. His was a project of restoration based on an ideal model from the past, in other words, a reordering, reinstating, and clarifying of norms and procedures on the grounds of historical evidence.

Clearly, a reinstatement of the Counter-Reformation Inquisition and Index was impossible. By the mid-eighteenth century, a restriction of the Holy Office’s influence and activities with regard to matters broadly related to clerical discipline under the pressure of jurisdictionalism was already evident. Also manifest was the overall loosening of censorship and the incumbent estrangement of ecclesiastic and lay culture. But such processes should not be seen as purely passive. Although further research is needed, through his measures, decisions, and chosen priorities as I have been describing them so far and through his overall attitude towards the problems of the Church, Benedict XIV seems, to a certain extent unintentionally and contradictorily, to have crystallized and accelerated the devolution of Church authority.

## NOTES

List of abbreviations: ACDF: Archive of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; St. st.: Stanza storica; ASV: Vatican Secret Archive. The author would like to thank the editors, especially Rebecca Messbarger, and the anonymous referees for their useful comments on this text, as well as Erminia Irace.

- 1 See, respectively, Caraccioli, *La vie du pape Benoît XIV*, xvi; Pastor, *The History of the Popes*; Appolis, *Entre jansénistes et “zelanti”*; Haynes, *Philosopher King*; Venturi, *Settecento riformatore*; Bertone, *Il governo della Chiesa nel pensiero*.
- 2 Mario Rosa, “Tra Muratori, il giansenismo e i ‘lumi’: profilo di Benedetto XIV,” in Rosa, *Riformatori e ribelli nel ‘700 religioso italiano*.
- 3 Garms-Cornides, “Benedikt XIV; Greco, *Benedetto XIV*; Donato and Irace, “Benedetto XIV,” in *Dizionario storico dell’Inquisizione* (readers can refer to this monumental dictionary for every aspect of the history of the Roman Inquisition and the Index discussed in this chapter).
- 4 Donati, “La Chiesa di Roma”; Neveu, *Érudition et religion*.
- 5 ACDF, Index Protocols 1740–8, f. 13.

- 6 ASV, Benedetto XIV, 22, ff. 151–2. On these prelates, the entries in *Prosopographie von römischer Inquisition und Indexkongregation, 1701–1813*, ed. Hubert Wolf (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2010), complete the biographical sketches available in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1961–). On the procedures, see Mayer, *The Roman Inquisition*. For an overview of the functioning of the Holy Office, which was at the same time a cardinals' congregation overseeing the activity of local Inquisitions and a tribunal, see Tedeschi, *The Prosecution of Heresy*; Christopher Black, *The Italian Inquisition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
- 7 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al card. de Tencin*, 1: 11; Di Carlo, *Il libro in Benedetto XIV*, 90.
- 8 ASV, Benedetto XIV, 22, ff. 158–60. See also ACDF, St. st. M-2-m, ff. 171–96.
- 9 Gianvittorio Signorotto, "The squadrone volante: 'Independent' Cardinals and European Politics in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century," in *Court and Politics in Papal Rome, 1492–1700*, ed. Gianvittorio Signorotto and Maria Antonietta Visceglia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 177–211; Bruno Pellegrino, ed., *Riforme, religione e politica durante il pontificato di Innocenzo XII (1691–1700)* (Galatina: Congedo, 1994).
- 10 Donato, *Accademie romane*.
- 11 See, for example, Giuseppe Agostino Orsi, *Della origine, dominio e della Sovranità de' Romani Pontefici sopra gli stati loro temporalmente soggetti* (1742); Giovanni Antonio Bianchi, *Della potestà e della politia della Chiesa trattati due contro le nuove opinioni di P. Giannone* (1745–51); Mario Guarnacci, *Vitæ, et res gestæ pontificum romanorum et S.R.E. cardinalium* (1751); Giacomo Acami, *Dell'origine ed antichità della Zecca Pontificia* (1752). See Garms-Cornides, "Storia, politica e apologia in Benedetto XIV"; Maria Pia Donato, "Gli strumenti della politica di Benedetto XIV: il Giornale de' Letterati," *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 1 (1997): 39–61.
- 12 ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii 1750*, ff. 192r–193r, 195v–196r.
- 13 Neveu, *L'erreur et son juge*, especially ch. 5.
- 14 S.D.N. *Benedicti Papæ XIV Bullarium*, Vol. IV (Rome: Mainardi, 1760–1) 71–6; Haven Putnam, *The Censorship of the Church of Rome*, 2: 10–73.
- 15 See, for instance, Mauro, "Benedetto XIV e la censura ecclesiastica"; Wolf and Schmid, *Benedikt XIV*.
- 16 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 3: 67.
- 17 See e.g., ACDF, *Censuræ librorum 1715*, 11. It should be remembered that by the eighteenth century neither the Index, nor the Inquisition initiated a book revision unless solicited.
- 18 Signorotto, *Inquisitori e mistici nel Seicento italiano*. On Molinos and quietism, see Anne Jacobson Schutte, *Aspiring Saints: Pretense of Sanctity*,

- Inquisition and Gender in the Republic of Venice, 1618–1750* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001). Molinos's most influential text, *The Spiritual Guide*, teaching the way to reach the perfect "quiet" in contemplating God, has recently been translated by Trevor Boiling (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2006).
- 19 The Congregation of Rites was responsible for all matters pertaining to cult and liturgy, including canonization procedures. On the Malabar rites and the acceptance of aspects of Indian society and traditions into Christian liturgy, see Pavone, "Inquisizione romana e riti malabarici: una controversia"; Paolo Aranha, "Les meilleures causes embarrassent les juges, si elles manquent de bonnes preuves: Père Norbert's Militant Historiography in the Malabar Rites Controversy," in *Europäische Geschichtskulturen um 1700 zwischen Gelehrsamkeit, Politik und Konfession*, ed. Thomas Wallnig, Ines Peper, Thomas Stockinger, and Patrick Fiska (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 239–68.
  - 20 Stella, *Il giansenismo in Italia*; Donato, "Scienza e teologia nelle congregazioni romane," and "Les doutes de l'Inquisiteur."
  - 21 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 3: 16; 1: 233, 72.
  - 22 He discloses his habit of writing the draft of any important resolution, already practised by Clement XI, in *ibid.*, 3: 46.
  - 23 *Ibid.*, 2: 241, referring to the Augustine theologians Beelli and Berti, on whom see Stella, *Il giansenismo*, 267–309.
  - 24 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 2: 200 (17 September 1749).
  - 25 ASV, Benedetto XIV, 22, ff. 180–2.
  - 26 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 2: 472. The pope commissioned from the Dominican Daniello Concina a work of controversy, *Della religione rivelata contra gli ateisti, deisti, materialisti, indifferentisti, che negano la verita de' misteri* (Venice: Occhi, 1754).
  - 27 Mario Rosa, "Cattolicesimo e 'lumi': la condanna dell'Esprit des lois," in Rosa, *Riformatori e ribelli*, 87–117; Macé, "Les Lumières françaises au tribunal."
  - 28 Maire, "L'entrée des Lumières à l'Index"; Delpiano, *Il governo della lettura*.
  - 29 On this topic see the excellent Rebellato, *La fabbrica dei divieti*.
  - 30 ACDF, Index Protocols 1753–4, ff. 369r–376v. On censorship and expurgations (abandoned in the early seventeenth century), see Gigliola Fragnito, ed., *Church, Censorship and Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
  - 31 Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione*; Johns, *Papal Art and Cultural Politics*; Barzazi, *Gli affanni dell'erudizione*; Mazzotti, *The World of Maria Gaetana Agnesi*.

- 32 ACDF, Index Protocols 1753–4, f. 367.
- 33 ACDF, Index Protocols 1755–7, ff. 53–61. Rebellato dates the note at 1757, but it was more likely prepared in 1755 and then resumed.
- 34 Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo*.
- 35 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 2: 289–90.
- 36 ASV, Benedetto XIV, 22, ff. 105–8.
- 37 ACDF, Index Protocols 1755–7, ff. 159r–162, and 571r–575r.
- 38 Ibid., ff. 486–97, ed. Ugo Baldini, *Saggi sulla cultura della Compagnia di Gesù*, 281–347, trans. Finocchiaro in his *Retrying Galileo*, 146–53.
- 39 See Mayaud, *La condamnation des livres coperniciens*, esp. 118–65, though he mistakes the lift of the anti-Copernican prohibition from the 1758 *Index* for a doctrinal resolution; Heilbron, “Censorship of Astronomy in Italy after Galileo,” and his chapter in this volume. On Lambertini’s patronage of science see Rebecca Messbarger’s, Marta Cavazza’s, and Paula Findlen’s chapters in this volume and Dacome, “The Anatomy of the Pope.”
- 40 Lazzari, ACDF, Index Protocols 1755–7, ff. 159r–162, and 571r–575r.
- 41 Ibid. See Sabatini, “Una disciplina scomoda.”
- 42 Rebellato, *La fabbrica dei divieti*, 195–9, 223–4.
- 43 *Index librorum prohibitorum sanctissimi domini nostri Benedicti XIV, pontificis maximi jussu recognitus, atque editus* (Rome: ex typographia rev. Camerae apostolicae, 1758).
- 44 Donato, “‘Il patente disprezzo a cui non possiamo ormai fare più fronte.’”
- 45 Silvestrini, *La politica della religione*. For an overview see Carpanetto and Ricuperati, *Italy in the Age of Reason*.
- 46 Rodolico, *Stato e Chiesa in Toscana*
- 47 Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 189–91.
- 48 ACDF, St. st. D-2-f, g, h; St. st. D-3-a.
- 49 ACDF, St. st. D-5-a. Benedict XIV requested information from France, which was then siding with the Bourbons of Naples; see Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 2: 16–17.
- 50 Ibid., 3: 154–5.
- 51 Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 208–10.
- 52 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 2: 15.
- 53 *Bullarium III*, 149–50; I do not fully agree with Greco’s assessment (*Benedetto XIV*, 188) on this point.
- 54 ACDF, St. st. M-2-m, f. 345r. For cases of conflicts see, e.g., ACDF, St. st. HH-2-e, 3; St. st. L-4-g.
- 55 On local tribunals see Tedeschi, *The Prosecution of Heresy*, 127–57; on patentees, see Brambilla, *La giustizia intollerante*, 109–17.

- 56 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 50.
- 57 ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii 1743*, f. 37; St. st. HH-2-e, 1. Fosi, *Papal Justice*, 122–4.
- 58 ACDF, *Decreta Sancti Officii 1743*, f. 37, 46.
- 59 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 50, 60.
- 60 ACDF, St. st. M-2-m, f. 351r.
- 61 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 328.
- 62 ACDF, St. st. II-5-m, starting on 1747, and following registers.
- 63 ACDF, St. st. HH-2-e, 2.
- 64 *Bullarium IV*, 166–71.
- 65 Ciappara, *Society and the Inquisition*. In the 1730s Lambertini had served as consultant on the precarious situation of the Maltese court, see ACDF, St. st. I-5-c, 83.
- 66 On the Chinese rites see Henri Bernard, “The Chinese and Malabar Rites: An Historical Perspective,” *Concilium* 7:3 (1967): 38–45; George Mina-miki, *The Chinese Rites Controversy from Its Beginning to Modern Times* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1985); Catto, “Superstizione, monoteismo e unità della Chiesa.” See above, n19, on the Malabar rites.
- 67 For an overview see Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 153–6, 214–30; Aurélien Girard, “Nihil est innovandum? Maintien des rites orientaux et négociation de l’union des églises orientales avec Rome (fin XVIe – mi XVIIIe siècles),” in *Réduire le schisme ? Eclésiologies et politiques de l’Union entre Orient et Occident, XIIIe–XVIIIe siècles*, ed. Marie-Hélène Blanchet and Frédéric Gabriel, 337–52 (Paris: Collège de France – CNRS, 2013); on mixed marriages with Muslims and Jews, see Caffiero, “Per una storia comparativa,” and “Benedetto.” The Holy Office supervised the correction of the Oriental liturgical books; see ACDF, St. st. QQ-3-e. The pope encouraged Pietro Pompilio Rodotà, professor at the Greek College and *scriptor* in the Vatican Library, to compose a survey on *Dell’origine progresso e stato presente del rito greco in Italia osservato dai Greci, Monaci Basiliani e Albanesi libri tre* (Rome: Salomoni, 1758–63).
- 68 Caffiero, *Forced Baptisms*, esp. 44–72.
- 69 I borrow the definition from Cognet, *Crépuscule des mystiques*; see also Brambilla, *Corpi inoasi e viaggi dell’anima*.
- 70 A minor yet revealing episode occurred in 1716, when Lambertini was consulted on the biography of Maria Triboli, founder of the Sisters of the Charity in Florence and dismissed the nun’s visions and acts of devotion as *fabulae* (ACDF, *Censurae librorum 1715–17*, 11). In 1727 he prepared a negative evaluation on the cult of Sacred Heart qualifying Marguerite Marie Alaquoque’s visions as *supposita*. On this episode, and on the

- treatment of visions and apparitions, and other mystical phenomena in his *De servorum Dei beatification et beatorum canonizatione*, especially with regard to women, see Rosa, *Settecento religioso*, 26–57.
- 71 *Ibid.*, 57–68; Cabibbo, “‘Ignorantia Scripturarum, ignorantia Christi est.’”
- 72 Boespflug, *Dieu dans l’art*.
- 73 ACDF, St. st. I-5-c, non-numbered file. See also Faoro, “Fra crepuscolo del misticismo ed alba della ben regolata santità”; Bottoni, *Scritture dell’anima*. More generally, see Schutte, *Aspiring Saints*.
- 74 ACDF, St. st. II-4-d.
- 75 ACDF, St. st. II-4-d. On blasphemy, see Barbierato, *The Inquisitor in the Hat Shop*.
- 76 Statistical data in John Tedeschi and William Monter, “Toward a Statistical Profile of the Italian Inquisitions, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries,” in Tedeschi, *The Prosecution of Heresy*, 89–126, are updated and discussed by Del Col, *L’Inquisizione in Italia dal XII al XXI secolo*. Repression of sacramental abuses and control over sexual conduct had already become a major activity of the Italian Inquisitions; however, on the overall lax discipline of Counter-Reformation clergy, see Mancino and Romeo, *Clero criminale*.
- 77 Pizzorusso, “Le fonti del Sant’Uffizio.”
- 78 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 11.
- 79 ACDF, St. st. I-1-f, *Index alphabeticum doctrinalis archivii S. Officii Romae* can be identified as one of Paolucci’s indexes, continued by G.M. Lugani; possibly St. st. I-1-d, among others, was also compiled at that time; few volumes of doctrinal *Dubia* already existed at the end of the seventeenth century, but further research must ascertain the relation between the series today classed as *Dubia* and other sub-series in the St. st. that seem to have been compiled in the eighteenth century. On the archive, see Beretta, “L’archivio della Congregazione del Sant’Uffizio,” though he does not refer to Paolucci.
- 80 See Paolucci in ACDF, *Sancti Officii, Privilegia 1743–9*, ff. 431–8.
- 81 As he states, for example, in Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 330.
- 82 Their reordering was assigned by the pope to the Inquisition’s archivist jointly with Rodotà, on whom see n67, above.
- 83 His own testimony in ACDF, St. st. D-2-f, non-numbered folios.
- 84 Donati, “La Chiesa di Roma,” 758.
- 85 Rosa, “Catholic Enlightenment in Italy.”

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## **PART IV**

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### **Theology, Tradition, and Institutions in the Era of Enlightened Catholicism**

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## 10 Lambertini's Treatises and the Cultural Project of Benedict XIV: Two Sides of the Same Policy

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MARIA TERESA FATTORI

The “enlightened” image of Benedict XIV owes much to traditional portrayals of him as an erudite theorist, in addition to being a supporter of intellectuals, scholars, scientists, and artists. This image corresponds to cultural initiatives the pope conducted through the various means available to him, including his own scholarly works. In the last decade, numerous studies have been conducted on the cultural and artistic commitment of this versatile man in order to highlight the subjects of his patronage, his collections of books and manuscripts, and his connections as pope with specific institutional, university, academic, and scientific circles in Bologna, Rome, and Coimbra, Portugal.<sup>1</sup> The sincere commitment of Benedict XIV to the cultural sector cannot be separated from his overall project for the enlightened reform of Church and state.

The Bolognese pope favoured and became an integral part of the processes of selecting and partially adopting those values of modern culture that were compatible with Christianity. He worked to reduce the influence of miracles and external practices, as well as to address the needs of contemporary science. His papacy stimulated Catholics to research Christian sources with a renewed epistemological vision and to reduce devotional practices to their bare essentials, creating a piety focused on Christ and devoid of superstition and excessive sentimentality. Piety based on a “solid foundation” was a Lambertinian expression that implied an examination of worship according to philological and historical criteria.<sup>2</sup> It marked an important transition towards the rational Christianity for which Benedict XIV had hoped.

As pope, Benedict XIV sought and achieved numerous agreements with major European and Italian monarchs. A willingness to compare world views is also evident in his interactions with foremost

representatives of the culture of the Enlightenment, including Voltaire, as well as those of “enlightened” Catholicism, such as Celestino Galiani. These relations with Enlightenment figures do not indicate agreement with their positions, but rather point to a decision to tackle some of the challenges launched by a culture increasingly distant from the ideological assumptions of Catholicism. If we consider the internal environment of the Church as an ecclesiastical and cultural institution, we can see that the attempt to soften the tone of theological debates and to mitigate conflicts among schools of thought allowed for the development of a variety of positions within Catholicism in the early 1700s. Internal pacification aimed to facilitate vast liturgical, legal, and administrative reforms.<sup>3</sup>

Prospero Lambertini’s initial writings began to take shape in the second decade of the eighteenth century, when his ecclesiastical career was in its ascendancy. His self-defined need to write in his own way pushed him to conduct extensive research. Certain collaborators selected by Lambertini participated in this work. The multidisciplinary approach that characterizes these texts and that covers canon law, the sciences, theology, liturgy, and ecclesiastical history was made possible not only by Lambertini’s vast reading background (as is made clear by the citations and books present in his personal library), but also by the breadth of his contacts and his exchanges with learned scholars and scientists.

As a scholar Lambertini enjoyed a cultural climate fostered by his immediate papal predecessors. Numerous scholars, such as Pietro Pompilio Rodotà, Domenico Giorgi, Nicolò Antonelli, the Jesuits Emmanuel de Azevedo, André-Marc Burriel, Alexandre Lesley, and the Barnabite Giacinto S. Gerdil, undertook the tasks of updating the Catholic Church’s apologetics and of neutralizing the challenges posed by modern philosophical and scientific thinking. These treatises are masterworks of multidisciplinary synthesis and integration; rich in references to studies on the first centuries of Christianity, they take advantage of the hermeneutic rigour of Jean Mabillon and the congregation of Saint-Maur.<sup>4</sup> Lambertini himself aligned sources from the Roman tradition (scripture, Church Fathers, councils, ecclesiastical history, dogmatic and moral theology, canon law) with the need to produce editions of *monumenta* (historical documents), to encourage “good criticism,” to give life to bibliographical, chronological, and geographical catalogues, and to promote a historiography of Church institutions.<sup>5</sup>

Good criticism is the ability to unite the sources in a reasonable manner but according to precise hierarchies. The manner "most sublime in order to proclaim it [the source] canonical law," according to Benedict XIV, consisted in combining the old and new law – justified by councils, ecclesiastical history, and good criticism – established in the decrees and in the preceding compilations and in the papal bulls, and finally, the controversies debated and resolved by the congregations of Rome: "study of canon law is subordinate to theology and presupposes it, just as medicine presupposes natural philosophy and music presupposes arithmetic." The law cannot ignore theological principles but instead originates from them, just as theology is subordinate to the dogma of faith expressed in the councils. Similar criteria were inferred by Benedict XIV from the *Prefazione* written by Cardinal Domenico Pinelli, dedicated to Pope Clement VIII and placed before the unpublished seventh book of the *Decretali*.<sup>6</sup> Lambertini thus created a balance between the search for truth and the defence of Catholic doctrine, as well as between the needs of investigation and that which Mabillon himself had stigmatized as abuses of criticism, in this case understood as the inability to evaluate sources.

The Maurist Benedictines launched an epistemological renewal, thanks to research on the sources of Christianity undertaken by Mabillon and continued by scholars such as Ludovico Muratori. For Benedict XIV, the "solid foundation of piety" was piety based on biblical sources or on a proven tradition in terms of the *monumenta*. Roman Catholicism during this epoch was characterized, both theologically and culturally, by the diffusion of Jansenism in Italy and France and resulted in a complex debate about ecclesiology and central government forms in the Roman Church.<sup>7</sup> Catholic intellectual culture was rooted in the metaphysics of the Thomist, Scotist, and Ockhamist tradition blended with scientific innovation. Lambertini was part of this network, and he gave his support and protection to certain institutions in Rome, Bologna, and Coimbra, such as the Sapienza University, the Capitoline and Vatican museums, the chair of liturgy at the Collegio Romano, the Institute of Sciences in Bologna, and the Portuguese Accademia Liturgica of Coimbra. In particular, in 1754, one year before the second and last edition of the treatise on synods, Benedict XIV decided to donate his private library and personal letters, including the drafts of his treatises and papal constitutions, to the library of the Institute of Sciences of Bologna. Two years later, the library (to which Cardinal Filippo M. Monti had also donated books) opened its doors to the public.<sup>8</sup>



## The Treatises

Lambertini's scholarly treatises demonstrate his adherence to the foundations of the Catholic tradition as a polyvocal synthesis of doctrines, regulations, and rites. His translation into Latin of works originally published in Italian, his treatises on the "Holy Sacrifice of the Mass,"<sup>9</sup> the "Collection of Notifications and Instructions for the Bolognese Diocese,"<sup>10</sup> as well as the revision of *De synodo diocesana* (*The Diocesan Synod*) and *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione* (*On the Beatification and Canonization of the Servants of God*), demonstrate the pedagogical intent of his cultural work. Benedict constantly modified his language in order to address differences in his primary audiences.

The immediate audience for the treatise on the Mass – which was published in the early months of 1740 during the conclave that would elect Lambertini pope – was the clergy and the diocese of Bologna. Its broader audience, which included Italian priests and bishops to whom the treatise was addressed on the occasion of Lambertini's election to the papacy, prompted him to update, correct, and expand some of the text's passages in order to present the Catholic priests with a work that would gather all the formal, material, and theological elements pertaining to the sacrifice of the Eucharist. The Italian translation of the second edition was intended to provide the reader, who knew neither Latin nor French, with access to the extensive treatises produced in this field. In Benedict's view, the very people whose liturgical knowledge was the most fragile risked falling victim to misunderstandings and required simple and clear explanations.

The treatises are part of the pope's broader cultural policy. For example, reacting against the proliferation of side altars that were typical of Renaissance and baroque churches, in the treatise on the Mass Lambertini claimed that the high altar, the key element of the Eucharistic celebration, should be the focal point of the celebration. This claim was consistent with the Tridentine doctrine that, in contrast to the Protestant belief, expressed the actual presence of the body of Christ in the Mass through the impressive size of the sanctuary. In its practical application, this liturgically driven theoretical position also resulted in the architectural projects commissioned by the pope. The basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore is a characteristic example. This venerable, highly important basilica was restored by the papal architect Ferdinando Fuga under the supervision of Benedict XIV and at the pope's own expense. In addition to the construction of the new façade, the interior of the church was

radically transformed, eliminating the various altars that covered the lateral naves and liturgically reorienting the basilica towards the central altar. In addition, Benedict had Fuga design an imposing baldachin ornamented with gilded sculpture.

Lambertini's liturgical treatises reached a wide public, facilitated by their translation into Italian, and enjoyed extensive practical application, further encouraged by an augmented Latin and a second Italian edition as well as by improved organization of the material and the inclusion of complete analytical indices. Liturgy is not only the key theme of the texts that specifically aim to analyse the celebration of the Mass and of the festivities of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the holy apostle and saints of Bologna, but is also the theme running continuously through all the texts; it is the basis for the exhortations to the bishops that ceremonies be carried out with decorum. It also establishes the basis for ecclesiastical ceremonies and of the rites of canonization. The centrality of the liturgy in Benedict's efforts to reform Church practices deserves greater scrutiny. The commitment to regulate the divine cult fully confirmed the concept of *lex orandi, lex credenda*: the law of prayer is the law of belief. When dealing with liturgical and sacramental issues, Lambertini highlighted the historical strata regarding the cultural practices that the Church had adopted for centuries, in which a priest would highlight the doctrinal and theological depth of each part of the rite and a canonist would harmonize the legal norms and practices formed over time and currently used in the Church.

The first edition of *De servorum Dei*, Benedict's legal treatise on canonization and beatification, published in Bologna between 1734 and 1738, can be ascribed to Lambertini's Roman years, when he was a member of the Curia, specifically when he was Promoter of the Faith (1712–21).<sup>11</sup> Over the decades he amassed a wealth of solid documentation and adopted a multidisciplinary approach to the theme of saintly canonization. Canonization and beatification served as a border field for the author that was ploughed by the fertile combination of canon law and theology and appealed to his historical sensibility as canonist. He addressed sainthood as a cultural and liturgical phenomenon that encompassed its indirect consequences in the immediate present of the Church and reconstructed its historical basis. The intended readers of the Paduan edition of 1743 and the Roman edition of 1747–51 were the bishops of the Catholic Church and professors of both Roman universities and those beyond the Alps. *De servorum Dei*, however, was also intended as the fundamental and authoritative text for members of the

Curia,<sup>12</sup> who were to consult it for celebratory purposes and utilize it as a guide for individual cases of canonization and beatification. Finally, it served to demonstrate the doctrinal authority of the pope.

Between 1747 and 1751 all of Benedict XIV's texts were published in twelve quarto volumes at the expense of John V of Portugal. For the majority of the works, with the exception of *De synodo diocesana*, the Roman edition is the authoritative text – that which corresponds to Benedict's definitive ideas and was used to remake subsequent editions.

The roots of *De synodo diocesana* may be traced back to the work of assimilation of the corpus of the decrees of the Council of Trent that Lambertini, as canonist, undertook over a number of years. His interpretation of the legal sources aimed to reconcile the new papal law with the council's teaching and thereby show continuity with previous canon law. Traces of this complex operation are preserved in the documents of the pope's personal archive, visible in the watermark of the treatise on synods as well as in the pontiff's decisions in relation to the sacraments, diocesan government, and benefices. The cataloguing and assimilation of Tridentine and subsequent papal law allowed Lambertini to integrate these decisions and thereby establish a juridical rationale. His synthesis also included the decisions and sentences of the curial congregations, in order to create the foundation for organizing this complex and disorderly group of writing. By contrast, the 1748 edition of the *Opera omnia*, commissioned and restructured by the Jesuit Egidio Maria Giuli, targeted an audience of international readers.

In his preface Benedict XIV presented the second edition of *De synodo* as an in-depth study of the first. It became necessary, however, to expand the sources and references in order to provide a stronger basis for what was previously stated, as well as for new themes and problems. A new, very detailed table of contents outlined the treatise's sources, authors, themes, and institutions. Lambertini declared that references were added for the decisions of the Council Congregation extracted from the registries preserved in the Roman archives. The intended readers of the work were, therefore, not only the bishops, but also the members of the curial congregations who had greater access to the Secret Archive. By means of the second edition, Lambertini planned to "fully" represent the overall material on which bishops would deliberate and legislate within the diocesan synod, or in the context of other regulatory instruments. His work provided more details, but it also had become more technical.

The *Opera omnia* was divided into twelve volumes, and the last edition of *De synodo* was the instrument for a cultural project with a profoundly unitary system, as demonstrated by its copious intertextual references.<sup>13</sup> It represents the Church's use of culture as a form of "enlightened" policy, including educational reform (of the university and the chair of liturgy of the Roman College), the review and "competitive" selection of the curial clergy and bishops, the publication of updated or easily consultable publications (the treatises and synopses), and the creation, or strengthening, of cultural institutions intended to preserve knowledge and scientific, legal, and historical research.

### The Primary Collaborators

These scholarly writings were created and developed much like a continually evolving workshop, in close relation to Benedict's XIV's most important pastoral, regulatory, and cultural activities. Benedict is the central figure in a group of scholars who were called upon to collaborate in the correction of citations, notes or bibliographical references, and linguistic revisions, translations, and the composition of indices. In particular, the Roman edition edited by the Jesuit Emmanuel de Azevedo between 1747 and 1751 aimed to influence the education of the members of the curial bodies and mid-level managers of ecclesiastical institutions in accordance with the policy lines implemented by Benedict XIV during the eighteen years of his papacy.

When Lambertini was elected pope, Azevedo was already a reference point in the Roman academic environment. He arrived in the papal capital in 1742, after acquiring philosophical and humanistic training at the Portuguese University of Coimbra. In Rome – during his training at the Roman College – this Jesuit had demonstrated particular interest in historical and liturgical studies, a fact that led him to become a spokesperson for the creation of a liturgical academy in Coimbra. Father Azevedo's theological, historical, and liturgical expertise, along with his humanistic preparation and full awareness of the problems associated with the Congregation of Rites, may explain the reasons for the pope's decision to entrust him with the management of the publication of the *Opera omnia*.<sup>14</sup>

Pietro Lazzeri and his students at the Collegio Romano were charged with the task of revising and correcting the indices of *De servorum Dei*. Lazzeri was educated in Florence, in humanistic studies as well as in mathematics and astronomy, and his works were known and

appreciated by the pope himself. Lazzeri adopted and developed innovative historical and philological methodologies concerning the critical history of the work of the Jesuit Bollandists, the group of Belgian Jesuits who from the beginning of the seventeenth century had revised the hagiographic legends and the cults of saints according to historical criteria and published the *Acta Sanctorum* according to philological criteria. Lazzeri's scientific work is characterized by the development of a philological and historical method along with new forms of scientific study. In 1753, Benedict XIV appointed him *qualificator* of the Congregation of the Index and, in this capacity under Clement XIII he examined Cesare Beccaria's *Dei delitti e delle pene* (*On Crimes and Punishments*, 1764) in 1766. On 20 November 1742, Lazzeri was named first rector of the chair of ecclesiastical history of the Roman College. This appointment did not fail to generate tensions between the more conservative wing of the order, which promoted the literal application of the Ignatian *ratio studiorum*, and the *novatores*, who held that whatever was not explicitly prohibited could be introduced into the institutional curriculum.

Lazzeri and Michelangelo Giacomelli, who drafted the Latin version of some of Lambertini's texts initially published in Italian, were associated with the Roman group that met through the influential "Giornale dei Letterati."<sup>15</sup> As the former librarian of the cardinal Carlo Agostino Fabroni and a member of the Arcadia Academy as well as of the Accademie degli Infecondi, dei Quirini e del Disegno, Giacomelli was known as a learned scholar of Latin and as a classicist. On this basis the pope entrusted him with the Latin translations of the treatises written in Italian. The majority of the collaborators of the editorial team were Jesuits linked to the Roman College. In addition to Azevedo and Lazzeri, for example, there was Egidio Maria Giuli, a canonist who was highly esteemed by the pope, who had hired him as a collaborator for the *De synodo dioecesana*.

The treatise *On Orthography*,<sup>16</sup> published in 1747, is a short essay that emerged from discussions in the group of scholars working on Benedict's texts. In his dedication to Benedict XIV, Azevedo recommends that the editor of the edition should be concerned with both the typographical beauty and the philological accuracy of the text. The first problem was resolved by using the best Roman publishing house, that of Niccolò and Marco Pagliarini.<sup>17</sup> In addition, philological accuracy required a standardization of Latin handwriting.

The pope also encouraged other ecclesiastical scholars to pursue their own research and publish their work in the form of academic debates,

dissertations, and treatises, in effect creating a salon. Such intellectual work could be useful for defending the Catholic faith or for clarifying Church discipline. In the second area, individuals such as Giuseppe Garampi and the Jesuits André-Marc Burriel, Fabio Danzetta, Alexandre Lesley, and Francesco Antonio Zaccaria were asked to examine archival materials and publish documents. Some, such as Pietro Pompilio Rodotà and Domenico Giorgi, implemented research in the liturgical field. They were also participants in the various studies sponsored by Pope Benedict. Some were selected for the congregations or appointed to the universities and academies. Others published sources or philologically reviewed missals, eucologies, and ecclesiastical books, such as the ancient Roman Lateran monastic missal, edited by Azevedo, who was also responsible for the guardianship of the liturgical collection in which the *pareri* of Niccolò Antonelli were published.<sup>18</sup> The *Codex liturgicus* of Giuseppe Aloysio Joseph Aloysius Assemanus made available in fifteen volumes the Oriental liturgical texts, an operation that was officially approved by Father Francesco M. de Rossi and by the Dominican Giuseppe Agostino Orsi, the Master of the Sacred Palace, who in turn, and for other reasons, were protagonists of the period of studies sponsored by Pope Lambertini. On the basis of this research, which forms part of the documentary corpus of the treatises, the pope proceeded to define new rules and regulatory frameworks.

Finally, there were individuals who were asked to analyse the texts from a critical perspective before their publication. As early as 1728, Lambertini contacted Ludovico Muratori and others to request a reading of his works in progress in order to “have a wise, knowledgeable and sincere editor.”<sup>19</sup> Experts in law, ecclesiastical history, liturgy, and hagiography, such as the Bolognese canonist Pier Francesco Peggi and the Dominican Antonin Brémond, were involved in order to complete or correct the citations or apply corrections of a legal nature, thus uniting the treatises, the scholarly Roman environment, and the Curia.

### **The Reform of the Curia**

Clear links demonstrate the connection between the editorial work of the treatises, the project of reforming the Curia, and the training processes of the Roman prelatore. With the publication of *Opera omnia*, the treatises became a catalyst for changes to the governance structure of the Church, the bishops, the Curia, and the clergy. Not a single sector of the life of the Church and of the Papal States was unaffected.

Benedict XIV implemented sustained efforts to delineate the framework of sacramental life, as well as to remove the primary obstacles for the full realization of episcopal governance and to reduce thereby the number of disputes and conflicts in the Church.

Certain orders were internally torn apart by bitter controversies. The strong positions and passion generated by the debate regarding the Chinese rites are well known, so that some Jesuits appeared to “fight for Confucius, as if he was the founder of the Company.”<sup>20</sup> Benedict XIV chose to forbid the rites, declaring that he had made this decision “in conscience,” after a personal examination of the material in addition to that undertaken by the Congregation and the councillors of the Holy Office. We can regard this choice historically as an error, but there is no doubt that this closure coincided with a reluctance to intervene authoritatively in other cases. Such vexed disputes were a direct challenge to authority. Benedict called for calm and wrote that “in things not defined by the Church, any person can follow the opinion which his philosophy dictates.”<sup>21</sup> The pope decided to take action with respect to the hostile climate by abstaining from definitive decisions that imposed his authority, thus leaving many issues unresolved.

Certainly this cluster of decisions indicates the need for reform, beginning with Benedict’s own ruthless diagnosis of the papacy, outlined in a letter of August 1744 to Cardinal de Tencin: “the Church needs reforms in the head and in the members. May God give us the courage to begin with ourselves and to carry on reformation with others.”<sup>22</sup>

The will to reform generated hundreds of micro-interventions, ranging from those best known, such as the reform of procedures of the Index and of ecclesiastical censure, which were studied and completed through recent research, to the less studied ones, such as the audit of account books, the reform of Roman courts, the creation of new curial congregations for the review of bishops and the *ad limina* visit,<sup>23</sup> and the reorganization and improvement in functioning of the Council Congregation, which was designed for certain fundamental functions such as dialogue, transmission of information, and policy.<sup>24</sup>

On 22 June 1747, Benedict XIV founded in Portugal the Liturgical Academy of Coimbra, along with the chair of ecclesiastical history and liturgy in the College of Canonists at Santa Cruz. On 21 November 1748, he founded in the Roman College of the *Schola Sacrorum Rituum* the first chair of liturgy, which was occupied by Azevedo. The intention was to offer the students of the *Schola* a tool that would aid in the study of Lambertini’s magisterial treatises. In the dedication, an introduction to

the reprinting of the *Sinossi* in 1757, it is Azevedo himself who explains the connection between this work and the teaching activities of the Roman *Schola*.<sup>25</sup>

The Roman *Schola* was created with the objective of educating priests assigned to the Congregation of Rites, the curial congregation assigned to revise liturgical books and take care of procedures of beatification and canonization. Azevedo, in fact, published his lessons in addition to printing some of the dissertations of his students. The *SS.D.N. Benedicti XIV Opera in duodecim tomos distributa* became the point of reference for the activities of the Congregation of Rites as well as for the course of studies meant to prepare future officials. The *Schola* served as the site where the Curia personnel were initially selected. Benedict XIV applied the same criteria he used in selecting direct and indirect collaborators for his writings to choosing members of the Curia: education, morality, and non-worldly behaviour were essential.

The chair of sacred rites was a tool used to mitigate the tension from verbal aggressiveness and litigiousness between theological schools that was tearing apart the relations between religious orders and dividing the order internally. As a result, when Azevedo, in 1754, was driven from Rome by order of the king of Portugal (in the anti-Jesuit offensive of the Portuguese minister, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, the marquis of Pombal), the chair of liturgy of the Roman College passed to the Jesuit Carlo Benvenuti on 18 September 1754. By means of this decision, Benedict XIV believed he had quenched the "fire" that divided the Society of Jesus between innovators and traditionalists:

between the Jesuit Fathers of the Roman College and the Jesuit Fathers of Jesus given that the latter, as solely attached to the peripatetic philosophy, had not approved certain theses sustained and defended in the Roman College with the approval of those members of the clergy and which were consistent with the reasonable and modern philosophy. By the grace of the Lord everything was calmed; the theses remained intact; and because the *lettore*, in his writings and in his school, had almost entirely forgotten that which is ancient, the borders between the ancient and the modern were set in a stable manner, and the reader was transferred to the chair of Sacred Rites since he was a man of value, and capable of all things.<sup>26</sup>

Benedict XIV's Curia consisted of personnel chosen by his predecessors and was very different from the Curia known by the young Lambertini. The pope noted, in 1753, that "the members of the Curia who emerge



from this stable are those with which today we must plow. We hope to leave others of differing nature and strength, who will not serve us much, but will be of great service to those succeeding us."<sup>27</sup>

In making promotions, Benedict XIV preferred "scholarly" prelates, "collectors of ancient monuments" who led cloistered lives. He sponsored the careful selection of the personnel involved in peripheral areas and in the Curia and guided the careers of his best collaborators step by step. Certain criteria, in any case, become clear with regard to the career paths the pope facilitated. First of all, he preferred staff who had accumulated many years of service. He privileged seniority and personal loyalty, shown through personal "efforts," because, as he noted with a discreet amount of cynicism, seniority guaranteed rapid turnover. In addition, his personal choices often came from a small circle of nobility. Lambertini recognized the limits of this model, yet he considered it essential for the functioning of the Church and the state. Despite favouring noble "subjects," he never acted in favour of the "privileges of ignorance," which could be considered a fourth corrective. By means of this formula, the pope quelled accusations that he maintained privileges without regard for the common good or the interests of institutions.<sup>28</sup>

## Conclusion

Benedict XIV defended papal infallibility through theological argumentation, but it is the degree of reliability of his adopted procedures that is the key factor in his treatises and papal decisions. The basis for his revision of the liturgical books, of censorship, of the reform of the courts, and of answers to doubts presented in *ad limina* reports, lay in the intention to continually adapt the tools through which the gift of infallibility was exercised. The practices of the Curia tacitly guaranteed papal infallibility and affirmed dogma through human and rational means as well as on the basis of moral and legal criteria.

For historians, the intrinsic limits of the reform project are clear today, since they were not so profound as to change the structure of the Papal States or invert certain tendencies established in the long Tridentine century, such as the marginal presence of scripture in Christian life and in contemporary liturgy. The reforms allowed the institutions to contain and react against the issues arising from modernity, but for Benedict, this was not a unicum but rather the sum of distinct parts. It was the outer limit of the papal "enlightenment" project, which could not completely untie the knots of conflict between the Church and modern thought.

Pope Lambertini's titanic attempt to integrate individual aspects of modernity into the theological and institutional structure of the Catholic Church that he led reveals much about his convictions and personal character. Benedict's moderation sought to mitigate extraneous elements of the Council of Trent, such as superstition, sentimentality, or "immoderate" piety. As a result, the end of liturgical experiments for Christians in China and India and the confirmation of the rigid sacramental geometry of Trent must be interpreted alongside the policy of concordat as an expression of the attempt to preserve equilibrium between Church and state. Benedict's sacramental policies and concordats are two aspects, both successful, of his attempt to reconcile the Church with the social, political, and cultural changes of his time. He sought to assimilate some "enlightened" traits while decisively rejecting others.

Benedict's reforms remained within the ecclesiastical, theological, structural, and institutional limits established by the council and by Roman hermeneutics on the council and expressed by the Congregation for the interpretation of the Council of Trent. These limits prevented even a partial acceptance of the philosophical and legal ideas of Enlightenment, but subjected the practices of the Curia and Church institutions to an examination by reason and historical tradition. The meeting point between the post-Tridentine Catholic Church and eighteenth-century Europe was more happily attained through exchanges with the physical and medical sciences as well as in the reform of religious practices. The rejection of all forms of clerical participation in slavery and the mistreatment of the inhabitants of Latin America was accompanied by decisions that diversified the discipline of the sacraments for Catholics in whose veins flowed a certain amount of non-European blood.<sup>29</sup> No changes were made in terms of tolerance towards other faiths or regarding respect for Jewish citizens' freedom of choice not to convert to Christianity.<sup>30</sup> The Catholic Church of the Enlightenment pope continued to be driven by a decidedly Eurocentric approach when dealing with religious and cultural diversity.

Benedict XIV used his personal authority and understood the importance and necessity of constructing a public image of the papacy that underlay support of learned women in the university, the academies, and the Istituto delle Scienze. His relationship with the sciences is a secondary issue. Science offered additional support, especially in the discernment of miracles,<sup>31</sup> to the construction of the hierarchy of authority. For Lambertini, the meaning of science encompassed the

proofs and sources of history. A global definition of Benedict's papacy could be found in his reforming actions inside the Catholic Church and the Papal States. The reform of the ecclesiastical and state institutions attempted to create a "reasonable efficiency" that would allow their operation.<sup>32</sup> Within the state, Benedict XIV established judicially defined procedures that limited patronage in order to create an administrative culture in the central and local bureaucracies and integrate the papal territories.

In any case, it is important to identify Lambertini's precise position within tradition and, specifically, his relationship to the papacy from Innocent XI to Clement XII. Lambertini tried to fulfil processes and decisions that had been put into place by his predecessors, but his reforming activities were also somewhat original. The reform of the Index determined by the *Sollicita ac provida* was a rationalization and standardization of bureaucratic procedures that were already in place in the practices of the Index. This proved, against the "unjust libel ... spread" even by the press, that an order "followed appropriate diligence" before banning the reading of certain texts.<sup>33</sup> This also explains why consultants of "great fame" as well as experts in the disciplines in which they were called to censor were chosen.

Continuity and tradition are two main concepts that today help us to understand something more about Lambertini's reforms beyond change and innovation. The legal and theological culture in which Prospero Lambertini was immersed determined the meaning and scope of the tools that he used as well as the theoretical and practical manoeuvres enacted through his many reforms. Benedict XIV was pope in a moment when it was impossible to "calm this unfortunately agitated ship of Saint Peter." He compared himself to the statues on the front of Saint Peter's. The statues appear to be beautiful when seen from afar, but up close are, like the papacy, "horrible masks."<sup>34</sup> In conclusion, Benedict XIV was also a notary of the papacy occupied with the defence and conservation of the Tridentine-Roman tradition, who used all the tools that could be found in his time. With the treatises, Lambertini was faced with the need for accuracy, measured according to canon law in terms of fidelity to the text. The law became the gauge by which to measure customs and traditions, just as fidelity to the biblical text as interpreted by the Roman authority – according to tradition – was the gauge by which to judge changes in economic and social reality.<sup>35</sup> Lambertini had an ecclesiastical culture that even while opening to interaction with the scientific culture of its time could not accommodate

the uncertainty produced by scientific disciplines and transmitted to moral theology and Church law.

## NOTES

- I am particularly grateful to Rebecca Messbarger, Philip Gavitt, and Christopher M.S. Johns for their attentive reading and for their advice and numerous suggestions and observations on my text. Omissions and errors are my full responsibility.
- 1 Benedict founded the Liturgical Academy there, owing to his close relations with clerics and theologians from Coimbra.
  - 2 For the expression "soda pietà," see Caffiero, "Dall'esplosione mistica all'apostolato sociale (1650–1850)," 346.
  - 3 For the main outlines of Lambertini's time and context see Fantappiè, *Chiesa romana e modernità giuridica*, 1: 30–52, and *Storia del diritto canonico e delle istituzioni della Chiesa*, 168–230; Prodi, *Il Paradigma tridentino*, esp. the chapter "Dal corpus iuris canonici al diritto pontificio moderno." For a general outline on the papacy see Greco, *Benedetto XIV*. New studies: Wolf, and Schmidt, *Benedikt XIV und die Reform des Buchzensurverfahrens*, 67–110; Fattori, *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV*, and *Storia medicina*.
  - 4 See now Leclant, Vauchez, and Hurel, *Dom Jean Mabillon*; on the congregation of Saint Maur see also Lenain, *Histoire littéraire des bénédictins de Saint-Maur*, preface by E. Poulle.
  - 5 It is not possible to mention all of Benedict XIV's efforts to support scholars in the writing of works of history, chronicles, and catalogues. On the support of the history of the bishops, the Church of Bologna, and the University of Bologna, see Introduzione, in Fattori, *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV*, xxviii–37.
  - 6 See the first notification for the diocese of Bologna, t. III, 15, which cited the Preface to the Seventh Book of the decrees, prepared but never published in 1598: Benedetto XIV, *Raccolta di alcune notificazioni, editti ed istruzioni pubblicate dall'Eminentissimo*, and the later Latin translation, *Institutionum ecclesiasticarum editio secunda latina veneta*.
  - 7 Jansenism, named after Cornelius Jansen, bishop of Ypres (1585–1638), was a religious movement that fostered adhesion to Augustinian and patristic ideals. Jansenists often clashed with Jesuit thinking on grace, the Eucharist, and moral theology. Jansenism thrived for over 200 years and proved highly influential in French politics as a political party opposed to absolutism. For more information on Jansenism, see William Doyle, *Jansenism: Catholic Resistance to Authority from the Reformation to the French Revolution* (London:

- Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Dale K. Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution: From Calvin to the Civil Constitution 1560-1791*, chaps 1 and 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Detroit: Gale, 2003), s.v. "Jansenism."
- 8 For the history of Lambertini's personal archive, see Fattori, Introduzione, in *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV*, xxxvi–l.
- 9 Benedetto XIV, *De Sacrosancto Missae Sacrificio Libri tres*; the first edition was published in Italian by the archiepiscopal typographer A. Longhi in 1740.
- 10 Benedetto XIV, *Raccolta di alcune notificazioni*.
- 11 See Saccenti, "La lunga genesi dell'opera sulle canonizzazioni," 13–17. The Promoter of Faith was an official in the Catholic Church's Congregation of Rites whose primary responsibility was to verify the authenticity of miracles in causes for beatification and canonization. Often called the "devil's advocate," the Promoter of Faith led the opposition against causes brought before the Congregation in order to ensure that the beatification and canonization process adhered to all legal regulations. *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Devil's Advocate."
- 12 The intended readers of this treatise are the members of the Curial Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. See the edition with Italian translation *a fonte*, Benedetto XIV, *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione*, Vol. I/1, esp. Criscuolo's introduction, 9–71; the second part of the first book, I/2, was published in 2011; the first part of the second book, II/1, was published in 2012.
- 13 Benedetto XIV, *Benedicti XIV pont. opt. max ... De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione, editio tertia auctior, et castigatior*; the first edition of Benedetto XIV, *De synodo diocesana. Libri octo* was published in 1748, as Vol. XII of the *Opera omnia*; the second and last edition, *libri tredecim*, was published in Rome in 1755.
- 14 Established in 1588 by Pope Sixtus V, the Congregation of Rites oversaw general aspects of worship, including the reform and revision of liturgical books and saints' feasts and the beatification and canonization processes. *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Congregation of Rites."
- 15 For the Roman revision published by the Pagliarini brothers, see Donato, "Gli "strumenti" della politica di Benedetto XIV"; see also Caffiero and Monsagrati, *Dall'erudizione alla politica*.
- 16 Emanuele de Azevedo, *De orthographia commentarius in gratiam eorum qui SS. D. N. Benedicti XIV. Opera recenserunt* (Rome: ex Typographia Palladis, excudebat Nicolaus Palearinus, 1747).
- 17 Marco was the primary importer of rare books from Amsterdam and London for the Roman Jansenist circles that gathered around Giovanni

- Gaetano Bottari, who, for this very reason, was arrested by the Inquisition in 1760.
- 18 Antonelli was a member of the congregation on the correction of the Roman breviary and of the ecclesiastical books of the Eastern Catholic Churches.
- 19 Letter from Lambertini to Muratori, 18 October 1728, quoted from Mss. copy in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Città del Vaticano, Vat. Lat. 10368, now edited by Maria Antonietta De Angelis, *Prospero Lambertini (Benedetto XIV). Un profilo attraverso le lettere* (Vatican City: Archivio Segreto Vaticano, 2008), 366n1114.
- 20 See the letter of 7 September 1742 in Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 20.
- 21 Benedict XIV applied the hierarchy of loci, proposed by the Dominican Melchiorre Cano in *De locis theologicis*: According to Cano, historical veracity was the essential condition of any theological demonstration. This was based on the authenticity of the text. Historical demonstration was now needed only when the Church formally made a pronouncement. Lambertini internalized and systematically applied this criterion in his evaluations; see Fattori, "Chiesa sacramentale e fede nei sacramenti nelle decisioni di Benedetto XIV sui cattolici oriental."
- 22 From the letter of 22 August 1744 in Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 191: "L'Église à besoin de réformes dans le chef et dans les membres. Dieu veuille nous donner le courage de commencer par nous-même et de la continuer sur les autres"; retained only in the French translation made by Tencin for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 23 The *ad limina apostolorum* visit occurred every three years. During this visit, bishops from Europe were required to travel to Rome and present a written review on the state of their diocese, describing its institutional, economic, and demographic make-up. Bishops outside Europe were able to go to Rome every five to ten years. The visit included a private meeting with the pope, various meetings with other curial officials, and visits to the tombs of Peter and Paul. *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Ad Limina Visit."
- 24 See Rebellato, *La fabbrica dei divieti*, esp. 199. In this context many documents about previous praxis were published. See also the letter of 1 August 1753 in Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 3: 67. For a negative judgment on the intense activity in the cultural domain see Greco, *Benedetto XIV*, 286–92.
- 25 The synopses of the *De servorum Dei* and the *De sacrificio Missae* were defended, respectively, in February 1750, by Father Niccolò Ricci and by the Hungarian priest Andrea de Kempelen; see Anzuini, "Il testo del S. Sacrificio della Messa tra arricchimenti e traduzioni," esp. 96–7. I do not think that Benedict XIV could be considered anti-Jesuit, but he

undoubtedly had a clear plan for the Order, as stated in the letter of 28 July 1745, regarding the appointment of the cardinals proposed by the kings of Portugal and Poland, who proposed two Calabrian Jesuits for the *galero*: Carbone and Guarini. Benedict XIV considered the possibility to make the two Jesuits cardinals because they were intellectuals who had distinguished themselves by their prints and by service to the Holy See, not by favors to princes." Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 257.

26 See Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 3: 169.

27 *Ibid.*, 1 August 1753, 3: 68.

28 In 1754, some positions in the Curia and dioceses were vacated. The pope mediated between the expectations of the individual claimants, the opinion of the Curia, the defence of the curial bodies' privileges, and the expected competences of specific roles. Benedict XIV was faced with a general situation of imbalance between concrete possibilities and pretensions; see *ibid.*, 10 April 1754, 3: 128, and 15 August 1753, 3: 72.

29 See the letter of 20 December 1741, *Immensa pastorum*, in *Bullarium Romanum Benedicti Papae XIV*, 99–102. For the policy on missionaries, see Fattori, "Sempre tenendo saldo il legame con la chiesa Madre e Maestra."

30 See Caffiero, *Battesimi forzati*, 1–111; English trans. *Forced Baptisms*.

31 See Vidal, *Prospero Lambertini's "On the Imagination and Its Powers."*

32 See Tabacchi, *Il Buon Governo*, 222–6, 401–21.

33 See Wolf and Schmidt, *Benedikt XIV und die Reform*, 170–1, 174–6.

34 He wanted: "mettere in calma [in] questa pur troppo agitata Nave di S. Pietro"; see his letter to the canonicals of 8 April 1741 in Archivio dell'Arcidiocesi, Bologna; see also the letter to Francesco Peggi of 20 July 1757, in Kraus, *Briefe Benedicts XIV*, 128. For Paolo Prodi this sentence was an indication of the Lambertini acknowledgement of the solitude of power. Prodi, *Introduzione*, xx.

35 See Vismara, *Oltre l'usura*.

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# 11 Benedict XIV and the Holiness of the Popes in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century

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ROBERTO RUSCONI

*Translated by Daniel Bornstein*

The library of Cardinal Francesco Barberini “the Younger,” a typical curial prelate, contained a volume in which were gathered and bound together all the publications, and only the publications, of the Sacred Congregation of Rites in the first decades of the eighteenth century concerning the cases then in progress for the recognition of the sanctity of medieval and early modern popes: Gregory X (r. 1271–6), Benedict XI (r. 1303–4), Pius V (r. 1566–72), and Innocent XI (1676–89). This volume offers eloquent testimony to the lively interest these cases inspired, an interest also attested to by the numerous handwritten annotations on the frontispiece and by the notes that accompany the texts.<sup>1</sup>

During the first decades of the eighteenth century, at the very summit of the Catholic Church, special attention was thus being given to officially recognizing the sanctity of a long series of Roman popes from both the Middle Ages and the early modern era. Whatever the origins and outcomes of the individual cases, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt about the intense and sustained interest in this issue. One need only consider the decisions taken over the course of a series of pontificates, from Clement XI (Giovanni Francesco Albani, r. 1700–21) to Innocent XIII (Michelangelo Conti, r. 1721–4), Benedict XIII (Pierfrancesco Orsini, r. 1724–30), and Clement XII (Lorenzo Corsini, r. 1730–40).<sup>2</sup>

The compact chronological sequence of papal decisions in this regard is striking. On 22 May 1712 Pope Clement XI proclaimed a saint Pope Pius V, whose reputation was connected with the victory of the Christian fleet over the Turks at Lepanto in 1571.<sup>3</sup> On 12 September 1713 he confirmed the reverence paid from time immemorial to Pope Gregory X in the dioceses of Arezzo and Piacenza.<sup>4</sup> The cause for the beatification of Pope Innocent XI began in the same years.<sup>5</sup>

In 1727 came confirmation of the reverence paid to Victor III (r. 1086–7), the former abbot Desiderius of Monte Cassino, who had been a leader of the Gregorian reform movement during the investiture controversy with the German emperor, though his cult was limited to the monasteries of Montecassino and Cava dei Tirreni and the archdiocese of Benevento (his equipollent canonization had to wait until 1887, during the pontificate of Leo XIII).<sup>6</sup> Victor III was depicted in a fresco painted in the portico of the Roman basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls, a work of the artist Nicola Oddi of Parma, who was active in Rome between 1701 and 1716.<sup>7</sup> In 1728, Pope Benedict XIII declared that the name of Pope Gregory VII,<sup>8</sup> the eponymous pope of the Gregorian Reform, would be included in the missal and in the breviary of the universal Catholic Church – a decision that provoked complaints from many sides, especially in the Protestant churches, since in this decision they saw a manifestation of the hegemonic pretensions of the Catholic hierarchy.<sup>9</sup>

Some of these decisions involved sustained attention on the part of several pontiffs. For instance, when on 24 April 1736 Clement XII confirmed the reverence given to Benedict XI from time immemorial, his decision capped a series of measures taken by Clement's predecessors over the previous two decades.<sup>10</sup> As early as 1713, during the pontificate of Clement XI, Benedict XI's tomb and the remains it contained had been subjected to a careful examination, which is described in the *Discorso sopra il ritrovamento di alcune ossa* by the Dominican friar Agostino Guiducci. This publication confirms the lively interest of the next pope, Benedict XIII, in the medieval predecessor whose name he shared; in 1726, "with the highest pontiff taking steps to approve reverence and a liturgical office for the Blessed Benedict XI," his remains were declared authentic, sealed in a wooden reliquary, and "placed in a worthy and appropriate location so that they could be exhibited for public veneration."<sup>11</sup>

The intellectual context in which these decisions were taken is also noteworthy, as these celebrations of more recent papal sanctity were accompanied by an exaltation of churches and objects connected with St Peter and his earliest successors. In 1709, the seventh volume for the month of June of the *Acta Sanctorum* was published in Antwerp. In this latest volume of their erudite encyclopedia of Catholic hagiography, the Bollandist fathers treated the cult of the relics of St Peter – including the wooden chair preserved in the basilica of St Peter's, of which they published a drawing prepared at the request of Father Daniel van

Papenbroeck in 1691.<sup>12</sup> One could hardly ask for a more literal expression of reverence for the seat of St Peter. Also during the pontificate of Clement XI, Filippo Rondinini of Faenza published a volume of more than 400 pages, with the aim of linking the reigning pope with the first pope who had borne that name: *De S. Clemente papa et martyre ejusque basilica in urbe Roma libri duo*.<sup>13</sup> In the same period work was undertaken to restore the medieval basilica of San Clemente, which was dominated by its great apse mosaic dating from the twelfth century.<sup>14</sup> Restoration work on the *Carcere Tullianum*, where, according to tradition, St Peter had been imprisoned by Nero, began in 1719 and was completed in 1726 during the pontificate of Benedict XIII with the reconsecration of the church of San Pietro in Carcere.<sup>15</sup> When the remains of Benedict XIII were translated to the Dominican church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in 1733, the event was marked by many expressions of devotion for the late pontiff.<sup>16</sup>

The popes had an obvious interest in Rome's architectural monuments of Christian antiquity, whose glories (even if variously interpreted) were invoked to add lustre to the currently reigning pontiffs. During the pontificate of Clement XII, in an effort to modify its orientation with respect to the piazza, work was undertaken on the surviving apse from the triclinium that Leo III had built in the Lateran palace in 800.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, this architectural intervention caused significant damage to the structure, which can be seen in the drawings executed between 1743 and 1744 on the orders of Pope Benedict XIV, who attempted to repair the damage.<sup>18</sup> The basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls benefited from a series of interventions, first on the exterior under Pope Benedict XIII and then, under Benedict XIV, on the interior, with the restoration of both the apse mosaic and the walls of the central nave, including its series of papal portraits.<sup>19</sup>

Benedict XIV's decision to continue the series of papal portraits in the great shields that decorated the upper portion of the nave of St Paul Outside the Walls confirms his desire to encourage public recognition of the significant role played by his predecessors at the head of the Roman Church. At the time, the series stopped with the seventh-century Pope Vitaliano and thus very much needed to be brought up to date.<sup>20</sup> Concern for this portrait series went back to the early years of the eighteenth century, as evidenced by some remarks made in a 1723 publication by Giovanni Francesco Bianchini, honorary chamberlain of Clement XII and secretary to the commission for the reform of the calendar.<sup>21</sup> The first attempt to do something about them was made

by Benedict XIII, who charged Giovanni Marandoni and the painter Salvatore Manosilio with assessing the deteriorated condition of the existing series.<sup>22</sup> However, it was Benedict XIV who finally took effective steps to restore the apse mosaic and the frescoes on the walls of the central nave: at his behest, the painter Manosilio was entrusted with the task of continuing and completing the series after having “looked after” the older images.<sup>23</sup>

Clearly, Benedict XIV had profound respect for the high ecclesiastical dignity of his papal predecessors. However, whether he thought that recognition of their historical significance and respect for their ecclesiastical dignity should also include reverence for their personal sanctity is a complex question that requires a nuanced response. On matters of papal sanctity, Benedict XIV often seems to have taken a somewhat distinctive, even contrarian, position – a critical attitude that was almost forced upon him by his professional experience. Before being appointed bishop of Bologna and later elected pope, Prospero Lambertini was Promoter of the Faith in the Sacred Congregation of Rites from 1708 to 1728. In this role, he was obliged to play the devil’s advocate, pointing out any weaknesses in cases for canonization and articulating the arguments against formally recognizing the candidate as a saint. Among the cases for canonization considered by the Sacred Congregation of Rites during Lambertini’s twenty years as Promoter of the Faith, more than a few concerned medieval and early modern popes. From the *animadversiones* he prepared and presented, we get a distinct impression that he was not particularly inclined towards a confident recognition of papal sanctity.<sup>24</sup> To illustrate this point, let us examine his role in the cases of Gregory X and Innocent XI.

From the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Piacentine canon Pietro Maria Campi waged a vigorous campaign in support of the canonization of Gregory X.<sup>25</sup> In 1622 Campi published *Relatio super processu, et causa Canonizationis, seu Beatificationis Gregorii papae X* addressed to the reigning Pope Gregory XV. Campi’s literary effort was seconded by a formal petition presented by the cities of Piacenza, where Gregory X had been born some 400 years earlier, and Arezzo, where he died in 1276.<sup>26</sup> An inquiry was opened, but its progress was hampered by doubts over the reliability of the so-called *Tabella*, an ancient parchment that was said to have been fastened to the papal tomb in the cathedral of Arezzo since the thirteenth century and on which miracles ascribed to his intercession were recorded. A revived initiative aimed at obtaining Gregory X’s beatification got under way in 1666, advocated this time by

Arezzo, where the pope's mortal remains were preserved. However, it was only in the early years of the following century that substantial progress was made when in 1711 a new postulator of the case, the Aretine Jesuit Anton Maria Bonucci (1651–1728), published in Rome his *Istoria del Pontefice Ottimo Massimo il B. Gregorio X*.<sup>27</sup> This tome of more than 300 pages offered yet another rehashing of the arguments that Campi had developed and published nearly a century earlier. In the same year the text of the *Relatio* was reprinted, which indicated that the Sacred Congregation of Rites had already recognized the heroic quality of the virtues of Pope Gregory X. What really helped clear the way, however, was the *Positio super dubio*, published by the Sacred Congregation of Rites the following year: in the reconstruction of the procedure laid out in the *Positio*, the chief obstacle was identified as the uncertain status of the *Tabella* from Arezzo and its list of miracles, a document whose antiquity was (quite correctly) considered dubious.<sup>28</sup> As for Prospero Lambertini, who held the office of Promoter of the Faith at the time the case was presented, his later reconstruction of the process closely followed the arguments of the anonymous author of the *Positio super dubio*.<sup>29</sup> Finally, in 1713 Pope Clement XI affirmed that Gregory X had been honoured locally in Arezzo *ab immemoriabili*, which essentially amounted to an equipollent beatification. Over the next few years there were some last-ditch efforts to move the case forward, but even with the approval in 1719 of the *Positio super miraculis*, they went nowhere. The case for the canonization of Gregory X was definitively stalled.

The case of Innocent XI is even more revealing of attitudes concerning the recognition of papal sanctity and the procedural difficulties such recognition could encounter. Benedetto Odescalchi took the name Innocent XI when he was elected pope in 1676, and he sat on the papal throne until 1689.<sup>30</sup> During his pontificate decisive events for the political and religious history of Europe took place: in 1683 the Christian armies broke the Turkish siege of Vienna thanks to the intervention of Jan III Sobieski, king of Poland; and in 1686 Buda, Hungary, was liberated. Innocent's image, therefore, was that of the pope who triumphed against the Turks. Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that a *vita* redacted immediately after his death would mention displays of popular devotion. Reports of miraculous healings soon followed.

Nonetheless, the recognition of the sanctity of the Odescalchi pope had to proceed through the maze of steps required by canon law. The canonical norms promulgated during the pontificate of Urban VIII (r. 1623–44) stipulated that an initial investigation of the reputation for

sanctity of a candidate for canonization should be opened in the place where that person had died and the localities where he or she had lived. If that preliminary inquiry reached a favourable conclusion, the Congregation of Rites in Rome could open an apostolic process. Drawing on the testimony collected, the Congregation would draft a *Positio* presenting the candidate's biographical particulars, the attested miracles, and the documentation evidencing his or her demonstration of the Christian virtues to a heroic degree. Questions could be raised regarding any of these claims, to which the postulator of the case would attempt to respond in the *Positio super dubio*, a process encapsulated in a *Summarium*. The Promoter of the Faith – the so-called devil's advocate – could raise objections (*animadversiones*) regarding the conduct of the candidate, which the postulator of the case then would seek to rebut (*Responsio*). Once all of these obstacles had been overcome, two miracles ascribed to the candidate's intercession had to be certified to merit a public conferral of the title of blessed, followed by another two miracles, in order to achieve recognition as a saint of the Catholic Church.<sup>31</sup>

The case for the canonization of the Odescalchi pope Innocent XI ground relentlessly through this protracted process. In 1713 the *Positio super dubio* regarding the introduction of the case successfully overcame the *animadversiones* offered by the Promoter of the Faith, who at that time was Prospero Lambertini before he became bishop of Bologna.<sup>32</sup> The formal introduction of the case took place on 3 September 1714, after twenty-five years had passed since Innocent XI's death, opening the way to the apostolic investigation. Lambertini was also the author of the *animadversiones* in the apostolic process approved ten years later, in 1723.<sup>33</sup> Despite a few twists and turns, which Mattia Giuseppe Lippi recounted in his somewhat dated text, the hurdle presented by the lack of contemporary reverence for the candidate was cleared and the case proceeded to the inquiries *in partibus*, which took place in Como (where Innocent was born) between 1714 and 1722 and in Rome between 1714 and 1727, while the investigation of his virtues and miracles dragged on in Rome from 1728 until 1733.<sup>34</sup> It was not until 1736 that the apostolic investigations finally received formal approval.

Numerous objections had been raised along the way, some of which were quite serious. The first three objections related to the period of life during which Benedetto Odescalchi was a simple priest. Some attention was given to the almost routine insinuation that his path to ecclesiastical advancement had been smoothed by simony. Two further



objections concerned his years as a cardinal and again raised a similar question, this time referring to the circumstances of his ascent to the papacy. Finally, fully thirteen objections concerned his actions as pope. Among them, the accusation that he had acted in favour of Jansenism and Jansenists, advanced in the penultimate *animadversio*, was phrased particularly sharply. Here we see how the political and ecclesiastical actions of a pope during his pontificate could create an objective problem serious enough to hobble the progress of a canonical process of beatification and later sanctification. In the case of Innocent XI, his difficult relations with the French monarchy over the Jansenist matter had repercussions decades after his death, when French complaints at the time were duly registered in the canonical proceedings.

In 1744, during the pontificate of Benedict XIV, the case for the beatification of Pope Innocent XI resumed its progress, only to stall again shortly thereafter. Faced with the accumulated difficulties surrounding the case, on 8 August 1744 Benedict XIV put a halt to further discussion, “and so that no additional ones would be created in the future, he decreed and imposed silence on all.”<sup>35</sup> We might suspect that the case was definitively frozen because the pope himself had doubts about it. Benedict XIV wrote that, despite the attestation of two sudden healings, miraculous events could not make up for his distant predecessor’s lack of heroic qualities of holiness. In his opinion, therefore, Innocent XI had “been a good and decent man,” but not a saint. Officially, however, the case was held to have been brought to a halt by the deaths of Pope Lambertini and of the cardinal *ponente* who had been in charge of it.

Prospero Lambertini’s twenty years as Promoter of the Faith had given him unequalled expertise in handling cases for canonization, expertise that he expounded in detail in his work *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione*.<sup>36</sup> The core of that text was prepared in the 1720s at the request of Pope Clement XI, and it was first published in 1727. By the time the definitive edition appeared in the years 1747–51, Lambertini had become Pope Benedict XIV, which gave the work additional authority. In its final form, it is a complex reconstruction of legislation, doctrine (including the question of papal infallibility), and specific cases of causes promoted that lay out the legal path for the recognition of holiness. In the course of discussing the canonical processes of beatification and sanctification, it touches on the relationship between the natural world of medical science, including wonders of nature, and supernatural divine intervention. In 1739, a year before ascending to the papacy, Cardinal Prospero Lambertini enacted a provision that

radically changed the traditional procedure for authenticating the miracles attributed to candidates for canonization by transferring it from the formal control of notaries to that of physicians.<sup>37</sup> For more than five centuries, ever since the publication of the *Decretals* of Gregory IX in 1234, notaries had been entrusted with preparing the documentation for canonization proceedings, and the key question regarding reported miracles was whether they were attested to by reliable witnesses. The new procedures shifted the focus from legal to scientific authentication. From this point on, physicians had the task of attesting with a “certificate of inexplicableness” that the healing of a person through the intercession of a presumed saint could not be explained on the basis of prevailing scientific knowledge. In general, this important procedural innovation tended to greatly slow down the official recognition of sanctity, including that of popes. As we have seen, the case for canonization of the medieval Pope Gregory X was almost stopped because of questions concerning the documentation of his miracles.

There is not the slightest doubt that Prospero Lambertini respected and honoured the ecclesiastical status of the papacy. In the third volume of *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione*, Lambertini organized his discussion of the procedures to be followed in the cases of canonization in terms of the status of candidates for recognition of their holiness. Of course, he started with the Roman pope and then went on to discuss cardinals and bishops, priests and regulars, before eventually approaching the laity – an unequivocal expression of his corporate conception of the ecclesiastical institution with the pope at its head. He devoted an entire chapter to “certain concerns which must especially be borne in mind when treating the cases of those servants of God who were supreme pontiffs, after they had ascended to the pontificate and assumed the governance of the universal Church.”<sup>38</sup> Lambertini began by articulating his understanding of what virtues a pope in particular must demonstrate, adding that the pontiff, by the nature of his office, must be evaluated both as the territorial ruler of the Papal States and as a bishop. In support of his views, he offered a series of reflections based on the treatise *De consideratione*, in which the Cistercian Bernard of Clairvaux offered advice to Pope Eugenius III;<sup>39</sup> on the *Decretum de reformatione* approved in 1563 at the twenty-fourth session of the Council of Trent; on the counsel that Roberto Bellarmine addressed to Clement VIII concerning the office of pope (a text that Lambertini deemed especially important for Promoters of the Faith);<sup>40</sup> and on the pope-elect’s profession of faith, as recorded by Lucas

Holstenius (1596–1661) in his *Liber Diurnus Romanorum Pontificum*.<sup>41</sup> For his part, Prospero Lambertini sought a confirmation of papal sanctity that would have in some measure a historical and liturgical foundation in the Roman Church's tradition of worship: "One might confirm this with the example of those Roman pontiffs counted among the saints, who enjoy the reverence of the universal Church: there is in fact not a single one among them who was not outstanding in his zeal for the Catholic faith and for ecclesiastical discipline. But since this is obvious, we will add other examples of Roman pontiffs, whose names appear in the *Roman Martyrology* and of whom it is reported elsewhere that they were honored with liturgical celebrations in the basilicas of the City."<sup>42</sup> This preemptory assertion was followed by some profiles of sainted pontiffs all of whom, apart from some minimal exceptions, belonged to Christian late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. Lambertini generally emphasized their actions as vigorous defenders of correct doctrine and the anti-heretical repression associated with that task, as well as their unflinching maintenance of ecclesiastical discipline, always in the service of defending Catholic doctrine.

Lambertini then proceeded to devote several paragraphs to cases involving Roman pontiffs with the aim of providing concrete examples of empirical rules to be followed in canonization procedures. "Among those servants of God who have obtained the Papacy," he noted, "there are five cases whose examination was undertaken in keeping with the procedure set forth in the latest standards."<sup>43</sup> These were St Peter Celestine, who was canonized in 1313;<sup>44</sup> Blessed Gregory X, whose worship from time immemorial had been recognized, but who still awaited a decision concerning miracles; St Pius V, who had been canonized in 1712;<sup>45</sup> the servant of God Pope Innocent XI, whose cause had been introduced recently; and Blessed Benedict XI, whose cult from time immemorial had been approved in 1736. He treated these cases very differently. For the Blessed Gregory X, he published in an appendix to his second volume, the *Relatio* of the auditors of the Sacred Rota, documentation "from which one can fully gather his zeal for the Catholic faith." The documentation for St Pius V was more ample: Lambertini referred back to the acts of the canonization process, beginning with the summary of his virtues and miracles, except where he referred to the auditors of the Rota. He then explicitly cited Clement XI's decree of 4 August 1710, which had invoked his heavenly patronage "in those calamitous times." Since the case of Innocent XI was still in progress, he specifically refrained from discussing it in this context (though he did not

hesitate to express elsewhere serious reservations about it). Lambertini concluded by citing a statement attributed to Pope Paul II as a way of summing up the traits ideally to be found in a holy pontiff: "Thus the works of eternity in a pontiff are to demonstrate a spotless life, restore ecclesiastical discipline where it is lacking, dedicate himself to protecting the liberty of the clergy, and be a promoter of justice."<sup>46</sup>

In the canonizations and beatifications over which he presided as pope, as in the principles and procedures he had articulated before his elevation to the papacy, Benedict XIV was clear about the grounds for a declaration of holiness and programmatic in their application. In a single ceremony in 1746, he proclaimed five canonizations, all of which concerned members of religious orders who had played a leading role in the Catholic Church in the age of the Counter-Reformation: Camillo de Lellis (1550–1614), founder of the Order of Clerks Regular, Ministers to the Sick, whom he had beatified in 1742; the Dominican mystic Caterina de' Ricci (1522–90); the Capuchin Fidelis of Sigmaringen (1577–1622), who had been killed by the Protestants; the Capuchin missionary and preacher Giuseppe da Leonessa (1566–1612); and the Spanish Franciscan Pedro Regalado, a leader of the Observant reform (1390–1456).<sup>47</sup> To these can be added six beatifications pronounced between 1741 and 1753: the Barnabite Alessandro Maria Sauli (1534–92); Girolamo Emiliani (1486–1537), founder of the Somascan Fathers; José de Calasanz (1557–1648), founder of the Order of the Piarists; Jeanne-Françoise Frémiot de Chantal (1572–1641), foundress of the Visitandines; and the Capuchin Giuseppe da Copertino (1603–63). In addition, between 1740 and 1757 Benedict XIV issued more than twenty confirmations recognizing the honours paid to various persons at a local level.

It was no mere chance that all these ceremonies took place in the theatrical setting of the papal basilica of St Peter in the Vatican rather than in the basilica of St John Lateran, seat of the bishop of Rome: in effect, by this time the basilica of St Peter had taken on a specific identity as papal basilica and, in choosing this setting, the pope emphasized his role as leader of the universal Catholic Church, whereas his immediate predecessors – that is, both Benedict XIII and Clement XII – had preferred to use the episcopal basilica of St John Lateran for such events. Furthermore, in keeping with his promotion of reverence for his very first predecessor, as if to call attention to the unbroken chain that linked them despite the passage of seventeen centuries, the multiple canonization ceremony in 1746 took place on 29 June, the liturgical feast-day of Saints Peter and Paul. Three years previously, on 1 April 1743, Benedict XIV

had established that from that point on the liturgical celebration would be extended throughout the following week, with the intention of conferring on it greater solemnity amid the liturgies of Catholic churches throughout the world. In the same year, on 16 October, he proclaimed the two apostles to be the principal patron saints of Rome. In the vision of the reigning pontiff, the evocation of the apostolic origin of papal authority and the exercise of that authority through the official recognition of sanctity evidently echoed and reinforced each other.

Moreover, we should not forget that in 1749 Benedict XIV published an updated version of Gregory XIII's *Roman Martyrology*, which had been the object of earlier revisions by Urban VIII and, more recently, by Clement X.<sup>48</sup> Among other modifications, Benedict XIV had a mention of the anniversary celebration of the Blessed Gregory X inserted in the *Roman Martyrology* on the date of 16 February (an anniversary later shifted to 10 January, the date of Gregory's death in 1276).<sup>49</sup> In fact, in the "Index rerum et verborum" found in the fourth volume of *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione*, under the heading "Names of the Roman pontiffs who are listed in the *Roman Martyrology* and who are venerated in certain churches with an office and Mass, according to the stipulations of the said *Roman Martyrology*," he took care to provide an authoritative list of pontiffs who were legitimately objects of formal reverence, albeit with some limitations.<sup>50</sup> They were almost exclusively popes from late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, a characteristic so marked that he felt it necessary to close the list with a clarification: "The deeds of each one are set forth in chapter 32 of the third book. It must be remembered that the *Roman Martyrology* includes the names of many other pontiffs who are venerated with office and Mass not in particular churches, but in the Church Universal, and that the Blessed Pope Gregory X is venerated with office and Mass in certain churches, even though his name is not listed in the *Roman Martyrology*."<sup>51</sup>

Though he encouraged reverence for St Peter while proclaiming the sanctity of representatives of the Counter-Reformation religious orders, Benedict XIV was less enthusiastic about promoting the sanctity of his more immediate forebears. Exemplary in this regard is the cause of beatification of Pope Innocent XI, which resumed its course in 1744 only to stop shortly thereafter. Nor do the norms that governed canonization proceedings – formalized in the *Decretals* of Gregory IX in 1234,<sup>52</sup> rendered more precise by a series of measures on the part of Urban VIII in the first decades of the seventeenth century,<sup>53</sup> and revised and codified by Prospero Lambertini – seem to have favoured the recognition of papal

sanctity in the centuries of the modern era.<sup>54</sup> A quarter of a century later, on the death of Pope Clement XIV, rumours flew that he either had been poisoned or had died of despair over having yielded to the pressure of various European powers and suppressed – in 1773, just a year before his death – the Jesuit order, which was feared for its power and viewed as being the long arm of the Roman papacy.<sup>55</sup> In fact, at least to judge from publications of the time such as the *Nouvelles Ecclésiastiques*, public opinion about the popes of the eighteenth century emphasized the notion that the spiritual aspect of the papal office should predominate and condemned the excessive influence of the Jesuits, who were viewed as avidly supporting the papacy in order to further their own ambitions.<sup>56</sup> When Angelo Braschi was elected to succeed him on 1 February 1775, he pointedly took the name Pius VI, invoking the memory of Pius V, the early modern pope who had been canonized a few decades earlier.<sup>57</sup> His long pontificate, which covered the last quarter of the eighteenth century, witnessed a decisive turning point in the history of the Catholic Church and the Roman papacy.

## NOTES

This chapter is a revised and expanded version of a section in Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 290–7. Important contributions on the figure of Benedict XIV since 2010 can be found in the volume edited by Maria Teresa Fattori, *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV*, and in the proceedings of the international seminar *Storia, medicina e diritto*. On the subject of this chapter, see in particular the contribution to the latter of Riccardo Saccenti, “Le fonti del ‘De Servorum Dei.’”

- 1 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Stampe Barb. LL. VII.28. Born in 1662, Barberini was created a cardinal in 1690 and died in 1738. On this notable personality, see Petrucci Nardelli, “Francesco Barberini iunior.”
- 2 The most up-to-date reference work on the lives of the popes is the *Enciclopedia dei Papi* [EP] (Rome: Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana, 2000); its entries also are available online at <http://www.treccani.it>. For information on popes who were revered for holiness in the eighteenth century, see the entries in reference works such as the *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* [BSS] (Rome: Istituto Giovanni XXIII della Pontificia Università Lateranense – Edizioni Città Nuova, 1961–2000) and *Il grande libro dei santi. Dizionario enciclopedico* [GLS] (Cinisello Balsamo [Milan]: Edizioni San Paolo, 1998).
- 3 On Pius V (Antonio [Michele] Ghislieri), pope 1566–72, see Feci, “Pio V, santo”; Ditchfield, “Pio V”; Silli, “Pio V, santo.” See also Rusconi, *Santo Padre*,

- chap. 3, sec. 4: "La canonizzazione del papa di Lepanto," 246–70 (and the bibliography on 652–5).
- 4 On Gregory X (Tedaldo Visconti), pope 1271–6, see Gatto, "Gregorio X, beato"; Molinari, "Gregorio X, papa, beato"; Piazzoni, "Gregorio X." See also Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, chap. 3, sec. 5: "Un santo 'locale': Gregorio X," 270–9 (and the bibliography on 655–6).
  - 5 On Innocent XI (Benedetto Odescalchi), pope 1676–89, see Menniti Ippolito, "Innocenzo XI, beato"; Gini, "Innocenzo XI, papa, beato"; Barone, "Innocenzo XI." See also Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, chap. 3, sec. 6: "Quando un papa impedisce la canonizzazione di un altro papa," 279–88, 290–1, and 296 (and the bibliography on 657). In addition, see the proceedings of the conference *Innocenzo XI Odescalchi (1611–1689) nel quarto centenario della nascita*. The beatification of the pope in 1956 was the occasion for a biography by Papasogli, *Innocenzo XI (1611–1689)*. See also the revealing comments of Martini, "Papa Innocenzo XI verso gli onori degli altari."
  - 6 On Victor III (Dauferio [Desiderio]), pope 1086–7, see Colotto, "Vittore III, beato"; Picasso, "Vittore III, papa, beato"; Cantarella, "Vittore III." See also Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 410–11.
  - 7 Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 279.
  - 8 On Gregory VII (Hildebrand), pope 1073–85, see Capitani, "Gregorio VII, santo."
  - 9 On this point, see Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 222.
  - 10 On Benedict XI (Niccolò di Boccassio), pope 1303–4, see Walter, "Benedetto XI, beato"; Berra and Celletti, "Benedetto XI (Niccolò Boccassino), papa, beato"; Barone, "Benedetto XI." On the unsuccessful medieval efforts to promote his canonization undertaken by the Dominican Order, to which he had belonged, see Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 86–96.
  - 11 Perugia, Archivio di Stato, Corporazioni religiose soppresse, S. Domenico, Miscellanea, n65, cited in Biganti, "Luoghi e oggetti della memoria di Benedetto XI," 46.
  - 12 See "De lignea S. Petri Cathedra in Vaticano," chap. 12 in *Acta Sanctorum, Junii*, 5: 456–9; the drawing of the chair is on 456.
  - 13 Clement served as the third bishop of Rome after St Peter, from 68 to 86 (according to other authorities, 92 to 99): see Scorza Barcellona, "Clemente I, santo"; Zannoni and Celletti, "Clemente I, papa, santo"; Forlin Patrucco, "Clemente I." For his reputation in the eighteenth century, see Rondinini, *De S. Clemente papa et martyre ejusque basilica*.
  - 14 On these interventions, see Maria Barbara Guerrieri Borsoi, "Il restauro della basilica di San Clemente a Roma promosso da Clemente XI," in *Papa*

- Albani e le arti a Urbino e a Roma 1700–1721*, ed. Giuseppe Cucco (Venice: Marsilio, 2001), 110–15.
- 15 On these interventions, see Fortini, “Nuovi documenti sul Carcere Mamertino,” 510.
  - 16 On Benedict XIII (Pierfrancesco [Vincenzo] Orsini), pope 1724–30, see De Caro, “Benedetto XIII.” On the initial efforts to promote his beatification, see Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 557.
  - 17 Leo III was pope 795–816: see Delogu, “Leone III, santo”; Rabikauskas, “Leone III”; Piazzoni, “Leone III.” On his building project, see Belting, “I mosaici dell’aula Leonina come testimonianza della prima ‘renovatio,’” 167–82.
  - 18 On these interventions, see especially Iacobini, “Il mosaico del Triclinio Lateranense,” 189–96. See also Andaloro, *La pittura medievale a Roma 312–1431*, 1: 217–20.
  - 19 On the series of portrait medallions, in addition to the old volume of Lucien de Bruyne, *L’antica serie dei ritratti papali della basilica di S. Paolo fuori le mura* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1934), see Tomei, “Vicende della basilica sino al 1823.” Still valuable is Nicolai, *Della basilica di S. Paolo*.
  - 20 Vitaliano was bishop of Rome 657–72: see Longo, “Vitaliano, santo”; Longo, “Vitaliano”; Monachino, “Vitaliano, papa, santo.”
  - 21 Bianchini, *Prolegomena ad Anastasii Bibliothecarii De vitis Romanorum pontificum*, 2: lxx–lxxx.
  - 22 Marangoni, *Chronologia romanorum pontificum superstes in pariete australi basilicae sancti Pauli apostoli*.
  - 23 *Ibid.* The reference is to the first page.
  - 24 In addition to Zanotti, “Tra terra e cielo,” see the wide-ranging discussion of Giovannucci, “Canonizzazione e infallibilità tra Seicento e Settecento,” republished in Giovannucci, *Canonizzazioni e infallibilità pontificia in età moderna*. See also Giovannucci, “Dimostrare la santità per via giudiziaria.”
  - 25 On Gregory X, see above, n4. Campi’s efforts to obtain official recognition of the sanctity of Pope Gregory X and their intellectual and political context have been carefully examined by Simon Ditchfield in *Liturgy, Sanctity and History in Tridentine Italy*; for details on the published and unpublished documentation of the case, see 361–3. See also Ditchfield, “How Not to Be a Counter-Reformation Saint.” For a list of Campi’s many publications, see Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 656. On the vicissitudes of the beatification process, see *ibid.*, chap. 3, sec. 5: “Un santo ‘locale’: Gregorio X,” 270–9.
  - 26 Campi, *Relatio ad sanctissimum D.N. Gregorium pp.* XV.
  - 27 Bonucci, *Istoria del pontefice ottimo massimo il b. Gregorio X*.



- 28 *Sac. Rituum Congregatione eminentissimo.*
- 29 See Benedict XIV, *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione*, Vol. 2, bk 2, chap. 24, par. 27, 175–80: “De beato Gregorio papa X.”
- 30 On Innocent XI, see above, n5.
- 31 For further details, see Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 284–6.
- 32 *Animadversiones Fidei Promotoris super dubio.*
- 33 *Ibid.*, ed. 1723.
- 34 Lippi, *Vita di papa Innocenzo XI raccolta in tre libri per Mattia Giuseppe Lippi*, esp. 199–201. See also Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 281–4.
- 35 *Romana Beatificationis et canonizationis Ven. Servi Dei Innocentii papae XI*, 13.
- 36 On the publication history of *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione*, in addition to Fattori, *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV* (cited in the headnote above), see Frutaz, “Le principali edizioni e sinossi del *De servorum Dei beatificatione et beatorum canonizatione*.” After the first edition, published in Bologna in the years 1734–8, a standard edition was prepared and published in Rome between 1747 and 1751. The most readily available version is that included in Benedict XIV, *Opera omnia*.
- 37 On this new “scientific” examination of miracles, see Gianna Pomata’s chapter in this volume, as well as Maragi, “Psichiatria e guarigioni miracolose,” and Alessandrini, “*Creder tutto ... Creder nulla.*” Il “*Notae de miraculis.*” In addition, see the contributions by Donato, “Il patente disprezzo cui non possiamo ormai fare più fronte,” and Dacome, “Ai confini del mondo naturale.”
- 38 *De servorum Dei*, bk 3, chap. 32, 297–304 (my citations are to the 1743 edition published in Padua)
- 39 Eugenius III (pope 1145–53) had been a Cistercian monk prior to being elected pope. See Daniele, “Eugenio III, papa, beato”; Paravicini Bagliani, “Eugenio III”; Zimmermann, “Eugenio III, beato.”
- 40 On Clement VIII (Ippolito Aldobrandini), pope 1592–1605, see Borromeo, “Clemente VIII.” Bellarmino’s letter of advice was published at the end of his *Epistolae familiares*.
- 41 *Liber Diurnus Romanorum Pontificum*, chap. 11, 46–63.
- 42 *De servorum Dei*, bk 3, chap. 32, par. 4, 298.
- 43 *Ibid.*, par. 38, 302. For what follows, see also *ibid.*, par. 39–41.
- 44 On the circumstances surrounding the canonization of the hermit Pietro del Morrone, who reigned as Pope Celestine V for a few months in 1294 and died in 1296, two years after he renounced the pontificate, see Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, chap. 2, sec. 4: “Da Celestino V a san Pietro del Morrone,” 123–55 (and the bibliography on 636–41). On the modern genesis of the title St Peter Celestine, see also Rusconi, “Celestiniana.”

- 45 On the beatification and canonization of Pius V, see Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 246–70.
- 46 *De servorum Dei*, bk 3, chap. 32, par. 41, 303–4. Paul II (Pietro Barbo) was pope 1464–71; see Modigliani, “Paolo II.”
- 47 For detailed information on the persons canonized and beatified by Benedict XIV, see the respective entries in the reference works already cited, such as the *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* and *Il grande libro dei santi*.
- 48 *Martyrologii Romani Gregorii XIII*. Urban VIII (Maffeo Virginio Romolo Barberini) was pope 1623–44; see Lutz, “Urbano VIII.”
- 49 Rusconi, *Santo Padre*, 279.
- 50 *De servorum Dei*, 4: xl.
- 51 *Ibid.*
- 52 See Kuttner, “La réserve papale du droit de canonisation.”
- 53 On the procedural reforms enacted during the pontificate of Urban VIII Barberini, see Papa, *Le cause di canonizzazione*, as well as his earlier article, “La Sacra Congregazione dei Riti.”
- 54 On the history of papal sanctity in the modern era, in addition to chap. 4, “Dal martire della Rivoluzione al ‘prigioniero del Vaticano,’” and chap. 5, “Dalla devozione per il papa al culto per il papato,” in Rusconi, *Santo Padre* (and the bibliography on 658–60), see Rusconi, “Il papa santo nel Novecento.”
- 55 The Franciscan friar Gian Vincenzo Antonio Ganganelli reigned as Pope Clement XIV from 1769 to 1774; see Rosa, “Clemente XIV.”
- 56 For a balanced assessment of the eighteenth-century papacy, see *Papes et papauté au XVIIIe siècle*, VIe Colloque Franco-Italien organisé par la Société française d’étude du XVIIIe siècle (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1999), especially the contributions of Elisabeth Garms-Cornides, “Storia politica e apologia in Benedetto XIV: alle radici della reazione cattolica,” 145–61; Jean Sgard, “Le Pape dans les ‘Nouvelles Ecclésiastiques,’” 195–204; and Pierre Retat, “La mort de Clément XIV,” 261–83.
- 57 On Pius VI (Angelo Onofrio Melchiorre Natale Giovanni Antonio Braschi; pope 1775–99), see Caffiero, “Pio VI.”

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### Abbreviations

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EP: *Enciclopedia dei Papi*. Rome: Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana, 2000.

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## 12 Vicar of Christ and *Alter Christus*: Benedict XIV's *Della S. Messa*

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PETER BJÖRN KERBER

“God shall hold neither you nor me accountable for scholarly questions, but he shall rigorously hold us accountable for the salvation of souls,”<sup>1</sup> wrote Pope Benedict XIV in June 1745 to Cardinal Angelo Maria Querini (1680–1755), bishop of Brescia, reminding him not to neglect his episcopal duties in favour of his other role as head of the Vatican Library. Benedict’s definition of the value and ultimate purpose of scholarship emerges in a letter of January 1754 to the polymath antiquarian and archaeologist Anton Roschmann (1694–1760) in Innsbruck: “Useful, innocent, and worthy of a Christian are those kinds of studies that prudently seek to benefit others, to pursue the truth, and to advance the glory of God and the salvation of one’s neighbor.”<sup>2</sup> For the Lambertini pope, striving for the spiritual welfare of the flock entrusted to him, to be achieved through a combination of pastoral and liturgical offices, took precedence over his accomplishments as a canonist, a historian of the Church, and a patron of the arts and sciences, for which he was far more renowned.

However, Benedict’s twin roles as scholar and shepherd of souls did stimulate one another. In the mid-nineteenth century, Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805–75), author of *The Liturgical Year*, one of the most comprehensive studies of the liturgy undertaken to this day, praised him as the great “pontiff Benedict XIV, whose mere name recalls the most immense liturgical scholarship to ever have adorned a man.”<sup>3</sup> Lambertini’s key liturgical work was first published in 1740, at the very end of his tenure as archbishop of Bologna, under the title *Annotazioni sopra gli atti d’alcuni Santi, de’ quali si celebra l’Offizio, e la Messa [...] nella Diocesi di Bologna, secondo il Calendario della medesima, e sopra il S.to sacrificio della Messa* (Annotations on the acts of certain saints, whose office and Mass



are celebrated in the Diocese of Bologna, according to its calendar, and on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass).<sup>4</sup> A Latin edition in a translation by Michelangelo Giacomelli (1695–1774)<sup>5</sup> appeared in Padua in 1745 and in multiple editions thereafter, both south and north of the Alps.<sup>6</sup>

While the Latin translation, with additional markets beyond the Italian peninsula, enjoyed greater commercial success, it was the Italian version that was closest to Benedict's heart, as he had underscored in the preface to the first edition.<sup>7</sup> In order to make the improvements and additions to the Latin edition available to the many priests who, ecclesiastical Latin skills notwithstanding, found it easier to read an Italian text, Benedict asked Jacopo Facciolati (1682–1769)<sup>8</sup> in Padua to prepare a second Italian edition of the work, at the pope's own expense.<sup>9</sup> The author's pastoral remit having grown substantially since the publication of the first edition while he was still archbishop of Bologna, the notes on local saints venerated in the city were dropped and the liturgical treatise, which accounted for more than three-quarters of the text but previously had been mentioned only at the end of the long-winded descriptive title, now became the book's primary purpose. Reflecting the shift in focus, this revised Italian edition, published in Padua in 1747, was given the new title *Della S. Messa trattato istruttivo*, which was retained for the subsequent editions published in Venice and elsewhere throughout the second half of the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

Benedict drafted and edited his texts in Italian, but the large majority of them were immediately translated into and published only in Latin. His working methods were described by the pope himself in a letter of 1746 to Canon Pier Francesco Peggi in Bologna and again in 1757 in a memorandum by the French ambassador, Étienne-François, comte de Stainville (1719–85), later duc de Choiseul.<sup>11</sup> In many cases, Benedict's own way of expressing himself, in the language in which he thought and wrote, is accessible only in the fragmentary form of his manuscript drafts. Written and published in Italian, *Della S. Messa* offers an authentic and unmediated insight into Benedict's thinking and his understanding of the role he considered more crucial than any of his other responsibilities and honours: his identity as *alter Christus*, as a priest offering the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the daily celebration of Mass.

As the subtitle "*trattato istruttivo*" (instructive treatise) declares, the book's purpose was essentially didactic in nature. In the introduction, Benedict states that his goal is "to bring to the attention of our priests some things that are good for them to know in order to instruct the laity, as they are obliged to do."<sup>12</sup> His opinion of the Bolognese clergy's

education was not very favourable; as archbishop, he wrote of the “war” he was waging and vowed to continue to fight against the ignorance of his diocesan priests.<sup>13</sup> The clergy’s obligation to instruct referred to by Benedict is the *munus docendi*, the duty or office of teaching, one of the *tria munera*, the three offices of teaching, sanctifying, and governing that a priest exercises. The *munus docendi* is rooted in Mark 6:34,<sup>14</sup> a passage that occurs immediately before the story of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, underscoring the notion that the pastoral function of teaching nourishes the soul just as food nourishes the body.

An emphasis on the formation of priests so that they could in turn educate the faithful about the liturgy had been one of the key tenets of the Council of Trent (1545–63): “[So] that the sheep of Christ may not suffer hunger, or the little ones ask for bread and there is none to break it unto them, the holy council commands pastors and all who have the *cura animarum* that they, either themselves or through others, explain frequently during the celebration of the Mass some of the things read during the Mass, and that among other things they explain some mystery of this most holy sacrifice, especially on Sundays and festival days.”<sup>15</sup>

In the collection of documents concerning the governance of his archdiocese written by Lambertini as archbishop of Bologna, he frequently referenced Saint Charles Borromeo and Gabriele Paleotti, both cardinals and Tridentine bishops par excellence.<sup>16</sup> One of these texts, a circular letter to his diocesan clergy, displayed more than a touch of sarcasm when Benedict recommended the decrees of the Council of Trent as “a rather good book, not too thick and not too expensive,” the occasional reading of which, he pronounced, would spare many priests having to blush with embarrassment at their own proposals and spare him the tedium of listening to them.<sup>17</sup> Historian Eric Cochrane has gone so far as to describe Benedict XIV as “the neo-Tridentine pope.”<sup>18</sup> Lambertini certainly envisioned himself walking in the footsteps of the Tridentine reforms, and the prefix “neo” may not, in fact, be necessary: he would have considered the Tridentine emphasis on education and the Enlightenment goal of advancing knowledge to be perfectly compatible, even interdependent.

Similarly, Benedict’s critical examination of the Church’s secular activities and his level-headed, unsentimental approach to reforming them were built on a foundation of steadfast fidelity to the core doctrines of the faith. His progressive vision favoured continuity over the uprooting of traditions.<sup>19</sup> Art historian Olivier Michel has observed that

“Benedict XIV is the pope of continuity. He brings abandoned projects to a conclusion, he acts in the tradition of which he is the guardian.”<sup>20</sup> This conception of tradition recalls the words of Saint Vincent of Lérins, an author with whom Benedict, an avid reader of the early Church Fathers, would certainly have been familiar. Vincent’s *Commonitorium* of 434, the most recent edition of which had appeared in Rome in 1731, defines the responsibilities of stewardship as follows: “[A deposit] is something entrusted to you, not invented by yourself; [...] a matter not of ingenuity, but of learning, not of private adoption, but of public tradition; something that has found its way to you, not come from you: of which you are not the author, but the guardian; not a teacher, but a disciple; not a leader, but a follower.”<sup>21</sup> The same notion is invoked by Saint Paul in 1 Timothy 6:20: “Keep that which is committed to your trust [*depositum custodi*], avoiding the profane novelties of words, and oppositions of knowledge falsely so called.” Benedict’s words in a decree rebutting requests from religious orders for ordinations *extra tempora* (outside the dates for ordinations prescribed by canon law) echoed both the Pauline epistle and Saint Vincent when he described his role as that of a “depository and custodian” of the existing regulations, which he did “not plan to extend but to preserve.”<sup>22</sup>

The Benedictine program of continuity between tradition and evolution was visually manifested in the frontispiece of the 1747 edition of *Della S. Messa* (Figure 12.1). This engraving refers to the most fundamental concept of continuity in Christianity: typology, the prefiguration of New Testament events or persons in the Old Testament.<sup>23</sup> The frontispiece, designed by Giambattista Piazzetta (1682–1754) and engraved by Giuseppe Wagner (1706–86),<sup>24</sup> shows an Old Testament high priest about to sacrifice a lamb. The figure at right, dressed in a pluviale (cope) worn over a lace-trimmed alb, represents the papacy, as denoted by the acolyte holding a tiara and the Petrine keys. The pope gently stops the high priest from plunging his long knife into the lamb and points to the Eucharistic host above, indicating that the animal sacrifice of the Old Covenant has been superseded by the Eucharistic sacrifice of the New Covenant.<sup>25</sup>

Following a discussion of the material aspects of the liturgy – its physical setting, the altar, vessels, linens, hosts, and vestments – the principal section of *Della S. Messa* is devoted to a detailed commentary on the Order of Mass, offering a description and explanation of the historical development and theological significance of each prayer, gesture, and symbol of the rite. The text is not intended as a training manual for the



formation of seminarians but, rather as a handbook for catechesis, as an aid to the priest in elucidating the inner meaning and beauty of the Mass for the laity.

The key to the interpretation of the frontispiece is contained in the commentary on the prayer *Supra quæ*.<sup>26</sup> In the canon, this prayer follows immediately after the consecration of the bread and wine and the Anamnesis (*Unde et memores*). The words of the *Supra quæ* implore God to accept the sacrifice “as you were graciously pleased to accept the gifts of your just servant Abel, and the sacrifice of our patriarch Abraham, and that which your high priest Melchizedek offered to you, a holy sacrifice, a spotless victim.”<sup>27</sup>

The wine jug and dish at bottom left allude to an episode recounted in Genesis 14:18: upon Abraham’s victorious return to Jerusalem, Melchizedek offered him bread and wine, foreshadowing the bread and wine of the Last Supper. This is one of the three Old Testament prefigurations of the Eucharistic sacrifice that are enumerated in the prayer and analysed in Benedict’s commentary. The typology extends to the two figures, since Christ’s priesthood – and by extension, the priesthood of his vicar, the pope, in the engraving – is the fulfilment of the prophecy in Psalms 109:4 that Christ would be a priest “according to the order of Melchizedek.”<sup>28</sup>

In addition, the engraved image visually invokes Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac by way of the raised knife held by the high priest. A comparison with Piazzetta’s painted depiction of the sacrifice of Isaac (Plate 13) underscores the connection: a bearded old man wielding a long knife, looking up towards a startling heavenly apparition and prevented at the last moment from plunging the knife into his victim by the outstretched hand of God’s representative – angel in one image, pope in the other.<sup>29</sup> The figure of the high priest in the engraving could therefore tellingly be described as a visual amalgamation of Abraham and Melchizedek.

The array of textual sources referenced in Benedict’s commentary on the Mass is vast, ranging from scripture and the early Church Fathers through medieval and early modern theologians to Benedict’s contemporaries. Among the authors and works cited most frequently are Noël Alexandre, especially his *Historia ecclesiastica* of 1699; Giovanni Bona’s *Rerum liturgicarum libri duo* of 1671; Jean Mabillon; Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet; the decrees of the Council of Trent; Robert Bellarmine; and Thomas Aquinas. In addition, numerous Protestant authors are referenced. They are usually described as “eretico” or “eterodosso,” not in

a pejorative sense but to indicate a difference in doctrinal viewpoints, and their Protestantism did not prevent Benedict from approvingly citing their historical scholarship. He even discussed internal Protestant disputes between Martin Luther and the theologian Andreas Karlstadt.<sup>30</sup>

While most of *Della S. Messa* is pedagogical rather than prescriptive in tone, Benedict displayed a firmer hand in areas he felt particularly strongly about, which included the question of the altar crucifix.<sup>31</sup> He was disturbed by a growing tendency to remove the crucifix from the altar in order to replace it with a *sottoquadro* – a smaller painting placed in the space between the altar table and the bottom edge of an altarpiece – and declared: “it remains unchanged and definite that Mass cannot be celebrated without the image of the Crucified Christ, or at least that of the cross, upon the Altar.”<sup>32</sup> This pronouncement was in line with the *Instructiones fabricae et suppellectilis ecclesiasticae*, Saint Charles Borromeo’s post-conciliar treatise on church architecture and furnishings of 1577, which stipulated that “the cross [...] is to be placed either on the high altar, or on the tabernacle of the sacred Eucharist.”<sup>33</sup>

To justify his position, Benedict cited canon 3 of the Second Council of Tours (567), a passage he understood as a reference to the altar cross, as “Ut Corpus Domini in Altari, non in armario, sed sub Crucis titulo componatur”<sup>34</sup> (“The Body of the Lord shall be placed on the altar, not in the *armarium* [i.e., a closet or chest distinct from the altar, often in the sacristy] but under the cross”).<sup>35</sup> The Latin citation followed Bartolomé Carranza’s *Summa conciliorum et pontificum* (Venice, 1546), a standard compendium of conciliar texts that had been republished in numerous editions throughout the seventeenth century. Neither Benedict nor his editors and translators appear to have been aware of the discrepancy between this version of the text and a different version appearing in the work he cited in support of his interpretation of this passage as mandating a cross on the altar for the celebration of Mass, Bona’s *Rerum liturgicarum libri duo*, which gives “non in imaginario ordine” (not in an arbitrary order) instead of “non in armario.”<sup>36</sup> Other eighteenth-century critical editions of the council documents also follow the “non in imaginario ordine” version.<sup>37</sup>

In a canonical context, *Della S. Messa* did not have prescriptive force, but the text of this section formed the basis for the encyclical *Accepimus praestantium* of 16 July 1746, which treated the question of the altar cross in very similar words and referred the reader back to the treatise.<sup>38</sup> Further on in the commentary on the Mass, Benedict returned to this

theme in a discussion of the Epistle and Gospel sides of the altar, pointing out that the liturgical right, as the more important side to which the recitation of the Gospel is assigned, is defined according to the perspective of Christ on the crucifix placed in the centre of the altar, equivalent to the heraldic right in a coat of arms.<sup>39</sup>

Language possessed a tremendous significance for Benedict – in liturgical use as much as in his own writings.<sup>40</sup> In *Della S. Messa*, quotations from scripture and the Church Fathers were given in Latin, a practice explained in the preface to the first edition of 1740.<sup>41</sup> As archbishop, Lambertini had insisted that seminarians should not be ordained to the priesthood unless they were proficient in Latin, because the Church, “for valid reasons,” did not permit the translation of liturgical texts into the vernacular.<sup>42</sup> The middle decades of the eighteenth century saw a lively debate in ecclesiastical circles – in Italy and elsewhere – over the possibilities of using the vernacular in at least some parts of the Mass.<sup>43</sup> Most significantly, the historian and theologian Lodovico Antonio Muratori (1672–1750) examined the question in his *Della regolata divozione de’ cristiani* of 1747. He explicitly affirmed the use of Latin for the prayers of the Mass, “which the Church continues to recite in this language for just reasons,” while urging that the laity be given the means to understand their meaning fully. To this end, Muratori offered his own explanation of the prayers of the Mass and additionally referred readers to a similar endeavour by the French Oratorian Pierre Lebrun (1661–1729), published as *Explication littérale, historique et dogmatique des prières et des cérémonies de la Messe suivant les anciens auteurs* in 1716–26 and in an Italian translation by Antonio Maria Donado as *Spiegazione letterale, storica e dogmatica delle preci e delle cerimonie della messa* in 1735–42.<sup>44</sup>

Addressing the same question in *Della S. Messa*, Benedict reserved perhaps the most adamant words of the entire treatise for his rebuttal of demands for the celebration of Mass in the vernacular: “In the Western Church, Mass is celebrated in the Latin language, and it is a malicious calumny [...] to claim that the laity is ignorant of the mysteries of the Mass.”<sup>45</sup> Considering the eighty-sixth of heterodox theologian Pasquier Quesnel’s 101 Jansenist propositions condemned in the bull *Unigenitus* of 1713, Lambertini scrupulously distinguished between Quesnel’s own words and the interpretation they had been given by a group of French bishops arguing for the celebration of Mass in the vernacular. In his counter-argument, Benedict quoted the twenty-second session of the Council of Trent as well as the Augustinian scholar Fulgenzio Bellelli’s

*Mens Augustini* of 1711<sup>46</sup> against Quesnel and the French bishops. Having given the other side's arguments an extensive hearing,<sup>47</sup> his response was not an enforcement of existing doctrine but a careful distinction between *intendere*, the understanding of words, and *capire*, the comprehension of their meaning.<sup>48</sup> While Mass in the vernacular would allow for the former, he concluded, the latter could be achieved only by catechesis.<sup>49</sup>

To Benedict, catechizing the laity, instructing the clergy, passing on knowledge, and preserving traditions all were incumbent upon him in his offices of priest, bishop, and pope, as they were for other past, present, and future occupants of these offices. *Della S. Messa* was intended as one link in this trans-generational chain of education and learning. In the spirit of Saint Thomas's dictum that "just as it is better to enlighten than merely to shine, so is it better to transmit to others the fruits of one's contemplation than merely to contemplate,"<sup>50</sup> Benedict's conception of scholarship was not one of learning, the noun, as an end in itself, but as a means to the end of learning, the verb.

## NOTES

- 1 Transcribed in Fresco, "Lettere inedite di Benedetto XIV al card. Angelo Maria Querini," 282: "Iddio non cercherà nè da Noi nè da Lei conto delle questioni erudite, cercherà bensì conto strettissimo della salute delle anime."
- 2 Transcribed in Auer, "Der Historiograph Anton Roschmann," 95: "Utile, innoxium, et christiano viro dignum studiorum genus est, quod sobrie sapere, aliis prodesse, Veritatem sequi; ac Dei Gloriam et Proximorum Salutem bene consulere sibi proponit."
- 3 Guéranger, *Institutions Liturgiques*, 2: 494: "[le] grand Pontife Benoît XIV, dont le nom seul rappelle la plus vaste science liturgique dont jamais un homme ait été orné."
- 4 *Annotazioni sopra gli atti d'alcuni Santi, de' quali si celebra l'Offizio, e la Messa, per lo più senza le lezioni proprie nella Diocesi di Bologna, secondo il Calendario della medesima, e sopra il S.to Sacrificio della Messa*, published as Vol. 2 of Lambertini, *Annotazioni sopra le feste di Nostro Signore e della Beatissima Vergine secondo l'ordine del Calendario Romano*. For the treatise on the Mass see 2: 139–620. For an overview of liturgical scholarship between the end of the first millennium and the eighteenth century, see Sodi, "Il *De Sacrificio Missae* di Benedetto XIV," 190–204. Specifically on the period between the Council of Trent and the eighteenth century, see Cattaneo, *Problemi liturgici nel Settecento italiano*, 13–17, and on Muratori's liturgical scholarship, 19–62.



- 5 See Laura Asor Rosa, "Giacomelli, Michelangelo," in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2000), 54: 140–1.
- 6 Benedict XIV, *Commentarii duo de D.N. Jesu Christi Matrisque ejus festis, et de Missae sacrificio*. On the treatise, see Cabrol, "Benoît XIV," col. 772; Brandolini, "Benedetto XIV di fronte ad alcuni movimenti riformistico-liturgici del secolo XVIII," 450–8; Hermans, *Benedictus XIV en de liturgie*, 164–72; Bellini, "L'interno della basilica liberiana nel rifacimento di Ferdinando Fuga," 56 (in connection with the design of the new high altar in Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome); M. Rosa, "Tra Cristianesimo e lumi," 191; Anzuini, "Il testo del S. *Sacrificio della Messa*." The following editions may be added to the list compiled by Anzuini: *Commentarii Theologico-Historici De Sanctissimo Sacrificio Missae*, 3 vols. (Würzburg: Kleyer, 1749–51); *De SS. Missae Sacrificio Commentarius* (Leoben and Augsburg: Dorner, 1752); *De SS. Missae Sacrificio Commentarius* (Cologne: Wilhelmi, Krakamp & Simonis, 1754); *Commentarius de Sacrosancto Missae Sacrificio*, 2 vols (Leuven: Typographia Academica, 1762).
- 7 See Lambertini, *Annotazioni sopra le feste di Nostro Signore*, 1: xxii–xxiii: "Si è eletto di scrivere in lingua Italiana, e non in lingua Latina, per essere la lingua Italiana più usuale, e più proficua all'intento."
- 8 See Marina Boscaïno, "Facciolati, Iacopo," in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1994), 44: 65–8.
- 9 Benedict XIV to Jacopo Facciolati, undated (c. 1745), Padua, Biblioteca Antica del Seminario Diocesano, Ms. 244, fols 34r–35v, at fol. 34r, transcribed in Fattori, *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV*, 252: "desiderarsi da Noi che a spese nostre si faccia in Padova sotto la sua direzione la ristampa della nostra Opera delle Feste, e del Sacrificio della Messa colle aggiunte, quali cose sono state tutte sotto il suo occhio, quando accudì alla stampa che si fece in Padova della medesima opera latina. Da questo discorso potrà inferire, che ora si tratta di ristampare in Padova l'Opera scritta in lingua italiana." In another undated letter, written soon after the previous one, Benedict requested further additions: Padua, Biblioteca Antica del Seminario Diocesano, Ms. 244, fols 30r–31r, at fol. 30v, transcribed in *ibid.*: "Pensiamo intanto di far qualche aggiunta al Trattato del Sacrificio della Messa, e fatta che sarà, sul che però nemmeno possiamo impegnarci quanto al tempo, manderemo le aggiunte a Padova."
- 10 *Della S. Messa trattato istruttivo*, 2 vols (Padua: Stamperia del Seminario, 1747), hereafter *Della S. Messa*; described on the title page as "presa dall'esemplare dell'autore, illustrato e accresciuto in tutte le sue parti."
- 11 Benedict XIV, *Briefe Benedicts XIV*, 37, letter of 14 December 1746: "Le nostre Notificazioni sono già tradotte in latino ad un Padre delle Scuole Pie"; Boutry, *Choiseul à Rome*, 289–90.

- 12 *Della S. Messa*, 1: "l'unico nostro scopo si è di porre sotto l'occhio de' nostri Sacerdoti alcune cose, che è bene, ch'essi sappiano, per istruire il Popolo, come sono obbligati di fare, sopra i Riti, le Cerimonie, e molte altre cose risguardanti il Sagrafizio della Messa, e per celebrarlo anch'essi come debbono."
- 13 Lambertini, *Raccolta di alcune notificazioni*, 5: 137: "È una gran cosa finalmente, che nella guerra da Noi intimata, e che sosteremmo, sino che l'anima starà unita al Nostro corpo, contro l'ignoranza che pur troppo si ritrova in tanti del Nostro Clero, ci convenga il vedere Sacerdoti, Curati, Arcipreti combattere a pro d'essa fra le prime schiere."
- 14 "And Jesus going out saw a great multitude: and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things."
- 15 Twenty-second session, chapter VIII, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, 148. See also twenty-fourth session, chapter VII, 197–8: "In like manner shall [all parish priests] explain on all festivals or solemnities during the solemnization of the Mass or the celebration of the divine offices, in the vernacular tongue, the divine commands and the maxims of salvation."
- 16 See Lambertini, *Raccolta di alcune notificazioni*, passim; Rosa, "Tra Cristianesimo e lumi," 190.
- 17 Lambertini, *Raccolta di alcune notificazioni*, 5: 39: "Chiara e letterale è la disposizione del Sacro Concilio di Trento, Libro assai buono, non molto voluminoso, e di non molto prezzo, e che se qualche volta fra l'anno si andasse leggendo, risparmierebbe a molti il rossore di proporre certe cose, ed a Noi il tedio di sentirle."
- 18 Cochrane, "Counter reformation or Tridentine reformation?" 32.
- 19 See Fattori, "Lambertini a Bologna," 425: "Alla pesante armatura rappresentata da questa tradizione il futuro papa non sapeva né voleva rinunciare, in quanto essa era da lui ritenuta strumentale alla cura delle anime. Egli intese praticare la dimostrazione della massima coerenza interna della interpretazione romano-cattolica del deposito della fede, pur facendo una operazione di purificazione e vaglio storico della attendibilità delle fonti."
- 20 Michel, "La décoration de la galerie de Urbain VIII par Giovanni Angeloni," 1169: "Benoît XIV est le pape de la continuité. Il mène à terme des projets abandonnés, il oeuvre dans la tradition dont il est le gardien."
- 21 Vincent of Lérins, *Commonitorium*, in *Sanctorum Vincentii Lirinensis et Hilarii Arelatensis opera ad Mss. Codd. insignioresque editiones recognita, ac notis observationibusque illustrata*, ed. Joannes Salinas (Rome: Zempel, 1731), 65–6, and "Tractatus pro catholicae fidei antiquitate et universitate adversus omnium hæreticorum novitates" [*Commonitorium*], in *Patrologiæ cursus*

- completus. Series Latina*, vol. 50, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris: Migne, 1844–55), col. 667: “Quid est depositum? Id est, quod tibi creditum est, non quod a te inventum; quod accepisti, non quod excogitasti; rem non ingenii, sed doctrinæ, non usurpationis privatæ, sed publicæ traditionis; rem ad te perductam, non a te prolatam: in qua non auctor debes esse, sed custos; non institutor, sed sectator; non ducens, sed sequens.”
- 22 Lambertini, *Raccolta di alcune notificazioni*, 2: 37: “A questa [this demand] non vogliamo, né potiamo cedere, non essendo Nostra, ma essendone [of the existing canon law] depositari, e custodi; né intendiamo di ampliarla, ma di conservarla.”
- 23 See Emile Amann, “Type,” in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, vol. 15, ed. Alfred Vacant et al. (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1903–50), cols 1935–45.
- 24 On Wagner, see Dario Succi, ed., *Da Carlevarijs ai Tiepolo. Incisori veneti e friulani del Settecento*, ex. cat. (Venice: Albrizzi, 1983), 432–3, with additional bibliography.
- 25 This composition is not included in Rodolfo Pallucchini and Adriano Mariuz, *L’opera completa del Piazzetta* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1982), 67–73, which lists various other books illustrated with engravings after Piazzetta, including two written by Benedict XIV: *Dissertationes in omni doctrinæ genere selectissimæ* and *Dissertatio circa publicum cultum, quem in Sancta Maria majore quidam vellent Nicolao Papae IV*.
- 26 *Della S. Messa*, 2: 11–26, esp. 14.
- 27 “Supra quæ propitio ac sereno vultu respicere digneris: et accepta habere, sicuti accepta habere dignatus es munera pueri tui justi Abel, et sacrificium Patriarchæ nostri Abrahæ: et quod tibi obtulit summus sacerdos tuus Melchisedech, sanctum sacrificium, immaculatam hostiam.”
- 28 Psalms 110:4 in the Hebrew numbering. See also Hebrews 5:10, 6:20.
- 29 Giambattista Piazzetta, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, c. 1715, oil on canvas, 100 x 126 cm, Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, inv. 318 (1980.75), on loan to Barcelona, Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya. A later autograph variant of the composition is *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, c. 1730–35, oil on canvas, 153 x 115 cm, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister.
- 30 *Della S. Messa*, 1: 358.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 30–5.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 33: “Resti dunque stabile e fermo, che non si può celebrare la Messa, se sopra l’Altare non v’è l’Immagine di Gesù Crocifisso, o almeno quella della Croce.” See also 18: “Nel mezzo dell’Altare vi deve esser la Croce.”
- 33 Charles Borromeo, *Instructiones fabricae et suppellectilis ecclesiasticae* (1577), book II, dicta 1, trans. Evelyn Voelker, <http://evelynvoelker.com/PDF/Book-II-Final.pdf>, 1.

- 34 *Della S. Messa*, 1: 31. The wording is identical in the first edition, *Annotazioni sopra gli atti d'alcuni Santi*, 156, and in the Latin editions, *Commentarii duo de D.N. Jesu Christi Matrisque ejus festis, et de Missae sacrificio*, (Padua: Manfrè, 1745), 2: 12, and *De Sacrosancto Missae Sacrificio* (Rome: Pagliarini, 1748), 17.
- 35 By contrast, both King, *Notes on the Catholic Liturgies*, and Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte*, 3: 23, interpret this passage as referring to a cruciform arrangement of the Host, divided into nine particles, on the corporal or paten.
- 36 Bona, *Rerum liturgicarum libri duo*, 271: "Cur sine cruce celebrari Missa non debeat."
- 37 Both Labbe et al., *Sacrosancta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta*, Vol. 6, col. 536, and Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova*, Vol. 9, col. 793, give the text as "Ut corpus domini in altari, non in imaginario ordine, sed sub crucis titulo componatur."
- 38 Latin text: Benedict XIV, *Sanctissimi Domini Nostri Benedicti Papæ XIV*, 2:123–8. Italian text: *Tutte le encicliche e i principali documenti pontifici emanati dal 1740. 250 anni di storia visti dalla Santa Sede, Benedetto XIV (1740–1758)*, ed. Ugo Bellocchi (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), 137–43, esp. 138: "Noi stessi abbiamo parlato di questa vecchia usanza di collocare la Croce sull'Altare, quando si compie il rito sacro, nei Nostri scritti *Sul sacrificio della Messa*, che da Noi sono stati composti in Italiano."
- 39 *Della S. Messa*, 1: 155–6.
- 40 See Brandolini, "Benedetto XIV di fronte ad alcuni movimenti riformistico-liturgici del secolo XVIII," 452–53.
- 41 Lambertini, *Annotazioni sopra le feste di Nostro Signore*, 1: xxiii: "avendo portati i testi Latini delle Divine Scritture e de' Padri, quando è stato d'uopo citarli."
- 42 Lambertini, *Raccolta di alcune notificazioni*, 3: 6: "Per rilevanti motivi non vuole la Santa Chiesa, che le Divine Scritture, gli Evangelii, i Messali, i Rituali, gli Uffizi Divini, Libri tutti necessari per i Sacerdoti, e per l'Ordine Clericale, si trasportino in Lingua volgare."
- 43 For the history of the use of Latin in the liturgy, see Lang, *The Voice of the Church at Prayer*.
- 44 Muratori, *Della regolata divozion de' cristiani*, 204: "quelle sante Orazioni, le quali per giusti riguardi la Chiesa continua a recitare in essa Lingua: a gloria di Dio, e in beneficio de gl'ignoranti, voglio io qui esporre la stessa Messa, e le sacrosante sue mirabili Orazioni, a chi non ne capisce il linguaggio [...] Una simile versione fu già fatta in Lingua Francese, e pubblicata dal padre Pietro il Brun dell'Oratorio." Lebrun, *Explication littérale, historique et dogmatique des prières* and *Spiegazione letterale*. Conversely, Anzuini, "Il testo del *S. Sacrificio della Messa*," 109, has suggested that Muratori "aveva sostenuto che si dovesse utilizzare il

- vernacolo, per venire incontro alle esigenze di comprensione del rito da parte delle classi più basse.”
- 45 *Della S. Messa*, 1: 123: “Passando all’Idioma, si celebra nella Chiesa Occidentale la Messa in lingua Latina; ed è un’infame calunnia di chi ha preteso, o pretende, ciò farsi, ad effetto che il Popolo ignori i Misterj della medesima.”
- 46 See Stella, *Il giansenismo in Italia*, 1: 270–94, esp. 273.
- 47 *Della S. Messa*, 1: 124–32.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 1: 128: “il Popolo, tradotta la Messa in lingua volgare, ne intendesse le parole, non ne capirebbe però il senso, il che sarebbe una sorgente continua d’infiniti errori.”
- 49 For Lambertini’s insistence, as archbishop of Bologna, that parish priests were obligated to teach their parishioners at least the fundamentals of the Catholic faith and doctrine, see Fattori, “Lambertini a Bologna,” 443, 445.
- 50 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ*, II-II, q. 188, a. 6: “Sicut enim maius est illuminare quam lucere solum, ita maius est contemplata aliis tradere quam solum contemplari.”

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## **PART V**

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### **Benedict XIV's Transformation of the Public Sphere**



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## 13 Prospero Lambertini and the *Accademia degli Arcadi* (1694–1708)

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PAOLA GIULI

“A sharp intellect, austere when declaiming, pleasant in conversation. A celebrated forensic orator, [Prospero Lambertini] is equally appreciated for his ingenious and spirited (*geniali*) conversation.”<sup>1</sup> With these words Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni (1663–1728), co-founder and director of the *Accademia degli Arcadi* (Arcadia), described the young consistorial advocate, who had recently joined his academy.<sup>2</sup> An assiduous participant in Giovanni Giustino Ciampini’s *Conferenza dei Concili* and Marcello Severoli’s literary conversations, as well as an admirer of Giovanni Maria Lancisi’s anatomical lessons, Lambertini probably joined Arcadian mixed-company conversations at the homes of Marquis Leone Strozzi (1657–1722) and consistorial advocate Giovanni Battista Felice Zappi (1667–1719), and in 1703 he had become a member of the *Accademia degli Arcadi*, the most influential literary academy in eighteenth-century Italy.<sup>3</sup>

By studying the activities, protocols, and membership of Arcadian academies and conversations that Prospero Lambertini frequented during his formative years in Rome, this chapter sheds light on some seminal experiences that may have influenced his future actions as pope, especially as regards his patronage of scholarly and learned women. During this period (1694–1708), Lambertini came to know and probably share the opinions of a core group of influential Arcadians, who saw the academy as a privileged centre for women’s acculturation and socialization. Their promotion of women’s inclusion in the activities of the academy was motivated both by their belief in and adherence to Christian egalitarian principles, and by the practical advantages afforded the academy by influential women’s patronage – they facilitated the inter-class and inter-gender networking that was to be the key to

the academy's success within the cosmopolitan and stratified society of eighteenth-century Rome.<sup>4</sup>

With manuscript correspondence and minutes preserved in the Roman archives of the still extant Arcadia and with the academy's historical publications for the years 1690–1728, I undertake a close study of a little-known resource, the *Historical Account of the Accademia degli Arcadi*.<sup>5</sup> Alternatively seen as embodying a superficial aesthetics of entertainment or an early manifesto of the experience of modernity, Crescimbeni's publication offers a challenging mixture of fiction and history that has led most commentators to underestimate its historical importance.<sup>6</sup> While the book's frame (Arcadian women's fictional trip to Elide, the site of Greek Olympic Games) has a literary and metaphoric value, the particulars of the narration – including the description of each member's character, home, work, and *conversazione* – are scrupulously historical.<sup>7</sup> The accounts of Arcadia's gatherings and Arcadians' ideas are founded, as Crescimbeni himself explained, “on publications or manuscript records.” Moreover, “both poetry and prose compositions were authored by the very same Arcadians the text portrays as singing or reading them.”<sup>8</sup>

### Lambertini and Learned Women

As is well known, several eighteenth-century Italian women obtained university degrees and/or became university professors (though the latter did not imply the former). Remarkably, they “professed” not only literary subjects (traditionally more available to women), but also scientific ones, including physics, mathematics, anatomy, and obstetrics. Directly involved in the patronage of the natural philosopher Laura Bassi, of the mathematician Maria Gaetana Agnesi, and of the wax modeller and anatomist Anna Morandi Manzolini, Prospero Lambertini was arguably the most influential architect of women's emergence at the University of Bologna, setting precedents that would be followed by several other graduates and professors before the reactionary backlash of the Restoration.<sup>9</sup>

Cultural historians such as Paula Findlen, Rebecca Messbarger, and Marta Cavazza have studied Lambertini's support of learned women throughout his career as archbishop of Bologna, as cardinal, and eventually as pope. These scholars have noted that Benedict XIV's support of learned women went far beyond the aspirations of even the most progressive eighteenth-century educational theorists, such as Vincenzo

Gravina, Giovanni Nicola Bandiera, and even Ludovico Antonio Muratori, who recommended, at best, a limited education in the humanities enabling noble women to properly discharge their domestic and dynastic duties. A public recognition of women's intellectual ability through awards, university degrees, and university appointments was not contemplated, and it was usually opposed.<sup>10</sup>

It is my contention that Lambertini's progressive approach to women's education has its roots in the Roman cultural milieu and in the papal actions at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. It has been noted that under the direction and with the encouragement of Innocent XI (r. 1676–89), Innocent XII (r. 1691–1700), and Clement XII (r. 1700–21), Roman academies developed predominantly from Church institutions, closely tied to the Curia, into a complex network of religious and secular academies as well as conversations, both literary and scientific in nature, which fostered deeply articulated relationships between the Curia, the clergy, and the laity.<sup>11</sup> Women were among the most influential patrons of a well-developed network of conversations and among the greatest beneficiaries of the exchange of ideas between academies and mixed conversations.

Highly respected and authoritative prelates such as Francesco Albani (1649–1721; the future Pope Clement XI), Mons. Giustino Ciampini (1633–98), Agostino Taja (–1717), and Mons. Marcello Severoli (1644–1707) worked together with younger clergymen such as Giuseppe Paolucci (1661–1730) and Mario Crescimbeni (1663–1728), with scientists such as Giulio Baglivi (1668–1707) and Giovanni Maria Lancisi (1654–1720),<sup>12</sup> and with literati Vincenzo Leonio (1650–1720) and Felice Zappi (1667–1719) to update the Church's outlook and to respond to the challenges brought about by modern philosophical and scientific thought.<sup>13</sup> Straddling Scholasticism and Galilean science, some Roman prelates endeavoured to incorporate in their work those values of modern culture that were compatible with it, including Cartesian rationalism, Newtonian physics, and Leibnitz's support for heliocentrism.<sup>14</sup>

If acceptance of the latest scientific discoveries produced interest in studying Christian sources from a new epistemological perspective and in looking for a new piety (free of superstition), a Christian interpretation of Cartesian rationalism produced an egalitarian formulation of women's intellectual abilities and rights, which in turn allowed for women's participation in the cultural life of the nation at conversations, academies, and later in the century, thanks to Lambertini's support at the university.

## Learned Women and Arcadia

If the impetus for Arcadia's foundation was the search for a more authoritative Roman and Italian culture, it was likewise the desire, on the part of a select number of prelates, clergymen, literary men, and intellectuals, to create a socially and culturally inclusive Republic of Letters, ideally open to both sexes, all social classes, and all Italian cities, in an effort to promote the knowledge and appreciation of the Italian literary tradition (especially lyric and dramatic poetry) and to create a national forum for the propagation of scientific discoveries.<sup>15</sup>

Unlike other academies of the time, such as the *Accademia degli Apatisti*, *Accademia degli Infecondi*, *Accademia degli Intronati*, *Accademia dei Ricovrati*, and *Accademia dei Forzati*, all of which occasionally bestowed honorary membership on a token representative of the fairer sex, Arcadia sanctioned women's participation from its foundation as a regular opportunity for a whole class of women.<sup>16</sup> Any woman who was at least twenty-four years old, reputable, and "practicing poetry or some other sort of literary endeavor" could be admitted.<sup>17</sup> It is no coincidence that Arcadians chose the recently deceased Queen Christina of Sweden as a symbolic mentor and model, thereby purposely positioning the academy as appreciative of, and open to, the contribution of literary and scholarly women.<sup>18</sup>

Deference to rules of precedence and restrictions on the basis of sex or social status were common practice at this time. At the time of Arcadia's establishment, noble birth was *condicio sine qua non* for membership in most academies, including the *Accademia degli Umoristi* and the *Accademia dei Forzati*. The most influential and powerful literary academy in Rome until the foundation of Arcadia, the *Accademia degli Umoristi*, allowed only limited participation by women: noblewomen were allowed to attend (and not necessarily to contribute) only if accompanied by their husbands or a male family member.<sup>19</sup> Not so in Arcadia. Having as its primary motivation the reform of Italian taste, Arcadia adopted the pastoral fiction, not just for stylistic reasons (a taste for simplicity) but also "in order to eliminate any deference to hierarchy or precedence among its members."<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, one of the most controversial aspects of Arcadia's expansion in the years 1695–1708 was its gradual and increasing inclusion of women as equal participants in the academy's activities. As a consequence of women's heightened visibility, debates increased over the desirability of woman's inclusion in academic life and in conversations.

The Curia's interest in reforming the Church and the Roman court according to a traditional and severe ideal of the clergyman had the potential to limit, if not completely exclude, women's participation. Among many others, Lodovico Sergardi published a harsh satire in Latin against the new French custom of mixing the sexes at the gaming table and in conversation (1696). As mixed conversations were discouraged, the Church hierarchy supported the founding of new academies devoted to the sacred sciences (such as Church history) and "serious" (i.e., exclusively male) scholarly and ecclesiastical conversations.<sup>21</sup>

In rebutting the objections to women's participation that were raised at the time, Crescimbeni's *Arcadia* provides evidence of the ideological obstacles they had to overcome in order to be accepted. First published in 1708 and reissued at the time of the so-called great schism of 1711 (itself prompted by ardent debate over women's membership), *Arcadia* meticulously illustrates the organization, the rituals, and the history of the academy.<sup>22</sup> The text dismissed all sociological and pseudo-scientific objections as being dictated ultimately by misplaced pride: women poets were excluded from the Republic of Letters because some feared that, "if women were allowed to compete with men, they would take for themselves some of the glory and the power that is all of men's world."<sup>23</sup> The text also subverted received notions of femininity and authorship: against popular belief, women poets *could* "contribute to the glory of their nation even more than men, since by choice and by supernatural grace, [they] do what men are obliged to do by law and nature." As a consequence, women's participation in academic activities would not hinder learning; rather, it would contribute to it, since "one can plainly see that [men] would only benefit by looking at women as their intellectual companions and competitors."<sup>24</sup>

The Roman *Arcadia*'s radical endorsement of women's literary pursuits that we find in Crescimbeni's text was echoed in an essay on women's education written by Anton Maria Salvini, an illustrious humanist whom Lambertini probably met at Mons. Leone Strozzi's conversations.<sup>25</sup> An enthusiastic Arcadian since 1691, Salvini maintained in his tract that "women are capable of every virtue, both moral and intellectual."<sup>26</sup> He supported his position with examples of illustrious women from classical antiquity through the Renaissance, to his own time.<sup>27</sup> The use of contemporary women as exempla endowed Salvini's apology with a particularly forceful pragmatic value. By emulating the likes of Selvaggia Borghini, who was "the honor of our century, and an excellent writer of sublime Tuscan poetry and of the noblest philosophy,"

women could aspire “to gain for themselves sublime glory and great fame.”<sup>28</sup> Without denying that domestic duties were a woman’s primary concern, Salvini nevertheless confuted the usual corollary to such a belief – that women’s education should be limited in scope. Salvini’s essay is one of the few voices raised to promote not only women’s literary and philosophical education, but also their aspirations to academic and literary recognition.<sup>29</sup>

Progressive views such as those quoted above allowed Arcadian women to pursue their intellectual interests and engage with the latest literary, philosophical, and scientific theories. They “professed” poetry, and even the sciences, not merely as passive consumers, but as active creators.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, two literary histories by Arcadia’s director gave women writers a prominence unmatched in literary criticism published at the time. Crescimbeni’s *Istoria della volgar poesia* (1698) included a considerable number of contemporary women as models of stylistic and literary excellence, while his *Comentarij intorno all’istoria della volgare poesia* (1702), summarizing his vision for a modern Republic of Letters, included women poets and writers whose works “live immortally in the memory of posterity.”<sup>31</sup> It was thanks to Arcadia that women began to be published in great numbers. Many of the works of eighteenth-century Italian women writers known today were first made public in Crescimbeni’s writings, especially in his *Arcadia* (1708, 1711), and in the first nine volumes of the *Rime degli Arcadi* (1716–22).<sup>32</sup> Being a member of Arcadia and participating in Arcadia’s literary activities was to become the pre-eminent platform for literary recognition and exposure for a growing number of literary women in the course of the century.

Arcadia’s formula was successful also because it aided the popes’ policy of cultural expansion and influence. When Lambertini joined Arcadia in 1703, the academy was undergoing a period of rapid growth, thanks in part to the patronage of the newly elected Pope Clement XI Albani (r. 1700–20). A frequent presence at Ciampini’s scientific academies, a member of Queen Christina’s Royal Academy, and a member of Arcadia since 1695,<sup>33</sup> then Cardinal Giovanni Francesco Albani took part in Arcadia’s most festive celebrations by humbly sitting on the grass of the Bosco Parrasio.<sup>34</sup> When Albani became pope, his sponsorship of Arcadia became part of his efforts to promote and preserve the Roman cultural patrimony and to expand the Church’s cultural influence by fostering literary and scientific academies. Organized as a federation of colonies, Arcadia was uniquely suited to foster exchange between

Rome and other major Italian cultural centres. By 1708 it numbered over 1,300 members with branches in all major and most minor Italian cities. Arcadia's cosmopolitan, national, and eventually international membership assured the visibility of the pope's patronage in Italy and abroad. The preservation, propagation, and reinterpretation of Italian classical literary and artistic patrimony were the main objectives of the Arcadian academy and points of pride of the Italian literary establishment. Together with the other academies, libraries, and museums that were being founded and expanded, along with works of restoration, Arcadia fulfilled the mission of a secular papacy. Among the signs of Clement's benevolence were his acceptance of the academy's poetic homage (Arcadians dedicated the 1701 Literary Olympic Games to him) and his designation of Arcadia as the official sponsor of the yearly drawing competition of the *Accademia del Disegno* – the first literary academy to be given such prerogatives.<sup>35</sup>

### Lambertini and Arcadia

Lambertini's exposure to Arcadian enlightened ideas and ideals began well before his induction into the *Accademia degli Arcadi*, probably as early as 1696, when he began frequenting conversations hosted or patronized by Arcadia's members. At a time when Roman conversations and academies were the locus for intellectual, personal, and professional advancement, some of the most prominent Roman conversations were hosted by Arcadia's founders and early members – among the former, besides the already mentioned Crescimbeni and Zappi, was Giuseppe Paolucci (1661–1730), secretary of Cardinal Giovanni Battista Spinola; among the latter were not just Ciampini and Severoli, but also cardinals Benedetto Pamphili (1653–1730) and Pietro Ottoboni (1667–1740).<sup>36</sup> Active in the most prominent academies and conversations of the 1680s, the above-mentioned intellectuals joined Arcadia soon after its foundation in 1690. As Maria Pia Donato has noted, several of Arcadia's founders had belonged to scholarly and exclusively male academies (among them Crescimbeni, Leonio, Zappi, and the future cardinal Carlo Tommaso de Tournon) while others belonged to "*accademismo mondano*" or mixed conversations (such as Pompeo Figari).<sup>37</sup> All were engaged in finding their place in a society that was redefining social and cultural hierarchies. I would go further and maintain that the practices, and therefore the definition, of "serious, erudite and exclusively male" conversations on the one hand and of "worldly, mixed" conversations



on the other were in flux at this time. Exclusively male conversations such as Severoli's and Paolucci's included "*stravizi*" (i.e., "indulgent pleasures" – probably dinners and libations), as well as intellectual games, not unlike mixed conversations, at the homes of Princess Prudenza Capizucchi (1654–1709) and of Faustina Maratti Zappi (1679–1745), among others.<sup>38</sup> By the same token, mixed conversations were at times devoted to the study of antiquities, of philosophical and literary works, and, most remarkably, to the joint composition of literary works *a più mani* (by many hands), an extraordinary example of cross-gender and cross-cultural cooperation.

Not only did these conversations provide instruction in modern scientific and philosophical subjects only marginally covered by the traditional humanistic curriculum, but they also facilitated the networking indispensable to advancing a young prelate's career, initiating him into the rules and rituals of curial and lay sociability.<sup>39</sup> Conversely, conversations at the home of well-known academy members provided the hosts with the opportunity to advance the academy's membership as well as its literary and cultural influence in Rome and abroad. As a contemporary witness explained, what qualified these conversations as "Arcadian" was the fact that they were indeed devoted to fostering the academy.<sup>40</sup>

Two years after graduating *Utriusque Iuris* (in canon and civil law) at the Università la Sapienza in Rome, twenty-one-year old Lambertini was invited to join Ciampini's *Conferenza dei Concili* in 1696. Initially concerned mostly with the history of Church councils (as the name suggests), the *Conferenza dei Concili* was by now the pre-eminent academy devoted to fostering a critical approach to Church history and to promoting the cultural prestige of papal Rome. As one of the academy's "most devoted and zealous members,"<sup>41</sup> Lambertini likely met cardinals Giovanni Francesco Albani and Benedetto Pamphili as well as famed antiquarian Filippo Buonarroti (1661–1733), all of whom attended Ciampini's conversations and were members of Arcadia, as was, of course, Ciampini himself.<sup>42</sup> Among the first Roman prelates to join Arcadia in 1691 and a frequent presence at Arcadia's meetings, Ciampini was especially appreciative of the academy's effort to study both classical and modern authors, admiring the erudition concealed in the guise of pastoral or allegorical works.<sup>43</sup> Having joined Arcadia in 1690, Buonarroti frequently attended its meetings and conversations, helped Crescimbeni secure manuscript poems of his great-great-grandfather Michelangelo,<sup>44</sup> and published the treatise that made his reputation as

a scholar, the *Osservazioni istoriche sopra alcuni medaglioni antichi* (1698), a study of Cardinal Carpegna's Imperial bronze coins and medals collection, greatly appreciated by Lambertini in his *Epistola ad Flaminium Cornelium* (1753).<sup>45</sup>

A co-editor of the Roman *Giornale de' letterati*, Monsignor Giovanni Giustino (Giusto) Ciampini was already nationally renowned as a Church historian, scientist, and antiquarian when he opened one of the most progressive and learned conversations of late seventeenth-century Rome.<sup>46</sup> In 1676 he had founded the famous *Accademia Fisico-matematica*, an academy of natural philosophy modelled after the Florentine *Accademia del Cimento*, the British Royal Society, and the French *Académie royale des sciences*, noted for its unprejudiced exploration of the scientific controversies of the time. Focusing primarily on humanistic subjects (history, literature, art, antiquarianism), Ciampini's conversation was held every day except Wednesday and Sunday in his 7,000-volume library, amid a collection of inscriptions, busts, and statues.<sup>47</sup>

Although records are lacking, given his professional ties to Ciampini and many of his cohort, it is safe to presume that Lambertini attended Ciampini's conversations. There Lambertini would have met the most prominent Arcadians, including founders such as the already mentioned Crescimbeni, Tournon, Zappi, and prominent literati such as Vincenzo Leonio, who, like Lambertini, worked at the Sacra Rota between 1694 and 1702. Lambertini may also have met Ciampini's old friend, Agostino Taja, cofounder of Arcadia, vicar of Sant'Angelo in Pescheria, and learned man of letters, who had been imprisoned by Alexander VIII for his support of Copernican philosophy and whose speech on the utility of academies had inaugurated Ciampini's conversation in 1676.<sup>48</sup> Lambertini showed real fondness and appreciation for Taja. Years after Taja's death, Lambertini found time in his busy papal schedule to see to the completion and publication of Taja's *Descrizione del Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano* (1750).<sup>49</sup>

Most Arcadian members attending Ciampini's conversations also participated in Marcello Saveroli's learned gatherings. More relevant to our study, we know for a fact that Lambertini was part of these reunions.<sup>50</sup> An antiquarian, a philologist, and a Church historian, Severoli (1644–1707) was also a patron of the arts, a member of the *Accademia de' Canonici e de' Concili*, and a member of the *Accademia della Crusca*. Severoli's career in the Church must have seemed worthy of imitation to the young Lambertini.

Severoli had risen from consistorial advocate to judge and finally president of the University of Rome. He was one of the most influential prelates in Rome at the time, one of the three on a shortlist for the position of “Segretario dei Brevi” for Innocent XI in 1687.<sup>51</sup> Severoli was a tireless and enthusiastic supporter of all Roman academies, especially of Arcadia. Having joined Arcadia in May 1691 – together with Leone and Giuseppe Battista Strozzi – Severoli was instrumental in Arcadia’s quick rise in prestige and popularity, repeatedly serving on its governing body, regularly attending public and private academies, contributing compositions and speeches, and, finally, encouraging several prominent prelates to join soon after its foundation, among them Alessandro Caprara, who was to become a cardinal and was at that time Lambertini’s employer.<sup>52</sup>

At Severoli’s conversations guests shared compositions and poems, discussed future works, consulted Severoli’s vast library of religious and secular works (the most comprehensive private collection of Italian literary works in “the whole world,” according to one commentator), and rewarded themselves with refreshments and dinners.<sup>53</sup> Lambertini conversed here with several of Arcadia’s co-founders, who were supporters of mixed conversations and of women’s writing (Figari, Zappi, Leonio, and Paolucci).<sup>54</sup>

According to Crescimbeni, Lambertini “left Severoli’s home and found his way to Mons. Leone Strozzi’s, arriving when dinner was being served.”<sup>55</sup> According to this account, Leone Strozzi’s conversations included his brother Giovanni Battista Strozzi, several exponents of the Roman aristocracy, and “two of the most prominent Arcadian members,” that is, scientist, traveller, diplomat, and poet Lorenzo Magalotti (1637–70), and the above-mentioned Anton Maria Salvini.<sup>56</sup> Among the Arcadian women were Prudenza Capizucchi and Faustina Maratti Zappi.<sup>57</sup>

Lambertini arrived in the middle of a “lively” dinner where “the nymphs [Arcadian women] toasted the shepherds [Arcadian men] who attended to them.” Believing he could not do it justice, Crescimbeni described the dinner simply as “just as splendid as the decorations.”<sup>58</sup> The dinner was followed by a beautiful improvisation by Pompeo Figari and a dance for the lay members in attendance.<sup>59</sup>

In case we may hesitate to believe a prelate of Lambertini’s calibre would participate in a conversation where women were seen reciting poetry and dancing, we could point out that Cardinal Niccolò Giudice from Naples, himself an “acclaimed” Arcadian (*Emireno Alantino*, 1707),

did not mind engaging in a poetic exchange with an Arcadian woman poet, Countess Prudenza Capizucchi.<sup>60</sup> Capizucchi's conversations were held twice a month in the palace of her uncle, Cardinal Galeazzo Marescotti. Participants, including the ubiquitous Zappi, Crescimbeni, and Leonio, improvised literary and musical pieces or played literary games such as the so-called *Sibillone* (Oracle).<sup>61</sup> It was in the context of this game that Capizucchi and Princess Petronilla Paolini Massimi (1663–1726) styled two refined, and now very famous, speeches on platonic love. Presumably improvised, the speeches were later revised and published.<sup>62</sup>

Among lay members of Arcadia, Lambertini became especially close to Felice Zappi (1667–1719), one of Arcadia's most engaged and prolific figures. The only lay intellectual to deliver the inaugural speech for the prestigious *Accademia del Disegno*, Zappi was greatly appreciated for his oratorical skills in both Latin and Italian.<sup>63</sup> Indeed, Anton Domenico Norcia's 1707 *Congressi Letterari* – a literary dialogue on the nature of jurisprudence between Zappi, Lambertini, and two more erudite consistorial advocates (Giovanni Battista Bottini and Jacopo Sardini) – praised Zappi for both his forensic and his literary ability, in contraposition to those who believed that literature was incompatible with the law.<sup>64</sup> The dialogue suggests that Lambertini's well-known friendship with Zappi must have been instrumental in his appreciation of Arcadia's literary endeavours, including its support of women's contributions.<sup>65</sup> In particular, Zappi's own conversation, established in 1705 after his marriage to Faustina Maratti, was one of the most celebrated in Rome and a showcase for Faustina's literary accomplishments.

The natural daughter of Carlo Maratti, one of the most famous and financially successful painters of the Roman baroque school, Faustina received a rigorous education in poetry, music, and painting, which soon endeared her to her father's aristocratic patrons, most notably Cardinal Albani, the future Pope Clement XI. Her striking beauty, her virtue, and her poetry were celebrated in prose and poetry by many contemporary writers, including Crescimbeni, Alessandro Guidi, Jacopo Martello, and Eustachio Manfredi. It was in Arcadia, where she was admitted in 1704, that she met (and later married) Felice Zappi. Their conversation soon became a regular meeting place for the Roman literati and occasionally hosted thinkers, poets, artists, and musicians such as Scarlatti and Handel.<sup>66</sup>

The Bolognese Pier Jacopo Martello was outspoken in identifying the “very literary and erudite Aglauro,” Faustina's Arcadian name, as one

of the main attractions of this conversation.<sup>67</sup> Besides scholarly debates, the Zappi couple's conversations featured games, collaborative compositions of new works, and the reading of new books. Moreover, these gatherings that centred around Faustina's conversation commonly functioned as writing workshops, where new works "had origin" and were "completed." That is, ideas for new works were communally developed, written down, and finally read and discussed over several meetings – not just short poems, but even long treatises, or histories. Among them, Crescimbeni's *Arcadia* was entirely composed at the Zappis' conversations and it was then read and revised during as many Thursday meetings as there are chapters in the book.<sup>68</sup> We can presume Faustina had a major role in shaping the text's radically feminist pronouncements on women's education, intellectual aspiration, and role in the academy. In fact, since Crescimbeni wrote that all "characters say only what can be found in their own manuscript or published work, and what they communicated to [him] personally," we can surmise that the pointed criticism of misogynous views Faustina and other Arcadian women expressed in the text actually represent their own thinking.<sup>69</sup> The text's vindication of Arcadian women's right to take part in Arcadian activities as equal partners was inspired by Faustina and by the other women intellectuals, such as the already mentioned Capizucchi, and Petronilla Paolini Massimi, both of whom animated Arcadian conversations.

Petronilla Paolini Massimi in particular had already become an iconic figure by this time.<sup>70</sup> Having risen to national attention, she had become simply known as "the Roman poet" – a definition testifying both to her fame and to Arcadia's role in fostering it. Although her poems began to circulate in manuscript form as early as 1681, it was Crescimbeni's inclusion of her work in his *Istoria della volgare poesia* (1698) that granted her poetry visibility well beyond Rome's city limits.<sup>71</sup>

At the Zappis' conversations Lambertini is likely to have witnessed Arcadian women discussing their participation in the most notable events organized by Arcadia: the "Olympic Games." Crescimbeni's *Arcadia* is in fact structured as Arcadian women's allegorical trip to Elide (site of the Greek Olympics) in order to plead for their inclusion in the Arcadian games and therefore for equality within the academy. Celebrated every four years with great fanfare, these literary games, which tested the players' intellectual acumen and poetic dexterity, were Arcadia's most visible events and one of the academy's most prominent venues for gaining public acclaim.<sup>72</sup> Allowing women to participate

amounted to publicly recognizing their excellence – as among the most accomplished and representative members of the Arcadian academy. It is not surprising, therefore, that the prospect of including women in the Arcadian Olympics encountered opposition: women were admitted as spectators only in 1701 and as competitors in 1705 (fourteen years after the first women were admitted to the academy).<sup>73</sup>

The 1701 games were particularly festive, featuring “torches shining as bright as day along the streets and on all balconies” as well as a great number of participants and spectators, including prelates, cardinals, and nobility, who enjoyed a separate and more prominent seating section in the Arcadian theatre, as did women.<sup>74</sup> It is certain that Lambertini would have been aware of this fashionable event, attended by the Roman *bel mondo*, including many of his friends and acquaintances, Zappi, Paolucci, Severoli, Leonio, and Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni among them.<sup>75</sup> Although we are told in the introduction that women were not allowed to compete because they “[did] not have sufficient valor to succeed in the games, or to aspire to glory and fame,”<sup>76</sup> the ceremony’s proceedings include two compositions by Petronilla Paolini Massimi – a discrepancy that further underscores the tensions within the academy on the point of women’s participation.<sup>77</sup> At the 1705 games, to which an even greater number of contenders was admitted, Lambertini saw women competing in public for the first time, as Faustina Maratti Zappi and Maria Buonaccorsi Alessandri recited madrigals and sonnets that reinterpreted and redefined the genres.<sup>78</sup> Among the competitors was also Francesco Maria Gasparri, professor of canon and criminal law at the Università La Sapienza, who recited an eclogue in praise of the Zappis’ mixed conversations.<sup>79</sup>

In conclusion, at Arcadian conversations the curial and lay worlds met regularly and predictably together with women Arcadians, occasions that influenced notions of women’s public roles, especially within the Republic of Letters. Even though we cannot prove with absolute certainty that Lambertini regularly attended mixed conversations, we know he had a professional, intellectual, and at times even personal relationship with a great number of Arcadians who did so, as well as with an even greater number who approved of women’s involvement in the Republic of Letters. At private conversations and public “Olympic Games,” Lambertini participated in erudite debates and intellectual games; he listened to concerts and recitations; and above all he witnessed the poise, literary virtuosity, and intellectual preparation of Arcadian women poets. Not only did he hear prelates express support for women’s education and intellectual pursuits, but he

witnessed women discuss their God-given abilities, compose poems and speeches, and contribute to the writing of historical works. It was an important lesson that no doubt influenced his very public patronage of learned women as leaders of the Church. He would approve Laura Bassi's university degree and membership in the Academy of Sciences, Maria Gaetana's chair in mathematics, and Anna Morandi's university lectureship not from behind the scenes, but with certain fanfare from the throne of Peter. The laurels he bestowed on these women very likely found their first impulse and inspiration in his witness of the authority of Arcadian women, who were recognized publicly in literary histories, collections of poems, and literary competitions.

## NOTES

- 1 Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 116. This and all translations are mine. Mancurtti, *Vita e catalogo delle opere di Crescimbeni*; Morei, "Vita di Crescimbeni," in Morei, *Vite degli Arcadi illustri* (henceforth, *Vite Arcadi*); Natali, *Crescimbeni*; Gaye, *L'opera critica e storiografica del Crescimbeni*; Gaspari, "Strategie retoriche ne *La Storia dell'Accademia degli Arcadi*."
- 2 Ms. *Atti Arcadi*, 2: 165, Biblioteca Angelica, Rome. Vichi, *Gli Arcadi dal 1690 al 1800*, 86–7.
- 3 On Ciampini, Severoli, Strozzi and Zappi, see section "Lambertini and Arcadia." On Lambertini's appreciation of Giovanni Maria Lancisi (1654–1720) see Carini, *L'Arcadia*, 27. Physician to popes Innocent XI, Clement XI and Innocent XII, Lancisi published extensively on epidemiology and cardiology. Influential works included *De Noxiis Paludum Effluviis* (Rome, 1717) and *De Motu Cordis et Aneurysmatibus* (Rome, 1728). Crescimbeni, *Notizie istoriche degli arcadi morti*, 1: 24–7, and "Vita di Mons. Lancisi" 4: 183–222 (1727); Bacchini, *La vita e le opere di Giovanni Maria Lancisi*; De Angelis, *Giovanni Maria Lancisi*; Angeletti, "Il ruolo del Lancisi."
- 4 Graziosi, "Presenze femminili."
- 5 *Notizie istoriche dell'Adunanza degli Arcadi* is the subtitle of Crescimbeni's *Arcadia* in the list of his published works that closes the text ("Opere stampate del Canonico Gio. Mario Crescimbeni," n.p.).
- 6 Quondam, "Gioco e societa' letteraria nell'Arcadia del Crescimbeni"; Kieran, "The Ridiculous, the Sublime, the Modern," 13; Dixon, *Between the Real and the Ideal*, 66ff.
- 7 The terms "conversazione" (conversation) and "ragunanza" (academy) are used at times interchangeably in the literature of this period. Nevertheless, while

Arcadian academies were held at fixed locations and on regular, predictable days, private conversations were held at the discretion of the hosts (for years 1690–95 see *Manoscritti d'Arcadia* 1: 185r–186v, 200r, 278r–279r, Biblioteca Angelica, Rome). Academies were open only to members of Arcadia and required the presence of the academy's director, while access to conversations was the exclusive prerogative of the hosts and was not limited to members of Arcadia. Mancurti, "Vita di Giovanni Mario Crescimbeni," 6: 238.

- 8 Crescimbeni, "L'Autore a Chi legge," in Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*. I confirmed Crescimbeni's statements with reference to the Arcadian archives, and publications: *Atti Arcadici* 1 and *Atti Arcadici* 2, covering the years 1690–1712, and *Manoscritti d'Arcadia* 1–8 (1690–1708), Biblioteca Angelica, Rome; Crescimbeni, *Breve notizia dello stato antico e moderno dell'Adunanza degli Arcadi*, and the five volumes of *Vite degli Arcadi illustri*.
- 9 To my knowledge, only two graduations occurred outside the Vatican Church State during the eighteenth century – Amoretti in Padua and Ferretti in Florence. *Alma Mater: La presenza femminile nel diciottesimo e diciannovesimo secolo* features a chapter on each learned woman. Cavazza, "Dottrici e lettrici dell'Università di Bologna," and "Between Modesty and Spectacle; Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*, also provides the most updated bibliography on Bologna's women graduates and professors.
- 10 Messbarger, *The Century of Women*; Messbarger and Findlen, *The Context for Knowledge*. See also Marta Cavazza's chapter in this volume.
- 11 Donato, *Accademie romane*, 9–10.
- 12 On Albani, see n32; on Taja, see n50; on Lancisi, see n2. A physician at the papal courts of Innocent XII and Clement XI who taught surgery (from 1696) and theoretical medicine (from 1700) at the University of Rome, Giorgio Baglivi is remembered also for his efforts to reconcile clinical observations with Galen's and Hippocrates's texts. Baglivi, *Opera omnia medico-practica et anatomica*, and *Opere complete*; Carini, *L'Arcadia*, 143–9; Di Trocchio, Guerrieri, and De Simone, *Carteggi di Giorgio Baglivi; Alle origini della biologia medica*.
- 13 On Leonio, see n48.
- 14 Leibnitz's insistence on heliocentrism at the Accademia Fisico-matematica in 1689 is credited for convincing its members to publicly support Copernicanism (with dire consequences for a few). Maria Teresa Fattori, "Introduzione" in Fattori, *Le fatiche di Benedetto XIV*, xxv–xxviii; Leonio, "Vita di Monsig. Gio. Giustino Ciampini," 2: 217; Donato, *Accademie romane*, 41; Robinet, G.W. *Leibniz*. Prominent scientists belonging to the school of Galileo were members of Arcadia: see Costa, "Clashing Traditions in the Eighteenth Century," and "L'Arcadia."



- 15 Crescimbeni, *Istoria della volgare poesia*, and *Bellezza della volgare poesia*. On Arcadia as relatively democratic: Fubini, "Arcadia e Illuminismo"; T. Graziosi, *L'Arcadia*; and E. Graziosi, "Arcadia femminile," and "Revisiting Arcadia." On the opposite view, see Quondam "L'istituzione Arcadia"; and Piromalli, *L'Arcadia*.
- 16 Maylender, *Storia delle Accademie d'Italia*, is the most comprehensive history of Italian academies.
- 17 Crescimbeni, *Breve notizia*, Vol. 6 of *Istoria della volgar poesia* (Venice: Basegio, 1730), 311.
- 18 Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 7n: "Arcadians nominated the Queen of Sweden as their Protector the year they established the academy (1690)." It was customary for Roman academies at the time to choose both a spiritual protector and a patron (called "prince"). Devoted to the infant Jesus, and in keeping with its pastoral image, Arcadia elected to do without a patron, in order to afford greater institutional freedom. It instead placed itself under the symbolic protection of the Queen of Sweden, who had just died in 1689.
- 19 Regarding the Umoristi's laws on the nobility, see Alemanno, "L'Accademia degli Umoristi," 99. As regards women's participation: "Feminis primaris aetate et forma prestantibus earumque viris eam frequentans veniam dabant leges." Quoted in Maylender, *Storia delle Accademie*, 5: 372.
- 20 Crescimbeni, *Breve notizia*, 308.
- 21 See Donato, *Accademie romane*, 59-60, and "The Temple of Female Glory," 61.
- 22 The arguments against women's participation that the text rebuts are familiar to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century historians: women's education might unravel the very fabric of society; women did not belong to the public sphere; finally, women's presence in academia would inevitably "feminize [men]." Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 2.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Salvini published *Prose toscane; Sonetti; Discorsi accademici di Anton Maria Salvini*; and a great variety of translations mostly from Greek but also from Latin, French, and English. See Guarnacci, "Vita di Anton Maria Salvini"; Cordaro, *Anton Maria Salvini*; Guerrini, "L'erudizione al servizio della scienza"; Paoli, "Anton Maria Salvini."
- 26 Salvini, "Se la donna e' ben che studi," in Salvini, *Discorsi accademici*, 3: 6-10. "Whether it is appropriate for women to study" was published posthumously by his brother Salvino Salvini. It had been composed for the academy of Apatisti, of which Salvini was a member and a director.
- 27 They included Diotima, Aspasia, and Hypathia; Veronica Gambarà, Tullia

- d'Aragona, and Laura Battiferi Ammanati; Faustina degli Azzi Forti and Selvaggia Borghini.
- 28 Salvini "Se la donna e' ben che studi," 3: 10.
- 29 Borghini was the second woman to be invited to join Arcadia in 1691. Borghini published her verses in several prestigious collections: Bergalli, *Rime ... della signora Maria Selvaggia Borghini*; Borghini, *Saggio di poesie di Selvaggia Borghini*, and *Il canzoniere di Maria Selvaggia Borghini*.
- 30 Crescimbeni's correspondence shows he elicited contributions from Arcadian women poets throughout Italy.
- 31 Crescimbeni, *Commentarj*, 1: 309 (1702).
- 32 Bergalli, *Componimenti poetici delle più illustri rimatrici*, and Recanati, *Poesie italiane di rimatrici viventi*, expanded on Crescimbeni's work. Both Bergalli and Recanati belonged to Arcadia, and Recanati published his anthology under his Arcadian pseudonym Ciparissiano Teleste, thereby affiliating his work with the Arcadian milieu and principles.
- 33 As Michele Morei wrote, "Because of his love for the academy, and his delight in attending both private and public meetings, our Arcadia acclaimed him as one of its members in MDCXCV," "Ristretto della vita del Sommo Pontefice Clemente XI," 4: 2. On Clement XI's cultural policies see Johns, *Papal Art and Cultural Politics*, and "The Entrepôt of Europe."
- 34 Francesco Albani was at the solemn ceremony for the approval of laws regulating the academy's life (1696). Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 15.
- 35 For a study of Arcadia's influence on the arts, see especially Barroero and Susinno, "Arcadian Rome, Universal Capital of the Arts."
- 36 Crescimbeni, "Elogio istorico di Vincenzo Leonio," 4: 29. On Severoli and Ciampini see below. Giuseppe Paolucci (1661–1730), secretary of Cardinal Giovanni Battista Spinola, poet and a member of the *Accademia degli Umoristi*, eventually became vicar of Sant'Angelo in Piscinula (in 1714). A life-long friend of Zappi, he held a renowned conversation. His work appeared in Crescimbeni, *Prose degli Arcadi*, and *Rime degli Arcadi*, and in several other poetry collections of the time. Carini, *L'Arcadia*, 18–19; Olszewski, "The Enlightened Patronage of Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni,"; Volpicelli, "Il teatro del cardinale Ottoboni"; Montalto, *Un mecenate in Roma barocca*; Leone, *The Pamphilj and the Arts*.
- 37 Donato, *Accademie romane*, 68–69. Carlo di Tournon (1668–1710) was *adiutore* to Cardinal Cenci, secretary to Clement XI, patriarch of Antioch (1701), and cardinal (1709). Pompeo Figari (1650–1730) was known for his epithalamion *Il giorno ritornato* and the collection *Il salmista penitente*, as well as for oratorios and *drammi per musica*.

- 38 Prudenza Gabrielli Capizucchi was the first woman in Rome admitted to Arcadia (in 1695). Her poetry can be found in Vols 3 (1716) and 9 (1722) of Crescimbeni, *Rime degli Arcadi*, in Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, and in Biblioteca Angelica, Rome, *Manoscritti d'Arcadia*, 5, 6, 7, and 9. Crescimbeni, *Notizie storiche degli Arcadi morti*, 3: 14–17 (1721); and E. Graziosi, "Presenze," 257–8. See F. Zappi's works in Crescimbeni, *Rime degli Arcadi*, Vols 2 (1716) and 10 (1747), and *I Giuochi Olimpici Celebrati*. The *Rime di Giovanni Battista Felice Zappi e di Faustina Maratti* was reissued several times. See also Galli, *Nel Settecento ... Felice Zappi e Faustina Maratti*; Maier, *Faustina Maratti Zappi*; and Zanelli, *Faustina Maratti tra Roma ed Imola*.
- 39 Donato, *Accademie romane*, 58.
- 40 Mancurti, "Vita di Crescimbeni," 4: A75 [sic]. Mancurti explains that, although members of Arcadia "were dispersed" among several conversations over the course of the month, they all convened in the house of the director once a month during General Academies. A symbiotic relationship thus existed between the academy and conversations: while the academy's cultural and literary tenets influenced the conversations' protocols and type of entertainment, conversations contributed to increasing the academy's membership. Cf. E. Graziosi, "Presenze femminili," 76.
- 41 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borg. lat. 60, c. 300; quoted in Donato, *Accademie romane*, 21.
- 42 Buonarroti's letters and manuscripts are preserved in the Biblioteca Corsiniana in Rome and at the Marucelliana in Florence. See Mazzuchelli, *Gli Scrittori d'Italia*, 2: 4; Fabroni, *Vitae Italarum*, 6: 122ff (1780); and Carini, *L'Arcadia*, 59–68.
- 43 Leonio, "Vita di Ciampini," 2: 218–19.
- 44 Parise, "Buonarroti, Filippo."
- 45 Carini, *L'Arcadia*, 61.
- 46 Donato, *Accademie romane*, 13–45. Among Giovanni Giustino Ciampini's most influential works are *Vetera monumenta*; *De incombustibili ... amianto*; *Il Teatro de' Grandi*; *Investigatio historica de Cruce Stationali*; and *De Sacris Aedificiis a Costantino Magno constructis*. Leonio's "Vita di Ciampini," 2: 252–3, provides a complete list of his manuscript work. Some can be found in *Indici* 213, Archivio Segreto Vaticano.
- 47 Leonio, "Vita di Ciampini," 2: 218. Between 1710 and 1721 much of Ciampini's library was purchased by Benedetto Pamphili for the Vatican Library he directed. Books are listed in *Index bibliothecae ... Iohannis Ciampini* at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (*Vat. lat.* 12.628 "materiae"; 12.679, "nomina"; 12630, "cognomina").
- 48 Leonio, "Vita di Ciampini," 2: 218–19. Donato, *Accademie romane*, 41, 68.

- 49 Leonio, "Vita di Ciampini," 2:16–17; Carini, *L'Arcadia*, 17; Donato, *Accademie romane*, 41.
- 50 Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 116. See also *Notizie storiche degli arcadi morti*, 3: 187; and Carini, *L'Arcadia*, 494.
- 51 Leonio, "Vita di Ciampini," 2: 219.
- 52 Crescimbeni, "Vita di Marcello Severoli." On Severoli's conversations see *Notizie storiche degli arcadi morti*, 3: 187; Tiraboschi, *Storia della letteratura italiana*, 8: 316; Carini, *L'Arcadia*, 494. Severoli worked tirelessly to avoid Arcadia's seemingly imminent demise.
- 53 Crescimbeni, "Vita di Marcello Severoli," 286.
- 54 Ibid. See also, Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 115–16. The listed Arcadians attended Severoli's exclusively male, and Zappi's mixed conversations. Mancurti, "Vita di Zappi," 168.
- 55 Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 116.
- 56 Ibid., 112–13. Preti and Matt, "Magalotti, Lorenzo"; S. Salvini, "Vita di Lorenzo Magalotti"; Donato, *Accademie romane*, 13–45.
- 57 On Capizucchi and Maratti see n38. Although there is no corroborating proof that Strozzi held regular mixed conversations, given Crescimbeni's detailed account it is safe to presume that Strozzi, Lambertini, and the other prelates mentioned here attended it occasionally.
- 58 Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 113.
- 59 Ibid., 117–28; Paola Giuli, "Monsters of Talent," 308–9.
- 60 Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 264.
- 61 Ibid. The game consisted of a duel of wits and erudition. After a participant (called "oracle") pronounced a "divination," that is, a random sentence (usually a single word, e.g., "crystal"), two more players were tasked with improvising their most ingenious interpretation for the audience, who would adjudicate the winning performance. See also E. Graziosi, "Revisiting Arcadia," 112–16.
- 62 Gabrielli Capizucchi, Maratti Zappi, and Paolini Massimi, "Giuoco dell'Oracolo" in Crescimbeni, *Prose degli Arcadi*, 3: 82–101 (1718); and Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 144–56. Cervone, "Presenze femminili nella prima Arcadia romana," and "Faustina Maratti Zappi e Petronilla Paolini Massimi." On Paolini Massimi, see below, n74.
- 63 Ghezzi, "Orazione del sig. Avvocato Gio. Battista Zappi." See also in Crescimbeni, *Prose degli Arcadi*, 1: 231–71 (1718). For Propaganda Fide Zappi wrote and delivered a series of speeches on the history of the Church (two volumes, never published). They offered a rare example of works of sacred erudition written in Italian, not in Latin (Mancurti, "Vita di Felice Zappi," 156).

- 64 Norcia, *Congressi Letterari*, 120; Mancurti, "Vita di Felice Zappi," 150.
- 65 On Lambertini's friendship with Zappi, see Mancurti, "Vita di Zappi," 149; Fabroni, *Vitae Italarum*, 16: 60–1; and Carini, *L'Arcadia*, 27.
- 66 Despite favourable criticism, Faustina's work has not yet received the attention it deserves. The only modern edition, published in 1972, merely reprints the sonnets of the 1723 collection. A comprehensive study of all her works would unveil unknown aspects of her contribution to Arcadia and to early eighteenth-century society. Besides the already cited biography by Bruno Maier, see Ceva, *Scelta di Sonetti*; and Binni, "Il Settecento letterario," 6: 388–91.
- 67 Mancurti, "Vita di Felice Zappi," 168.
- 68 Ibid.
- 69 Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 2. See above section on "Learned Women and Arcadia."
- 70 Petronilla Paolini Massimi's difficult life is recorded in her numerous autobiographical poems. See *Rime* in Crescimbeni, *Rime degli Arcadi*, 1: 163–94 (1716). For recent editions, see Martelli and Ricciardi, *Petronilla Paolini Massimi*; Massimi, *Le Rime. Raccolta degli editi, Le Prose, and Le Rime. Raccolta degli inediti*.
- 71 Antonio Muratori, *Trattato della perfetta poesia italiana*, vol. 4 (Modena, 1706), 343; Antonio Magliabechi's letter to Niccolo' Montemellini, July 12th 1698, in Ms. Archivio Massimo, 1698–1710, Archivio Privato, Roma; quoted in Martelli and Ricciardi, *Petronilla Paolini Massimi*, 81.
- 72 The Olympic proceedings were the Academy's most important publication until the first collections of poetry and prose (1716 and 1718, respectively). For attendance at the Olympic Games, see also Crescimbeni, *I Giuochi Olimpici Celebrati dagli Arcadi nell'Olimpiade DCXX*, 16–17, and *I Giuochi Olimpici Celebrati dagli Arcadi nell'Olimpiade DCXXI*, 7.
- 73 Crescimbeni, *Arcadia*, 265.
- 74 Ibid., 296.
- 75 See Crescimbeni, *I Giuochi Olimpici in lode di Clemente XI*, 87–8 for a complete list of participants and their compositions.
- 76 Ibid., 20.
- 77 Ibid., 59, 74.
- 78 Ibid., 107.
- 79 Ibid., 119.

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## 14 Benedict XIV's Enlightened Patronage of the Capitoline Museum

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CAROLE PAUL

One of the most significant and enduring contributions of the eighteenth-century papacy to the modern world was the founding and development of the Capitoline Museum, the first institution of international importance to manifest the defining characteristics of the public art museum as it has evolved into the present day.<sup>1</sup> The museum was established not by Benedict XIV Lambertini (r. 1740–58), but by the previous pope, Clement XII Corsini (r. 1730–40), reminding us that while Benedict's achievements were remarkable, in some areas he was continuing the initiatives of his predecessors. Opened in 1734, the Capitoline was truly a path-breaking institution: in its public nature and its educational mission it exemplified the influence of Enlightenment thought on the genesis of eighteenth-century museums. Nonetheless, the Museo Capitolino is an accomplishment for which the popes have not been given their due by scholarship, which has rather singled out the Louvre, opened in 1793, as the archetypal public art museum, a point that will later be addressed.

In order to appreciate Benedict's expansion of the Capitoline Museum, it is first necessary to examine the earlier history of its site and its founding during Clement's reign. Today's Musei Capitolini complex on Rome's Campidoglio, or Capitoline Hill, still contains the oldest civic art collection of the early modern period, begun in 1471 by Pope Sixtus IV della Rovere (r. 1471–84), who donated some famous ancient bronzes to the *popolo Romano* (Roman people) to be placed in the Palazzo dei Conservatori (Conservators' Palace), the seat of the magistrates who formed the representative assembly of the municipal government.<sup>2</sup> The best known of these works is probably the bronze she-wolf (*lupa*) suckling the twins Romulus and Remus, founders of

the city, but other sculptures attesting to the grandeur and power of ancient Rome – city, republic, and empire – continued to be added to the collection, and Michelangelo’s redecoration of the hill, beginning in the sixteenth century, further underscored the theme of Roman greatness.<sup>3</sup> Flanking the staircase to the piazza stand the marble *Horse Tamers*, the Dioscuri brothers Castor and Pollux, considered in antiquity to be protectors of Rome and symbols of liberty. The ancient trophies next to them were believed to have commemorated the victories of the republican leader Marius. In the centre of the piazza stood the equestrian statue of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and in the central niche of the Palazzo Senatorio (Senator’s Palace) sits a personification of Rome.

### The Founding of the Museo Capitolino

As the site of Roman civic government since the Middle Ages, representing *Romanitas* through the objects displayed there, the Campidoglio was the natural location for a public museum. The Museo Capitolino, founded in 1733 and opened in 1734 in the Palazzo Nuovo (New Palace), was created for the display of a large, outstanding collection of antiquities recently purchased by Clement XII from Cardinal Alessandro Albani, a well-known antiquarian and dealer (Figure 14.1).<sup>4</sup> This was an extraordinarily innovative initiative, not only because of the institution’s early founding date, but also because Albani’s collection was purchased expressly to create the museum, whereas most other early art museums evolved from private collections already on site that were subsequently made public.<sup>5</sup> Although the pope spent some 97,000 scudi on the project, the driving force was Marchese Alessandro Gregorio Capponi, an amateur antiquarian and intimate of Clement XII, who had convinced the pontiff to buy Albani’s statuary and who would serve as the museum’s first president and curator.<sup>6</sup>

What were Clement’s reasons for establishing this pioneering institution? Archival documentation for Capponi’s appointment as president cites the contribution of the museum, and thereby of the papacy, to the splendour and magnificence of Rome as well as the Capitoline’s didactic purpose, anticipating the museum-going public of dilettantes, foreigners, and youths finishing their education, who would reap its benefits.<sup>7</sup> As a new kind of public cultural space, the Capitoline was clearly an expression of Enlightenment values. It afforded visitors educational opportunities and promoted a sense of civic pride that necessarily redounded to the glory of its patrons. The characterization of

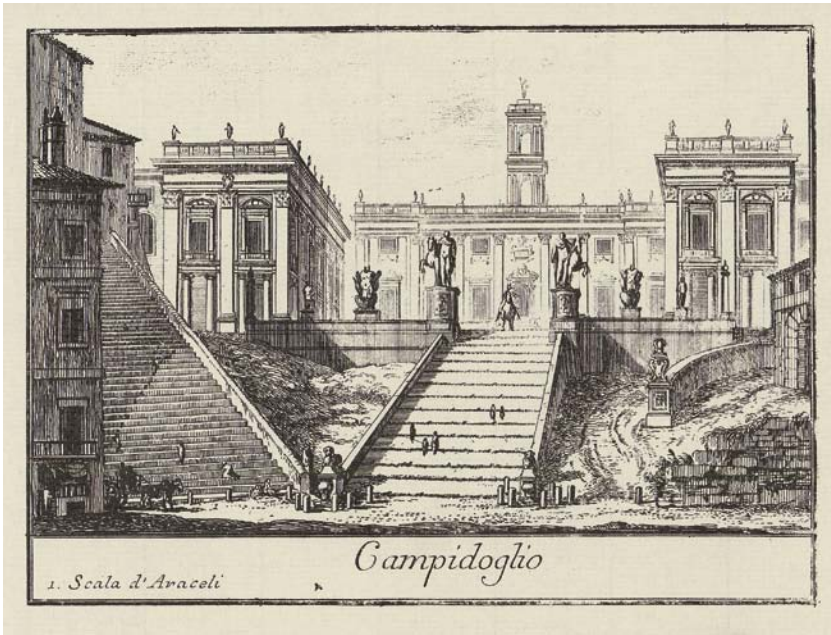


Figure 14.1 View of the Campidoglio (Capitoline Hill). Engraving, 13 × 17.5 cm. From Ridolfino Venuti, *Accurata, e succinta descrizione topografica e istorica di Roma moderna* (Rome, 1767), Vol. 2, plate between pp. 688 and 689. The Palazzo Nuovo is on the left, the Palazzo dei Conservatori on the right, and the Palazzo Senatorio in the centre. Photo: Author.

its public audience in the records indicates, too, that the project was in part a response to the growth of cultural tourism, forecasting the interdependent relationship between museums and travel that has existed ever since. In fact, the enterprise was a response to the desire of “Grand Tourists” not just to see the antiquities of Rome but also to buy and export them. Although the popes had issued multiple edicts during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries prohibiting the exportation of antiquities and were increasingly successful in their efforts, statuary continued to leave the city to be sold throughout Europe; by purchasing Albani’s collection himself, Clement was preventing the loss of yet more of Rome’s patrimony.<sup>8</sup> In exhibiting the antiquities, he extended the triumphant narrative of Roman history that animated the Campidoglio, and in this emphasis on political heritage the Capitoline served

as the single most important model for the nationalistic exhibition programs that came to characterize subsequent public art museums.

Once acquired, the museum's antiquities were installed in the atrium and courtyard on the ground floor of the Palazzo Nuovo, along the adjoining staircase, and on the *piano nobile* (first floor) in seven rooms formerly rented by the Ministry of Agriculture, which was forced to vacate the premises.<sup>9</sup> The collection originally included 408 pieces of sculpture, which had been bought from Albani, 494 objects or fragments with ancient inscriptions that the cardinal donated, and some other statuary already on the hill. Clement later purchased works for the museum, most notably the celebrated *Dying Gaul*. Although the sculpture was grouped for exhibition by conventional themes and types – busts, statues, herms, urns, reliefs, and inscriptions – the Capitoline's rooms were less richly ornamented than those of private galleries, and the works were displayed in innovative ways that reflected the public nature and educational mission of the museum, as in the case of the busts. Sets of emperor busts were commonplace in private collections, where they were exhibited to decorative effect, in niches or on pedestals, but not necessarily in any particular order and usually with other types of statuary. At the Capitoline not only were imperial busts placed in historical order by subject, but they were also displayed together in their own room, on simple shelves, inviting visitors to reflect on the sitters and compare the quality of their likenesses, especially when multiple images of the same subjects were placed side by side (Figure 14.2). Similarly, the inscriptions were arranged on the museum's walls by content and date and their lettering was tinted to facilitate study. They were also grouped, painted, and framed in a way that clarified and enhanced their systematic organization and at the same time gave them an aesthetic interest appropriate to their prominent exhibition in the museum. This was in contrast to the usual random placement of unframed fragmented inscriptions, generally in much smaller numbers, found in private collections of antiquities.

### **Benedict's Expansion of the Museum**

Benedict XIV's expansion of the Capitoline in many ways extended Clement XII's efforts. He augmented the antiquities collection by more than sixty works and supported scholarship on it, added a picture gallery, and founded two related academies, thus forming an integrated educational program. To accommodate his acquisitions some of the



Figure 14.2 View of the Stanza degli Imperatori, Palazzo Nuovo, Musei Capitolini, Rome. Photo: Archivio Fotografico dei Musei Capitolini.

antiquities were moved around, which necessitated a new guidebook for visitors to use in the museum. It was published in 1750 and has been attributed to Giovanni Pietro Lucatelli, Lambertini's private secretary, who succeeded Capponi as president.<sup>10</sup> However, the actual author may have been the pope's *presidente delle antichità* (commissioner of antiquities), the highly respected antiquarian Ridolfino Venuti, who included an authoritative account of the Capitoline in one of his more general Roman guidebooks.<sup>11</sup> Whoever its author, the 1750 guide, which offers a room-by-room tour of the collection, ends with a list of Benedict's acquisitions in each room, proudly trumpeting the pope's munificence, as do inscriptions on the bases of most of the sculptures he gave to the museum.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Lambertini was actively involved in augmenting the collection and spent lavishly on the new statuary and its restoration from his private funds.<sup>13</sup>

Benedict's additions were acquired in various ways and complemented different aspects of the display.<sup>14</sup> The most famous works served



to raise the collection's already high quality. These include statues such as the *Faun in Rosso Antico* (Faun in Red Marble), the *Capitoline Venus*, the *Capitoline Flora*, the *Marble Faun* (made famous in Nathaniel Hawthorne's eponymous 1860 novel), the *Boy Struggling with a Goose*, *Cupid and Psyche*, and *Cupid Bending His Bow*.<sup>15</sup> Three other objects belong in this class, including the *Mithradates Krater*, a rare Hellenistic bronze that was a gift of the Pontic King Mithradates Eupator to an athletic youth association and brought to Rome as war booty during the late Republic. To the Sala, the major gallery, Benedict added two magnificent bronze tables, newly made by the sculptor Francesco Giardini, that are topped by mosaics taken from floors at Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli.<sup>16</sup> From the same site came the coveted *Furietti Centaurs* that Benedict's successor, Pope Clement XIII (r. 1758–69), acquired in 1765 and exhibited in the Sala, reaffirming its status as the museum's showpiece.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to their aesthetic value, the Roman antiquities that Benedict acquired contributed to the theme of *Romanitas*, as did other works he donated to the museum. These included four marble reliefs installed in the atrium, three of which decorated small monuments inscribed with stonemasons' instruments and the measure of the ancient Roman foot. Another example was the reconstruction of the third-century CE marble plan of Rome, known as the *Forma Urbis Romae*, in twenty-six panels displayed along the stairwell, which incorporated hundreds of fragments of the original.<sup>18</sup> Both the map and the reliefs also reflect the museum's emphasis on the role of antiquities as sources of historical information, but, as was done with the aforementioned inscriptions, care was taken to exhibit the map fragments in an aesthetically pleasing way.

A final group of objects that Benedict obtained for the museum is indicative of growing interest in the ancient world beyond Greece and Rome, in this case in Egypt. While there had been Egyptian monuments in Rome since antiquity, most notably obelisks, the distinction between these and other ancient Egyptianizing works was not always clear. Egyptian or Egyptianizing sculpture was displayed at the Campidoglio even before the founding of the museum: the first works the visitor still encounters on entering are the two sphinxes flanking the bottom of the staircase that leads up the hill, which were installed there in the late sixteenth century. Framing the entrance to the courtyard were two Egyptian idols that were moved from the courtyard of the Palazzo dei Conservatori, where they had been displayed in the early eighteenth century (see [Figure 14.3](#)).<sup>19</sup> The placement of these figures ahead of



Figure 14.3 Hubert Robert, *A Draftsman in the Capitoline Museum*, ca. 1763, red chalk, 33.5 × 45 cm. Valence, Musée de Valence.

Greco-Roman antiquities, with all its implications of artistic and political succession, was surely deliberate.

According to the 1750 guidebook, Benedict acquired a group of Egyptian statues from an excavation carried out by the Jesuits in the ruins of the Canopus at Hadrian's Villa, so named for an Egyptian city, and had them installed, together with other Egyptian antiquities he purchased, in a room on the museum's ground floor adjacent to the courtyard that was called the Canopo.<sup>20</sup> From the villa came five statues in black marble, decorated with hieroglyphs, which stood in five of the ten niches lining the walls of the room. Other objects in the Canopo included a two-faced herm representing Isis, the Egyptian goddess of the earth, and Osiris, her husband, who was the god of the underworld and fertility. There was also a crocodile in parian marble, a statue of the jackal-headed god Anubis, a dog-headed deity in basalt, a canopic god, and a bas-relief of a scene set on the Nile River. This room is arguably the first example of Egyptian works grouped together for

display – including ones excavated from a single site – allowing viewers to appreciate them in a systematic manner, like the installation of the emperor busts. It might also have inspired the exhibition of groups of Egyptian antiquities in later collections, like those at the Villa Albani and the Villa Borghese. At the latter villa the room in which they were installed was decorated in a fashionable Egyptianizing style that established a vogue for such ornamentation throughout Europe.<sup>21</sup>

Expanding on the exhibition strategies introduced during Clement XII's reign, the Capitoline's innovative displays continued to provide a variety of educational opportunities. As more and more antiquities could be systematically viewed and compared in such installations, a better sense of the chronology, regional variety, and stylistic evolution of ancient sculpture began to emerge, contributing to the advancement of both aesthetics and connoisseurship. As aesthetic models, the Capitoline antiquities also played an important role in artistic education, especially the most acclaimed works, which, together with other canonical masterpieces of ancient statuary, were understood to illustrate the principles upon which early modern art was founded.<sup>22</sup> Artists and art students alike studied and drew the museum's antiquities, though permission to sketch them, at least on the *piano nobile* of the Palazzo Nuovo, had to be obtained from the president.<sup>23</sup> On the ground floor this could be done without his permission, probably because the entrances and courtyards of Roman palaces were traditionally unrestricted to the public. Two well-known drawings, by Charles Natoire and Hubert Robert (Figure 14.3), depict artists drawing in the museum's atrium.<sup>24</sup>

In facilitating the aesthetic appreciation and connoisseurship of ancient art, the Capitoline displays contributed much to the development of antiquarianism; in another way, the museum's objects did so as sources of historical information. The Capitoline's international audience, which had been classically educated and regarded Roman history as a common cultural heritage, would have been inclined to relate the antiquities they saw to ancient texts, both historical and literary.<sup>25</sup> As we have seen, the museum's installations offered visitors opportunities to rehearse their classical learning and apply it. However, they were also designed to inform and correct the prevailing understanding of the distant past. In the course of the early modern period antiquarians came to rely increasingly on their observations of ancient statuary and the evidence of inscriptions to gather historical information, combining such knowledge with traditional texts.<sup>26</sup> This approach

to the museum's collection was modelled in its early catalogues and guidebooks that offered rich historical contextualization of the works, citing ancient sources as well as early modern scholarship while also considering issues of provenance and quality.<sup>27</sup> Such guides had been written for Roman collections of antiquities since at least the seventeenth century.<sup>28</sup> Because they tended to be small enough to be used on site, they were generally not illustrated and usually suggested specific routes through the galleries, discussing the works in each room in correlation with their installation.

During Benedict's reign a large, four-volume catalogue of the Capitoline collection began publication, the first three volumes of which were written by the eminent scholar, Giovanni Gaetano Bottari, who was a close associate of the pope.<sup>29</sup> This ambitious catalogue derived partly from the older tradition of albums or books of prints illustrating works of art in one or more collections, sometimes with descriptive text.<sup>30</sup> However, Bottari's volumes were more scholarly and comprehensive, for they included not only an engraving of each object but also a substantial entry on it, typically offering a more detailed discussion than one would find in a traditional guidebook. This pioneering museum publication became a model for subsequent catalogues in its erudition and organization. The Capitoline catalogue was also unlike the usual guidebooks in other ways. Too large to be used on site but well illustrated, it functioned as a "virtual" museum. Moreover, its organization deviated from the installation of the collection by grouping the entries and illustrations strictly by the typologies and subjects of the works. The first two volumes were devoted to the busts, the third to full-length statues, and the fourth, published after Bottari's death, to reliefs and the objects they decorated. This arrangement allowed readers to easily compare works of the same type. Those wealthy enough to own the catalogue were thus able to develop antiquarian knowledge at home as well as by visiting the museum. No less important to such studies would have been the inscriptions, published in a separate catalogue in 1775 by Francesco Eugenio Guasco, the fourth president of the museum.<sup>31</sup>

The cost of producing the Capitoline catalogue was subsidized by funds from the papal lottery and treasury.<sup>32</sup> Benedict also supported antiquarian studies by establishing an academy in 1740 that was dedicated to Roman history and antiquities, one of four academies he founded, the other three of which focused on ecclesiastical issues.<sup>33</sup> Both Bottari and Lucatelli were members of the *Accademia di Storia Romano*

(Academy of Roman History). The pope may have thought that other members would mobilize the scholarly potential of the statuary and inscriptions on the Campidoglio, too, but this was not to be the case. As Maria Pia Donato has shown, most of the group's academicians produced very traditional scholarship, relying solely on literary sources.<sup>34</sup> Nonetheless, more innovative antiquarians used the Capitoline collections to benefit their studies, as the pontiff had hoped. For example, the French abbé Jean-Jacques Barthélemy noted in his correspondence with the antiquarian comte de Caylus that he had verified the findings of his highly regarded treatise of 1754 on the Palmyrene alphabet against two Palmyrene inscriptions displayed in the museum.<sup>35</sup> It was even proposed to the abbé that a copy of his treatise be placed in the Capitoline, near the inscriptions, for the use of visitors, indicating the kind of active educational experience the museum worked to foster.

### **The Founding of the Gallerie de' Quadri**

Even more impressive than his contributions to the Museo Capitolino was Benedict's founding of the Gallerie de' Quadri (Picture Galleries; now known as the Pinacoteca Capitolina) in the Palazzo dei Conservatori, a collection of Renaissance and baroque paintings that, together with the antiquities in the Palazzo Nuovo, formed a "complete" collection of the sort amassed by Rome's noble families. The emphasis on collecting ancient sculpture and early modern painting but exhibiting the two classes of objects separately set a precedent that has proven definitive for later public art museums, still observed, for example, at the Louvre.<sup>36</sup> In establishing the galleries, Benedict was motivated by some of the same factors that prompted his involvement with the statuary – a desire to preserve and display the Roman patrimony and, in so doing, to make educational opportunities more widely available.

Following the strategy that guided the formation of the antiquities collection, the pope was able to quickly amass a large and impressive group of paintings by purchasing a quantity of works from two older collections that might otherwise have been sold abroad.<sup>37</sup> In 1748 he bought 187 pictures for 25,000 scudi from the Sacchetti family, whose collection was particularly abundant in Emilian paintings, especially those of celebrated Bolognese artists of the seventeenth century, as well as in the works of the acclaimed Tuscan artist, Pietro da Cortona. In 1750 Benedict bought 126 pictures for 16,000 scudi from the Pio di Savoia da Carpi family, whose collection was most admired

for its sixteenth-century Venetian paintings. The resulting group of 313 paintings was dominated, according to the taste of the period, by Italian pictures of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially of religious subjects, which in part reflected the interests not only of the patron but also of the founders of the Sacchetti and Pio collections, both of whom were cardinals.

The emphasis on Italian Renaissance and baroque art in the Capitoline galleries and in the collections from which the pictures came was determined by the precepts of academic art theory first formulated by Italian critics in the fifteenth century. Here, "academic" denotes the approach to art sustained by the institutional framework of art academies and the theoretical system they propagated. Academic theorists understood the goal of the visual arts to be "to instruct and to delight" and typically analysed or judged the effectiveness of pictures in this regard by reference to a more or less standard list of the constituent parts of painting: design or drawing, colouring, composition, decorum, expression, grace, imitation, invention, proportion, and beauty. Upholding different artists' paintings as exemplary of one or more of these aspects, they would imply or directly make comparisons among the works.<sup>38</sup> For example, the pictures of Michelangelo, Raphael, and other central Italians would invariably be admired as models of good design or drawing, whereas those of Titian and the Venetians would be valued for their colouring.

Based on these criteria, a canon was formed that esteemed most highly the works of Italian painters of the High Renaissance and the early seventeenth century. For eighteenth-century theorists, the canon typically consisted of the antique (which, as has been noted, was understood to provide the foundation for early modern art), Raphael, and other High Renaissance masters – usually Titian and Correggio – at the top. Immediately below them were the artists of the so-called Bolognese school, especially Annibale Carracci, Guido Reni, and Domenichino.<sup>39</sup> Rich in fine examples of Venetian and Bolognese painting, the Capitoline collection well illustrated the principles of academic art theory.

In acquiring the Sacchetti and Pio collections and installing the galleries, the pope depended on a close and well-informed group of advisors, particularly Cardinal Girolamo Colonna, the papal majordomo, and Cardinal Silvio Valenti Gonzaga, Benedict's secretary of state and himself a noted collector.<sup>40</sup> As early as 1747 Valenti Gonzaga and Colonna determined that the space in the Palazzo dei Conservatori was inadequate for the kind of spacious, light-filled picture galleries

that they and the pontiff must have envisioned. As a result, two large, rectangular rooms with high ceilings and large windows, designed by the papal architect Ferdinando Fuga, were constructed on the palace's *piano nobile*.<sup>41</sup> One of the galleries was built over the Capitoline archive and simply decorated with a bust of Benedict and an inscription honouring his contribution. The other was erected above a studio for life drawing that was established by the pope, a project discussed below.

The installation of the paintings was supervised by Giovanni Paolo Panini and Giacomo Zoboli, two prominent painters who were members of the Accademia di San Luca, the Roman art academy. In 1755 Joseph Voght, a painter from Bohemia, was appointed *custode* (caretaker) of the galleries and the life-drawing studio.<sup>42</sup> During the period the caretakers, curators, and directors of picture collections were often painters themselves, if they were not scholars or connoisseurs, and painters continued to be chosen to oversee the Capitoline galleries well into the nineteenth century. The Capitoline picture galleries opened to the public in 1751, and although the administration of the Gallerie de' Quadri and the Museo Capitolino was separate, the *custode* – and later the director – of the galleries reported to the president of the museum, who in turn reported to the conservators and the pope.<sup>43</sup>

The contents of the Capitoline galleries were first published in Venuiti's 1766 guidebook to Rome, which listed the pictures on every wall, but did not indicate their specific arrangement.<sup>44</sup> Only the name of the artist and the subject were included, such minimal information being typical of early guidebooks and even catalogues of painting collections; a catalogue with detailed entries on each of the Capitoline pictures was not published until the late nineteenth century.<sup>45</sup> Like the display of paintings in most Roman collections of the period, the pictures do not seem to have been grouped in any systematic way by artist, school, genre, or subject, but with a total of 298 works in both rooms the walls must have been filled from floor to ceiling.<sup>46</sup> Even if dizzying, the organization was most likely visually harmonious, as suggested in paintings of galleries such as the well-known 1749 image of the picture gallery of Cardinal Valenti Gonzaga by Panini, who thus was familiar with this kind of installation (Plate 14).<sup>47</sup> In the image paintings of various sizes and formats are arranged in symmetrical groupings, larger canvases forming centerpieces around which smaller ones are arrayed, which seems to have been a common exhibition strategy.

Picture galleries such as Valenti Gonzaga's and the one at the Campidoglio were designed to encourage visitors to practise and enhance

their connoisseurship by providing abundant opportunities for comparing a rich variety of personal, regional, and historical styles, following the principles of academic art theory. Informed of these principles through the many treatises circulating throughout Europe in the eighteenth century, educated viewers were expected to exercise their skills in conversation before the paintings.<sup>48</sup> Although we do not know how Venuti's lists corresponded to the pictures' disposition, they include some works listed in consecutive order that would have formed ideal pairings for comparison. On the first wall of the first gallery, for example, were displayed two images of St Mary Magdalene, one by Francesco Albani (c. 1640) and the other by Domenico Tintoretto (c. 1598), which allowed visitors to assess the relative merits of the artists' individual, period, and regional styles, Bolognese and Venetian, respectively, in their treatment of the same subject. Also on that wall were hung two early to mid-sixteenth-century images of the Holy Family by the Emilian painter Benvenuto Garofalo, thus affording viewers the possibility of comparing pictures on the same theme by the same artist.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, on the last wall in the second gallery there were six small *vedute* (views) of Rome, painted in tempera between 1682 and 1688 by Gaspar van Wittel, a Dutch landscape painter known in Italy as Gaspare Vanvitelli.

The emphasis on the formal elements of painting in academic art theory does not mean there was no interest in what we would call "content"; on the contrary, one of the essential aspects noted above was *invenzione* (invention), which designated composition or the treatment of subject matter. It is clear that some of the aforementioned groupings at the Gallerie de' Quadri would have prompted reflection on the subjects of the pictures as well as their styles. There were other examples, such as the "pairing" of Cortona's *Rape of the Sabines* (c. 1630–1; Plate 15) and the *Romulus and Remus* (c. 1612–14; Plate 16) by Peter Paul Rubens and his workshop on the second wall of the first room. These two famous Roman narratives were especially appropriate to the Capitoline galleries, considering the location of the iconic she-wolf with the twins at the Campidoglio. Also paired were paintings on the fourth wall of the first room that Venuti attributed to Cortona: *David Fighting Goliath* and *David Returning in Triumph with the Head of Goliath*. On the same wall was another picture he ascribed to Cortona: *David Beheading Goliath*, paired with what Venuti called Carlo Maratti's copy of Guido Reni's *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*.<sup>50</sup> Viewers would also have been expected



to form their own pairings or groupings as they moved about the galleries.

Venuti's lists also indicated paintings considered to be highlights of the Capitoline collection by describing each as "*un gran quadro*" (a great picture). In addition to Cortona's *Rape of the Sabines*, these included Reni's *Bacchus and Ariadne* (c. 1619–20), Cortona's *Battle of Alexander the Great and Darius at Issus* (c. 1635), and Paolo Veronese's *Rape of Europa* (c. 1580), the last two of which were paired on the first wall of second gallery.<sup>51</sup> On the lists as well were a few high-quality copies of famous pictures that enriched the galleries by substituting for unobtainable originals. The copy of Reni's *Judith* has already been noted. Another was a copy attributed to Cortona of Raphael's acclaimed *Galatea*. Also noteworthy in this regard was Maria Felice Tibaldi Subleyras's miniature watercolour copy of 1748 of a celebrated painting of *Christ in the House of the Pharisee* by her more famous late husband, the French painter Pierre Subleyras. It was unusual among pictures at the Capitoline in being by both a woman and a living artist.<sup>52</sup>

### The Establishment of the *Accademia del Nudo*

The *Gallerie de' Quadri* was intended not only for the benefit of those who wished to exercise their skills in connoisseurship, but also for the education of artists. As models of academic principles, the same paintings that guided viewers in appreciating art were meant to instruct artists in its creation. Benedict duly appointed times for young artists, Roman and foreign, to draw and copy the Capitoline's pictures, a practice already permitted for the antiquities. In the academic tradition *disegno*, which designates both drawing and design, was the fundamental skill that underlay all the visual arts. In addition to developing their own personal styles by drawing, literally, from exemplary works of the past, aspiring artists were also to draw directly from nature and, synthesizing all these sources, create original styles that were both idealized and naturalistic, in the spirit of the most acclaimed artists of the past. While artists had been sketching landscapes from the observation of nature for centuries, the greater emphasis was traditionally placed on drawing the human figure, a practice essential to various genres of painting, including the most prestigious one of depicting historical, mythological, or religious narratives. Life drawing was thus a basic element of artistic training in the highest genre of painting.

In the mid-eighteenth century Rome was considered to be the place where young artists went to learn drawing and improve their skills. There were various venues where they could practice life drawing: the two "official" art academies, the Accademia di San Luca and the Académie de France à Rome (French Academy in Rome), academies held by leading Roman painters that met in the evenings, and independent classes arranged by students themselves.<sup>53</sup> Neither the life-drawing classes at the Accademia di San Luca nor those organized by students met on a regular basis, and painters usually charged a small fee. In order to make life drawing more accessible to young artists, in 1754 the pope established a studio, the Pontificia Accademia detta del Nudo (Papal Academy, called [Academy] of the Nude), known as the Accademia del Nudo, on the Campidoglio, where art students could draw posed male models and attend free of charge.<sup>54</sup>

Benedict has traditionally been thought to have founded the Accademia del Nudo at the urging of three men: Cardinal Valenti Gonzaga, Monsignore Giovanni Maria Riminaldi, *auditore* (magistrate) of the Camerlengo, and the painter Francesco Mancini, who in 1754 was *principe* (president) of the Accademia di San Luca.<sup>55</sup> Valenti Gonzaga's involvement is cited in early sources. However, Christopher M.S. Johns has observed that from 1753 to 1754 the cardinal was critically ill and preoccupied with other concerns.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, drafts of the papal brief establishing the Accademia del Nudo, uncovered by Peter Björn Kerber in the Vatican archives, are addressed to Valenti Gonzaga, possibly indicating that the pope may have played a more active role in conceiving the project than has previously been assumed.<sup>57</sup>

The studio took place in a large oval room, designed by the painter Panini, which was located beneath the second Capitoline picture gallery. There students could view the live model, who posed on a small platform in the centre, from all sides.<sup>58</sup> The models were male only, as were the students permitted to draw them, a standard practice during the period throughout Europe. Cardinal Girolamo Colonna was named protector of the academy, but it came under the jurisdiction of the Accademia di San Luca, whose members supervised the models and the students. Every year ten members of the Accademia di San Luca, both painters and sculptors, were chosen by the *principe* from among the most prominent academicians to direct the classes for one month each, which they did without payment, though they did receive silver medals for their efforts. The professors would pose the models, changing the pose every Monday, attend sessions three times a week,

and correct students' drawings, or clay models in the case of sculptors, once a week.

Benedict initially allocated 300 scudi a year to pay for models, benches, lights, fires, custodial care, and competitions; in 1756 he allotted an additional 130 scudi annually for the academy's expenses.<sup>59</sup> The Accademia del Nudo was open ten months a year, closing in October, which was when the papal court usually vacationed, and in February, for Carnival. There were two terms, fall/winter and spring/summer; classes were held in the early afternoon during the former and in the morning during the latter. In the summer term students drew the nude model and in the winter the model was draped. Each month that the academy was open competitions were held to which students submitted their work from a given week, and the winners were awarded silver medals.<sup>60</sup>

The Accademia del Nudo, attended by artists from all over Europe, underscored the time-honoured notion of Rome as an international artistic capital, the source of sound and universal academic practice based on *disegno*. In the 1780s, the German painter and theorist Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein observed: "Rome is the place where one learns to draw."<sup>61</sup> So noteworthy was Lambertini's academy that a full account of it appears in a 1775 guidebook to the Capitoline Hill, even though it was not open to the public.<sup>62</sup>

Through Benedict's patronage young artists had access on the Campidoglio to the ideal models for an academic education: nature, in the form of the nude; ancient sculpture; and some of the greatest examples of early modern painting. Although seldom encountered today, this conjunction of museum and academy provided an unprecedented opportunity for art students. In particular, the pope recognized the didactic significance of the relationship of the Gallerie de' Quadri and the Accademia del Nudo in the drafts of his brief to Valenti Gonzaga, as did the author of the aforementioned 1775 guide.<sup>63</sup> Such relationships came to be imitated by public art museums throughout Europe, for example, when the Royal Academy of Arts and its school were located in the eastern wing of London's National Gallery in 1838.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, one of the chief arguments for the creation of a national museum in France in the early 1790s was to give artists access to a wide variety of models from which to develop their talents in the best academic tradition.<sup>65</sup> In partnering with academies or displaying academic ideals, museums were able to play an active role in the production of modern art, linking it to the works of the past on exhibition.

In founding the Accademia del Nudo, Benedict clearly hoped to influence artistic production in eighteenth-century Rome for the better. As Johns has observed, the pope noted in the drafts of his brief to Valenti Gonzaga that contemporary Roman art had fallen into decline, and that he intended the Accademia del Nudo to be a vehicle for its revival.<sup>66</sup> Another academic activity that took place on the Campidoglio and focused attention on artistic training was the award ceremonies for the periodic student competitions of the Accademia di San Luca, known as the *concorsi clementini* because they had been instituted by Pope Clement XI Albani (r. 1700–21) in 1702.<sup>67</sup> The *concorsi* had lapsed for several years but were revived in 1750 with Benedict's support. Open to all aspiring artists residing in Rome, the *concorsi*, like the Accademia del Nudo, emphasized the importance of Rome as an international training ground. Students competed according to medium – painting, sculpture, or architecture – each of which was further divided into three classes, corresponding to the difficulty of the subjects assigned, which were announced in advance. In the painters' division, for example, young artists competing in the first and most challenging class entered drawings of historical subjects, while third-class contestants usually copied antiquities, often works in the Museo Capitolino.<sup>68</sup> The award ceremonies imitated ancient and early modern ones during which poet laureates had been crowned on the Campidoglio. Not only were the winners, who represented the future of art, announced, but poems and orations by academicians or *litterati* associated with the academy were read at the elaborate festivities, honouring the visual arts at a place where they were displayed and studied.



The Museo Capitolino and its allied institutions formed a leading-edge centre for art and antiquarian education, which operated simultaneously on different levels, demonstrating the complex, interrelated cultural functions that museums could perform. Benedict XIV's contributions to this phenomenon can hardly be exaggerated. Preserving and exhibiting their cultural capital, mid-Settecento popes used the Capitoline both to represent Rome's legendary grandeur and authority and to display themselves as the enlightened, modern stewards of tradition. In so doing, the pontiffs, especially Benedict, were clearly involved and well-informed patrons, aided by the able advisors they chose. Lambertini also selected the museum's second president, in the process overriding

the conservators, who were charged with choosing a candidate for the pope to confirm. When Capponi died in 1746, the conservators nominated Nicolò Soderini, but Benedict instead appointed Giovanni Pietro Lucatelli, his private secretary (the same Lucatelli to whom a guidebook to the museum was attributed), which afforded him close control of the Capitoline.<sup>69</sup>

It was the popes themselves, moreover, who provided the museum's essential and substantial financial support and all that that implied, and they were duly celebrated for their efforts, especially in guidebooks. The earliest published guide to the Capitoline was Giambattista Gaddi's *Il Campidoglio illustrato* (1736), the largest portion of a book by Gaddi discussing architectural projects commissioned by Clement XII and completed during his reign.<sup>70</sup> Contextualizing Clement's establishment of the museum, Gaddi's book makes clear that it was part of a broader program of enlightened patronage, including the lumberyard where wood was stored for public use and the prison built for the rehabilitation of women. This offers us a different picture from the one often presented of the blind and feeble Clement, manipulated by the clever Capponi. Benedict has fared better, and we can easily see that his initiatives, like Clement's, derived from a larger vision for the arts on the Capitoline Hill.

The broadest implication of studying the founding and development of the Museo Capitolino by the Corsini and Lambertini's pontiffs is that, posing serious challenges to the traditional narrative of the Louvre as the archetypal public art museum, it also calls into question more conventional notions about the emergence of the modern world – even about the nature of modernity itself. Public art museums are quintessentially modern institutions, and one of the reasons the Louvre has come to occupy such iconic status among them is that its opening in 1793 was coincident with the French Revolution, even though its planning was begun long before.<sup>71</sup> After the founding of the Capitoline in 1733, a number of other museums throughout Europe were opened to the public, including the British Museum in 1759, the Uffizi Gallery in 1769, the Vatican's Museo Pio-Clementino in 1770, the Kassel Picture Gallery in 1775, Vienna's Belvedere Museum in 1776, and Stockholm's Royal Museum in 1792.<sup>72</sup> I would therefore argue that the Louvre should be seen as playing an important role in a larger process rather than representing its inception, an insight that displaces the motivation for this new type of institution from revolutionary politics onto other factors, such as the internationalization of Enlightenment values

and the growth of cultural tourism, as in the case of the Museo Capitolino. What would naturally follow from this understanding would be the realization that the true archetype of the public art museum was created not by a modern revolutionary government but by a religious monarchy of the *ancien régime*, the papacy.

## NOTES

- 1 For the emergence and development of early public art museums, see Paul, *The First Modern Museums of Art*, with extensive bibliography.
- 2 For the bronzes donated by Sixtus and their display on the Campidoglio, see Christian, *Empire without End*, 103–19. For the early history of exhibition at the site, see also Carole Paul, “The Capitoline Hill,” and “Capitoline Museum, Rome: Civic Identity and Personal Cultivation,” in Paul, *The First Modern Museums*, 20–4.
- 3 It has recently been proposed that the *lupa* is medieval; see Carruba, *La lupa capitolina*. The sculptures of the twins, dating from the fifteenth century, are by Antonio Pollaiuolo.
- 4 For earlier accounts of the establishment of the museum, see Tittoni, *Il Palazzo dei Conservatori e il Palazzo Nuovo in Campidoglio*; Benedetti, *Il Palazzo Nuovo nella Piazza del Campidoglio*; Paul, “The Capitoline Hill”; Franceschini and Vernesi, *Statue di Campidoglio*; Minor, *The Culture of Architecture*, 187–215; Collins, “A Nation of Statues”; and Paul, “Capitoline Museum,” 20–45. See also Johns, *The Visual Culture of Catholic Enlightenment*, chaps 3–4; I am grateful to the author for his generosity in allowing me to read his work before it was published. For the most recent comprehensive catalogue of the collection at the Palazzo Nuovo, see La Rocca and Presicce, *Musei Capitolini*. The second part of this catalogue has not yet appeared.
- 5 Although sculpture decorated some of the palace's rooms from the late seventeenth century, it was the purchase of the Albani collection that gave the impetus to Capponi's project.
- 6 For bibliography on Capponi, see Franceschini and Vernesi, *Statue di Campidoglio*, 20–3, 25; Minor, *Culture of Architecture*, 265–6nn1–3. As is well known, the Albani collection was purchased for 66,000 scudi; see Paul, “Capitoline Museum,” 42n14, for the documentation.
- 7 For documentation on the founding of the museum, see Paul, “Capitoline Museum,” 24–5nn14–17.
- 8 See Johns, *Visual Culture*, 132–3, for an excellent discussion of this issue, especially Clement's efforts to prohibit exportation. As Johns observes, the

- popes' success in protecting the patrimony from exportation, especially the greatest works, is better than has been credited.
- 9 For the renovation of the Palazzo Nuovo and the early installation of the collection, see Paul, "Capitoline Museum," 24–38; see also various publications cited in n4, above, especially Collins, "A Nation of Statues."
  - 10 [Lucatelli], *Museo Capitolino*.
  - 11 Franco Prinzi cites documentary evidence that the volume was actually written by Ridolfino Venuti and published by Lucatelli; see Prinzi, "Ridolfino Venuti tra antiquaria e archeologia," 10. Venuti's account of the Campidoglio and the Capitoline Museum appears in his *Accurata, e succinta descrizione topografica e istorica di Roma moderna*, 2: 290–340.
  - 12 For the list, which does not include all of Benedict's acquisitions, see [Lucatelli], *Museo Capitolino*, 69–71. Some of the objects on the list, as well as others, are found in a manuscript note on works that Benedict added to the collection; see Archivio Storico Capitolino, Rome, Archivio Cardelli.
  - 13 Johns, *Visual Culture*, chap. 4, discusses Benedict's generosity towards the museum and his active involvement as its patron; Clement's expenses were funded by the papal lottery.
  - 14 Johns, *ibid.*, 161–7, notes that Benedict acquired works for the museum in three different ways: by purchase, by regifting presents, and by donating antiquities from excavations sponsored by the papacy.
  - 15 For the works acquired by Benedict, see Rocca and Presicce, *Musei Capitolini*; and [Lucatelli], *Museo Capitolino*.
  - 16 For the tables, see Montagu, s.v. "Francesco Giardoni: Tavolino," 276.
  - 17 This information is written by hand in a copy of [Lucatelli], *Museo Capitolino*, 71, in the Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (83-B1016).
  - 18 See Franceschini and Vernesi, *Statue di Campidoglio*, 110–13; [Lucatelli], *Museo Capitolino*, 17, 69; and Colini, "Scoperta e vicende dei frammenti." The map is now in the Museum of Roman Civilization in the city's southern suburb of EUR. For the reliefs see also Franceschini and Vernesi, *Statue di Campidoglio*, 118, 120–1; and [Lucatelli], *Museo Capitolino*, 13, 69.
  - 19 These were two of four such Egyptian statues that Pope Clement XI Albani had acquired in 1714; see [Lucatelli], *Museo Capitolino*, 9.
  - 20 For the Canopo, see [Lucatelli], *Museo Capitolino*, 15–16, 69.
  - 21 For the Stanza Egizia at Villa Borghese and its influence, see Paul, *The Borghese Collections*, 196–201, with additional bibliography.
  - 22 See *ibid.*, 39.
  - 23 See Paul, "Capitoline Museum," 27n31, for the documentation.

- 24 For Charles Natoire's *Courtyard of the Capitoline Museum* (Paris, Musée du Louvre) of 1759 and Hubert Robert's *A Draughtsman in the Capitoline Museum* (Valence, France, Musée de Valence) of ca. 1763, see Paul, "Capitoline Museum," 28–30.
- 25 For a more extensive treatment, see Paul, *Borghese Collections*, 35–42.
- 26 See the classic article by Arnaldo Momigliano, "Ancient History and the Antiquarian"; Momigliano describes a process that began in the Renaissance.
- 27 See Paul, "Capitoline Museum," 30–7.
- 28 Manilli, *Villa Borghese fuori di Porta Pinciana*, may have been the first example of a guidebook devoted to a collection at a single site.
- 29 Bottari and Foggini, *Del Museo Capitolino* (Foggini wrote Vol. 4). Giovanni Domenico Campiglia made preparatory drawings of the works in the Capitoline collection for the engravings in the catalogue.
- 30 For the older tradition, see Marchesano, "The Düsseldorf Gallery." The immediate predecessor to Bottari's catalogue would have been Gori, *Museum Florentinum*, which featured a selection of objects from the Uffizi Gallery and other Florentine collections.
- 31 Guasco, *Musei Capitolini antiquae inscriptiones*.
- 32 See Minor, *The Culture of Architecture*, 211n81, for the documentation.
- 33 See Donato, *Accademie romane*, 77–115, 101–5 for the academy of Roman history.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 102–3.
- 35 Barthélemy, *Voyage en Italie*, 139 (letter 24, 9 June 1756); for the treatise, see Barthélemy, *Reflexions sur l'alphabet et sur la langue*.
- 36 For the history of this exhibition strategy, see Paul, *First Modern Museums*, 1–19.
- 37 For the history of the Pinacoteca and a catalogue of the paintings, see Guarino and Masini, *Pinacoteca Capitolina*. For the acquisition of the pictures, see especially Sergio Guarini, "I quadri Sacchetti e Pio," in Guarino and Masini, *Pinacoteca Capitolina*, 14–25; and Johns, *Visual Culture*, 167–78. For the financing, management, and operations of the Pinacoteca, see Marinetti, *Pinacoteca capitolina*.
- 38 The classic discussion is in Lee, *Ut Pictura Poesis*.
- 39 This hierarchy was built on much contested earlier formulations, particularly in the seventeenth century; see Warwick, *The Arts of Collecting*, 132n5, 136. For a discussion of this tradition as it evolved into the eighteenth century, see Paul, "Pietro da Cortona."
- 40 Valenti Gonzaga has traditionally been given most of the credit. See Johns, *Visual Culture*, 168, who notes, however, that Colonna's name appears more frequently in archival sources concerning the galleries.



- 41 For the construction of the galleries and the later history of the Pinacoteca, see Patrizia Masini, "Da Galleria de'quadri a Pinacoteca," in Guarino and Masini, *Pinacoteca Capitolina*, 28–39.
- 42 Marinetti, *Pinacoteca capitolina*, 32–3.
- 43 That the director of the painting galleries continued to report to the president of the Museo Capitolino is clear, for example, from letters from the 1830s and 1850s between the director, the painter Agostino Tofanelli, and the president, Giuseppe Melchiorri; see Archivio Storico Capitolino, Rome, Presidenza del Museo Capitolino, buste 21–4.
- 44 See Venuti, *Roma moderna*, 2: 330–40.
- 45 See Paul, *First Modern Museums*, xvii, for early catalogues and guidebooks of collections.
- 46 The lists in Venuti's *Roma moderna*, 2: 330–40, indicate there were 154 paintings in the first room and 144 in the second, almost all acquired from the Sacchetti and Pio collections.
- 47 See Zafran, *Renaissance to Rococo*, 84–5, cat. no. 23; Morselli and Vodret, *Ritratto di una collezione*, esp. 143–51. Scholars have noted the exaggerated grandeur of the space in the image, and we do not know what the actual installation looked like, but Panini and Zoboli had in fact organized the pictures in Valenti Gonzaga's gallery.
- 48 For the relationship among academic art theory, discursive practices, and the installation of picture collections in the eighteenth century, see Paul, *First Modern Museums*, 1–8.
- 49 There is now only one *Holy Family* by Garofalo in the Pinacoteca Capitolina; see Guarino and Masini, *Pinacoteca Capitolina*, 110.
- 50 There are actually two paintings of David in the Pinacoteca Capitolina that might have been attributed to Cortona: Giovanni Francesco Romanelli's *David* (with the head of Goliath; c. 1638) and Guillaume Courtois's *David Beheading Goliath* (c. 1655?); see Guarino and Masini, *Pinacoteca Capitolina*, 406, 418–21. The *Judith* is attributed to Maratti; see Guarino and Masini, *Pinacoteca Capitolina*, 320.
- 51 Judging by Venuti's description, the *Bacchus and Ariadne*, no longer in the Pinacoteca Capitolina, may have been a copy of Reni's original of 1637–40, depicting the couple with various figures on the island of Naxos; it was destroyed in 1650. The collection is rich in other works by the artist.
- 52 The copy of Raphael's *Galatea* is no longer in the Pinacoteca Capitolina. For the miniature by Tibaldi Subleyras, see Guarino and Masini, *Pinacoteca Capitolina*, 496–7.
- 53 See Edgar Peters Bowron, "Academic Life Drawing in Rome, 1750–1790," in Campbell and Carlson, *Visions of Antiquity*, 75–85.

- 54 For the Accademia del Nudo, see Liliana Barroero, "I primi anni della scuola del Nudo in Campidoglio," in Maino, *Benedetto XIV e le arti del disegno*, 367–84, with additional bibliography. The Accademia del Nudo was founded in a papal brief of 6 April 1754, *Gymnasium publicum seu Academia in Aedibus Capitolinus erigitur*.
- 55 Bowron, "Academic Life Drawing," 78.
- 56 See Johns, *Visual Culture*, 178–9.
- 57 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Fondo Benedetto XIV, Bolle e Costituzioni; I am grateful to Peter Björn Kerber for his generosity in sharing these documents with me. Johns, *Visual Culture*, 179, partially transcribes and translates the last draft.
- 58 The Accademia del Nudo was moved to the suppressed convent of S. Maria Maddalena delle Convertite, on the Corso, in 1804.
- 59 For the additional allotment, see Marinetti, *Pinacoteca capitolina*, 195–8.
- 60 Regulations for the competitions were drawn up in 1759; see *ibid.*, 198–204.
- 61 Quoted in Marsha Morton, "Imitating the Ancients': The Revival of Art in Northern Europe," in Campbell and Carlson, *Visions of Antiquity*, 48.
- 62 Lucatelli, *Descrizione delle statue*. The discussion of the Gallerie de' Quadri, 141–64, is taken directly from Venuti, *Roma moderna*, 2: 330–40.
- 63 Lucatelli, *Descrizione delle statue*, 142: after discussing the Gallerie de' Quadri, he turns to the Accademia del Nudo, "la quale fu provvidamente eretta da Benedetto XIV, affinché quelli, che imparano il disegno, possano studiare in un istesso luogo la Natura, e ciò chè ha saputo far l'Arte." See also Silvia Bordini, "'Studiare in un istesso luogo la Natura e ciò che ha saputo far l'Arte': Il museo e l'educazione degli artisti nella politica culturale di Benedetto XIV," in Maino, *Benedetto XIV*, 385–94.
- 64 Brandon Taylor, "National Gallery, London: For 'all ranks and degrees of men,'" in Paul, *First Modern Museums*, 271.
- 65 Andrew McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre*, esp. 99–103.
- 66 See Johns, *Visual Culture*, 179–80.
- 67 See Cipriani, "L'Accademia di San Luca," and *I premiati dell'Accademia*.
- 68 See Cipriani and Valeriani, *I disegni di figura nell'Archivio Storico*.
- 69 See Archivio Storico Capitolino, Archivio della Camera Capitolina. The office of president was a lifetime appointment.
- 70 See Gaddi, *Roma nobilitata nelle sue fabbriche dalla santità di nostro signore Clemente XII*, 129–210.
- 71 For the Louvre and its planning, see McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre*.
- 72 See Paul, *First Modern Museums*.

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## 15 Papal Diplomacy and the Catholic Enlightenment: Benedict XIV's *Caffeaus* in the Quirinal Gardens

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CHRISTOPHER M.S. JOHNS

On 3 November 1744, Charles of Naples, occupant of the Neapolitan throne as Charles VII since 1733 (later Charles III of Spain in 1759 after the death of his half-brother, Ferdinand VI), was granted a papal audience. Elated by a victory over the Austrians at the battle of Velletri a few miles from Rome in the ongoing War of Austrian Succession, the Bourbon monarch had urgently requested a meeting with Pope Benedict XIV Lambertini. It was the first visit of a reigning Catholic monarch to Rome in almost two centuries. Since so much time had passed since the last royal audience, protocols and an itinerary had to be established in considerable haste, and it is a tribute to the efficiency of the papal functionaries that the affair went off without a hitch. The king's encounter with the pope sheds considerable light on the relationship between the papacy and Catholic monarchs in the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Benedict wanted to put Charles at ease so that important issues could be discussed in a relaxed atmosphere as free from tiresome ceremonial as possible. The Neapolitan sovereign, sensitive to long-standing papal claims that he occupied his throne only as a feudatory of the pope, hoped to meet the Holy Father on equal terms. Both sides were satisfied, and Benedict XIV came off as an avuncular, easy-going pontiff who wanted better relations with the secular rulers and who wished to engage the modern world on its own terms.<sup>1</sup> The choice of the newly constructed *Caffeaus* in the gardens of the Quirinal Palace for the audience was inspired (Figure 15.1). It perfectly suited the purpose and the encounter was arguably a high watermark in enlightened papal relations with Catholic states.

Shortly after election to the throne of Peter in 1740, Benedict XIV decided to erect a small pavilion in the Quirinal gardens as an informal



Figure 15.1 Ferdinando Fuga, *Caffeaus*, Gardens of the Palazzo del Quirinale, façade, 1741–3. Photo: author.

place where he could relax, take refreshments, and entertain friends in a setting largely free from pomp and circumstance. To design and build his modest retreat he hired the prominent architect Ferdinando Fuga, who had worked extensively for Pope Clement XII and his family. Fuga's Corsini undertakings include the pontifical stables and the Palazzo Consulta, both located very near the Palazzo del Quirinale.<sup>2</sup> From its inception, Benedict's pavilion was designated "*Caffeaus*," an Italianization of the English term "coffee house," and this association is crucial to the structure's function and interpretation. Work began in spring 1741 and was completed, except for some of the interior decorations, in 1743. The *Caffeaus* was the earliest architectural initiative of the Lambertini pontificate and the only one imagined primarily for the pope's comfort and pleasure. As I shall argue, it played an important

role in Benedict XIV's engagement with modern, enlightened governance. The pope was an enthusiastic walker and traversing Rome's neighbourhoods brought him into personal contact with the people he ruled. He believed strolling through gardens was both physically and mentally restorative and a means of maintaining good health. Moreover, at the *Caffeaus* Benedict could indulge a fondness for select society of the type he enjoyed before becoming pontiff and that was largely denied him as pope. In so doing, he was participating in a form of homosocial intellectual and cultural exchange widespread in Europe during the Enlightenment.

Prospero Lambertini was exceedingly fond of clerical society. While a rising star in the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Rome, he hosted a *conversazione* frequented by the Maurist celebrity Bernard de Montfaucon (1655–1741) during his stay in Rome. He said of his host: "Lambertini has two souls, one for science, the other for society."<sup>3</sup> The Bolognese canon lawyer was an advocate for reform, moderation, and conciliation with the Catholic powers, even at the price of sacrificing some of the clerical prerogatives that had long hamstrung Roman diplomacy. Although his reputation for liberality, tolerance, and enlightened attitudes was earned, as both priest and pope he had limits. He was willing to recognize the diplomatic agent of Frederick II of Prussia (reigned 1740–86) because it would benefit the monarch's Catholic subjects in recently conquered Silesia, but acquiesced in the placement of Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois* on the *Index of Forbidden Books*.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, a widely publicized epistolary exchange with Voltaire and appreciation of the well-known sceptic's literary talents showed him to advantage in progressive circles, but later the *philosophe's* collected works were put on the *Index* with Benedict's *placet*. He favoured enlightened ecclesiastics such as Lydovico Antonio Muratori and the cardinals Domenico Passionei, Neri Corsini, and Fortunato Tamburini, and he even encouraged criticism of the Society of Jesus, but never formally censured the latter and permitted all sides to publish their ideas freely.<sup>5</sup>

Few scholars would dispute the claim that Benedict XIV was the most enlightened and progressive pope of the Settecento, a century characterized by pontiffs of considerable moderation and a willingness to compromise with the modern world, at least up to a point. Tsarina Elizabeth II (reigned 1742–62), founder of the University of Moscow and of the Saint Petersburg Academy of the Fine Arts, described Benedict as a "sage par excellence." Frederick II's sister, the learned Wilhelmina, margravine of Bayreuth and as agnostic as her brother,



begged the pope for an audience. The worldly French ambassador to Rome, the duc de Choiseul, described Benedict as a peace-loving savant who was the pope of the *lumières*. Horace Walpole's famous encomium, which claimed Benedict was "loved by papists, esteemed by Protestants, a priest without insolence or interest, a prince without favorites, a pope without nepotism, an author without vanity, a man whom neither intellect nor power could corrupt," provides additional evidence of Benedict's contemporary reputation.<sup>6</sup> A Roman pontiff admired, courted, and flattered by such an array of European progressive luminaries must have seemed to many little short of miraculous. That such an individual would build a *Caffeaus* in his garden is, in this context, perhaps a bit less surprising.

The use of the term *Caffeaus* to characterize Fuga's garden pavilion acknowledged not only the English association of the project but also revealed awareness of its progressive intellectual and cultural function, because English commercial coffee-houses were widely believed to be sites of intellectual and cultural exchange. Lambertini's coffee-house was the only one in Rome designated by the italianized English term. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the pope was deliberately following an English model, not in the architectural fabric, but in a cultural sense. It was to serve not only as a retreat in which to take refreshments while in the gardens alone or with friends, but was also designed as a place devoted to study, intimate conversation, and the exchange of ideas, all of which were characteristic of European coffee-houses. It was also a place where important visitors could be received informally, and the "pretender" king of Great Britain, the so-called James III, was occasionally entertained there.<sup>7</sup> Lambertini disapproved of the gambling, flirtations, and frivolities at most of the *conversazioni* that dominated the Roman social scene, but he enjoyed those of a respectable clerical tone that excluded worldly amusements in favour of a serious exchange of ideas.<sup>8</sup> One imagines he planned to host such events at the *Caffeaus*.

Many Italians shared the pontiff's enthusiasm for British culture and learning. The peninsula's denizens had long considered people from beyond the Alps to be little more than barbarians, although such attitudes had softened considerably by the eighteenth century. In particular, the English were thought to be cultural parvenus – sickly, intellectually pretentious, and arrogant. Despite their faults, British tourists were politely received and usually coddled more than visitors of other nationalities, partly because of their wealth (the pound sterling enjoyed a highly favourable exchange rate with the Roman

scudo) and acquisitiveness, but also because many Italians could not but be flattered that affluent foreigners would come so far to admire the achievements of their venerable civilization. Britons, convinced of their superiority, would have been surprised to discover that the indigenous inhabitants did not recognize their own inferiority. Many British tourists considered Italians lazy, filthy, superstitious, and larcenous.<sup>9</sup> In the case of the *Caffeaus*, however, one gentleman was struck by how “English” it was, assuming imitation to be the sincerest form of flattery. John Northall remarked: “At one angle of the large [Quirinal] garden the pope has lately built two most elegant apartments for his particular retirement, and has furnished them after the English taste, even to the hearth brush, and bellows, which are English commodities, and his holiness has given it the name of ‘The Coffee-house.’”<sup>10</sup> Anyone arguing that the *Caffeaus* was a site of Catholic enlightenment must consider the fact that an Englishman with no interest in praising anything “papist” understood the building’s function. Although Northall does not discuss it explicitly as a centre for homosocial conversation and cultural exchange, he surely understood it to be one.

Fuga’s *Caffeaus* is a highly innovative and remarkable building, in both its modest scale and its elegant, understated classicism. The floor plan reveals its extreme simplicity and unpretentious dimensions. Many scholars have noted the austerity of Fuga’s design, which has an almost Greek sense of reductive brilliance coupled with an arcadian sensibility. The large windows blur the distinction between the interior and the gardens. They also provide a panoramic view that must have been utterly charming to Lambertini’s guests. The fact that the windows recall triumphal arches does not occlude their primary function as mechanisms to enhance the natural flow between the exterior and the two pavilions. The connecting “breezeway” had almost no furniture and was intended as a transitional space between nature and culture.

The remarkably modern character of the *Caffeaus* was mostly due to the patron and the reasons why he commissioned the building. Cardinal Jérôme de la Rochefoucauld noted that Benedict often held court in the Castelgandolfo gardens while on holiday, receiving foreign ambassadors and ministers in a sylvan, improvised court.<sup>11</sup> Benedict’s biographers similarly described the *Caffeaus* as a place for informal discussions and private audiences. The pope went there almost every day to drink coffee and hot chocolate and to receive intimates, discussing news, joking, and laughing in a setting where he could almost forget he was supreme pontiff.<sup>12</sup> Louis-Antoine de Caraccioli, Benedict’s earliest

biographer, claimed that the pope held informal audiences in the gardens only in summer, but since the Roman climate is clement for seven or eight months a year, it seems likely that Benedict used the *Caffeaus* frequently.<sup>13</sup>

Informal encounters in Fuga's *casino* contrasted with the imposing formality of official audiences in the pontifical throne room of the Quirinal and Vatican palaces, replete with the ceremonial kissing of the slipper.<sup>14</sup> Casual audiences were an innovation of the self-effacing Benedict XIII Orsini (reigned 1724–30), who made Prospero Lambertini a cardinal, and who was an important role model for the future pontiff. Orsini often received visitors in the long gallery of the Quirinal palace instead of the throne room (*sala della presentazione*), discussing important issues while admiring the paintings, sculptures, and tapestries on display. Although Benedict XIV never specifically described the *Caffeaus* as a setting for private audiences, some of his visitors did so, including the ambassadors of the republics of Lucca and Venice and the Holy Roman Imperial Staatskanzler, Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz.<sup>15</sup> In addition to the noteworthy *Caffeaus* audience for the king of Naples, to be discussed in due course, two others may serve as cases in point. Pompeo Girolamo Batoni's *Benedict XIV presenting the Encyclical ex omnibus to comte de Stainville, later duc de Choiseul* of 1757 shows the enthroned pontiff under a baldachin in a garden pavilion not found in the Vatican complex (Plate 17). The dome of Saint Peter's in the background indicates the scene is set in the *Caffeaus* or very near it.<sup>16</sup> Both the kneeling French ambassador and the pope are dressed in court attire, unlikely for an *al fresco* event, but decorum doubtless made the artist's sartorial choices necessary. The setting may also be part of the painting's politics, however, because both Benedict and Louis XV (reigned 1715–74) wanted to downplay papal involvement in French religious affairs. A pompous diplomatic ceremony in the *Sala della presentazione* would have had a contrary effect.

A letter from Benedict to his confidential friend Cardinal Pierre Guérin De Tencin (1679–1758) describes a typical garden audience. While returning from his diplomatic nunciature in France, Monsignor Marcello Crescenzi lost his household livery, silver, furniture, and much of his money when the ship carrying his goods back to Rome sank in the Tyrrhenian Sea near Civitavecchia. Benedict created him cardinal in 1743, as was expected for a papal diplomat returning from a major Catholic court, but relative poverty and the loss of his belongings prevented his assuming the dignity. De Tencin, who had befriended

Crescenzi in France, was interested in his fate, and Benedict wished to help by appointing him papal legate in Ferrara, a city of which he later became archbishop. The pope mentions receiving Crescenzi "privately in the garden," where he consoled with him over his losses and pledged to do what he could.<sup>17</sup> Shortly afterwards, the prelate assumed the cardinal's hat and was named legate of Ferrara, but it took several years for his finances to recover. The conversation must have been humiliating for the luckless cleric, and privacy was likely a comfort. One may well imagine many delicate discussions taking place in the serenity of the garden and the *Caffeaus*, where the number of auditors was necessarily limited.

Conversation in the Quirinal gardens must have been pleasant, but the interior of the *Caffeaus* was also designed to encourage relaxation, informality, and various forms of homosocial exchange (as women were never received in private audience). Since the building was constructed and decorated in only three years, there is a remarkable sense of patronal presence and an aesthetic consistency rarely seen in projects executed over a longer period. The mixture of sacred and profane objects and imagery is also unusual for a papal commission. Although Fuga's furniture is no longer present and can be imagined only through archival descriptions, it was simple and comfortable. There were twelve small stools, four French-style armchairs, a largish settee, a desk, and eight small tables. A considerable array of porcelain was also displayed on the two pavilion chimneypieces, the shelves built into the upper areas of the walls, and corner brackets. The *Caffeaus*'s porcelain will be discussed in more detail shortly, but its use in elite interiors was highly fashionable. The frames for the various paintings were simply carved and gilded, complemented by gold and white stucco reliefs. Overall, the taste was "masculine." The exclusion of mirrors may have enhanced such a perception, but their association with the deadly sin of vanity may also have played a part.<sup>18</sup>

Lambertini's take on enlightened Catholicism was to promote the Church's cautious dialogue with the contemporary world by creating a hybrid of tradition and innovation. Visually, the *Caffeaus* worked in this way. The progressive aspects of Fuga's designs and the interior's combination of porcelain, French-style furniture, and view paintings of new or recently restored buildings are juxtaposed to ceiling paintings of traditional papal subjects, making plain the salmagundi of old and new. The decorative friezes with personifications are the work of Giuseppe Cucciolini, who also executed the wall grotesques. Two are highly

traditional in an ecclesiastical context – *Justice* and *Fortitude* – while the others are more personal and in one case highly unusual – *Clemency* and *Affability*.<sup>19</sup> As a monument to papal rapprochement with progressive culture while affirming historical traditions and pretensions, the iconographies of the *Caffeaus* are key to evaluating the aspirations and limitations of Catholic enlightenment.

The copious display of porcelain in the *Caffeaus* was a crucial signifier of modernity. Affluent individuals in the mid-eighteenth century required utilitarian porcelain vessels for serving the newly popular caffeinated beverages coffee, chocolate, and tea. On 18 May 1743, the papal journal *Chracas* noted that Benedict XIV was delighted to receive an impressive gift of Meissen porcelain from Cardinal Annibale Albani (1682–1751), who presented the objects, carefully packed in beautiful velvet-lined cases, on behalf of Augustus III, elector of Saxony and king of Poland (reigned 1734–63). The presentation took place in the Quirinal gardens near Fuga's new *Caffeaus*. Saxon porcelain was highly prized throughout Europe and by the 1740s had begun to compete seriously with East Asian imports. The porcelain was personalized with the family coat-of-arms and each item was bordered in gold (Plate 18).<sup>20</sup> Most likely Augustus III knew that Benedict XIV was building the *Caffeaus*, and the hot beverage services could be used there. Cardinal Albani, as the representative of Saxon-Polish interests in the Curia, was the initial conduit for Meissen porcelain in Rome, and he was a notable collector in his own right. There were frequent exchanges of porcelain, Roman micromosaics, elaborate rosaries, and finely wrought reliquaries between the courts. Porcelain was so highly prized it was sometimes used as currency, above all in the purchase of works of art; for example, many of Augustus's acquisitions for the Electoral Gallery in Dresden were paid for with porcelain.<sup>21</sup>

Porcelain beverage services trumpeted novelty and utility and their gifting demonstrated diplomatic sophistication. The garden ceremony also had an important component related to good government. Count Heinrich von Brühl (1700–63), Augustus III's minister of state, sent two Saxon Protestant miners to Rome to accompany Albani at the papal audience. Supervision of the Meissen porcelain factory was part of Brühl's portfolio, and he also oversaw Augustus III's diplomatic service, two areas more intimately connected than might initially be imagined. Art historian Maureen Cassidy-Geiger has discovered that the miners were part of a technological tit-for-tat, Dresden seeking Roman help with mosaic and metalwork decorations for the Hofkirche, then

under construction, in exchange for the mining expertise requested by the pope in order to extract greater quantities of copper and other metals from the mountain quarries near Civitavecchia. The miners, named Beyer and Biese, were finely dressed in gold and silver costumes, appropriate to the precious metals produced by their labour, and were allowed to kiss Benedict's slipper.<sup>22</sup> The exchange is an illuminating example of the vital importance of visual culture to European diplomacy and of the close connection between eighteenth-century decorative art and economics.

The prominent display of porcelain in the *Caffeaus* was complemented by oil on canvas paintings placed on the ceilings and walls of the pavilions. As art historian Donatella Biagi Maino has demonstrated, Cardinal Girolamo Colonna di Sciarra (1708–63), not Cardinal Silvio Valenti Gonzaga (1690–1756) as is usually claimed, had the primary responsibility for supervising the interior decorations.<sup>23</sup> Colonna determined the disposition of the paintings and likely the choice of artists, but the pope probably selected the subjects. In both rooms, the iconographies are consistent and obviously the product of an intelligent program I believe bears Benedict's fingerprints. The ceiling paintings are traditional narratives, but when they are considered with the images on the walls, a more nuanced vision of enlightened Catholicism emerges. The pairing of tradition and reform in a papal arts program is hardly new, but the direct confrontation of the innovative and the venerable are rarely seen with such thematic clarity in so intimate a setting.

The papal role as Vicar of Christ and chief agent of the Son of God's mercy and charity is explicitly visualized in the west pavilion, the chamber on the left of the vestibule entrance (Plate 19). The painters employed in the *Caffeaus* were a mixture of established artists such as Agostino Masucci; Pietro Costanzi; Gianpaolo Panini, professor of perspective at the French Academy in Rome; Gaspar van Wittel, called Orizzonte (ca. 1653–1736); and an emerging talent, Pompeo Batoni. The five west pavilion ceiling paintings were entrusted to Masucci, whose *Pasce Oves Meas* (*Feed My Sheep*) is a work of sufficient importance to be singled out for praise by Melchior Missirini, historian of the Accademia di San Luca (Plate 20).<sup>24</sup> Inspired by Raphael and Carlo Maratti, the figures are set in a spare, classicized landscape representing the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The Apostles look on in restrained wonder while the graceful Christ indicates to Peter the sheep he is charged to feed. Surrounding this traditional image of papal pastoral responsibility and charity are four oval paintings of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

Although the Petrine narrative *Pasce Oves Meas* is traditional, its selection for the *Caffeaus* had notable contemporary relevance. Many enlightened Catholics believed charity was the central tenet of the Gospels. Were such a radical notion accepted by secular rulers, a profound transformation of society leading to universal felicity would result. This idea is the thesis of Muratori's *Treatise on Christian Charity* and was foregrounded in many other theological publications. Corio Gorini's *Politics, Law and Religion*, published in Milan in 1742, draws on similar arguments to claim that the role of government is to improve the quality of life and to guarantee basic rights to those subject to its authority.<sup>25</sup> *Feed My Sheep*, as a prototypical image of Christ's command to the papacy to tend the faithful, takes on special resonance in the context of enlightened Catholic ideology that privileged charity above all other Christian virtues. Similarly, in a three-volume publication of sermons delivered at the Quirinal Palace beginning in the 1720s, published in 1752, and dedicated to Benedict XIV, Bonaventura Barberini compares sheep and fish, exhorting the clergy to care for their charges with the same avidity the Apostles exhibited when they "fished for the souls" of the people.<sup>26</sup> Pairing sheep and fish may explain the boat on the water in the background. Barberini argued that the titular phrase *Feed My Sheep* also underscored the papal role as universal pastor, the shepherd charged by heaven to succour humanity. As we shall soon see, promoting Christian charity is also the core message of two paintings in the east pavilion.

The spiritual mission of bringing Christ's charity and mercy to the faithful under the guidance of Saint Peter and his papal successors is complemented by another vital pontifical function visualized in Gian Paolo Panini's two large view paintings on the west pavilion walls. Building churches and palaces was a papal obligation, both to promote the Church's spiritual agenda and to aggrandize the pontifical office by magnificent and imposing undertakings, while providing employment for Rome's labouring and artisanal classes. Church construction, restoration, and refurbishment continued unabated in the eighteenth century, but raising public buildings dedicated to administrative and cultural functions became a priority of papal building. To showcase this aspect of clerical governance Benedict introduced a pair of *veduta* paintings to the west pavilion. Panini executed *View of the Piazza del Quirinale with the Palazzo della Consulta* for Clement XII in 1733 (Plate 21). It was exhibited in the Crystal Loggia of the Quirinal palace until Lambertini ordered its reinstallation in the *Caffeaus*.

This was done to create a pendant for a new commission to Panini, *The Piazza di Santa Maria Maggiore during a Visit of Pope Benedict XIV to the Basilica* of 1742 (Plate 22).

The dimensions of the Panini canvases are virtually identical.<sup>27</sup> Both visualize good government and responsible curation of venerable antique monuments while showcasing Fuga's work for Corsini and Lambertini. In *Piazza di Santa Maria Maggiore*, Lambertini is seen inspecting the restored basilica.<sup>28</sup> It has been convincingly suggested that Benedict's appropriation of Panini's earlier painting was an act of piety to his predecessor, and *Piazza di Santa Maria Maggiore* was a demonstration of his solicitude for important sacred sites exercised in anticipation of the Jubilee of 1750.<sup>29</sup> Their presence in a private papal chamber juxtaposed to stalwarts of Petrine ideology such as *Pasce Oves Meas* and portraits of four Old Testament prophets is unexpected and nuances the cultural possibilities for painting in the context of Catholic enlightenment. The fact that Panini was given 300 scudi for *Piazza di Santa Maria Maggiore*, while Masucci and Batoni were paid only 400 scudi for their suites of five ceiling paintings, is an indication of Panini's celebrity and the importance placed on the inclusion of contemporary subjects in what otherwise would have been a highly traditional space, at least in terms of its painted decoration.<sup>30</sup>

Batoni executed *Christ Delivering the Keys to St Peter* for the east pavilion ceiling (Plate 23), a counterpart to Masucci's *Pasce Oves Meas* in the west pavilion. This centrepiece canvas is flanked by oval images of the evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John rendered in strong foreshortening. The artist composed *Christ Delivering the Keys* in a shallow frieze with Jesus and the twelve Apostles close to the picture plane, as if arrayed on a stage. However, such a high-profile commission did not necessarily encourage Batoni to work quickly, and Benedict expressed frustration with the dilatory painter. He instructed Cardinal Colonna to press the artist to put aside other commissions in order to finish the *Caffeaus* pictures.<sup>31</sup> *Christ Delivering the Keys to St Peter* was installed in 1743, but Batoni did not deliver the four evangelist canvases until spring 1744, still in time to be appreciated by Charles VII of Naples when he visited the *Caffeaus* the following autumn.<sup>32</sup>

*Pasce Oves Meas* and *Christ Delivering the Keys to St Peter* visualize the divine charge to the first pope to be responsible to the faithful through works of charity and mercy and to safeguard the path to salvation through the institution of the Church. Peter's role in both narratives is clear, and equally lucid is the fact that he is the direct ancestor



of the reigning pontiff, who inherited his spiritual authority. Panini's view paintings display the papacy's emphasis on building in the public interest and on taking seriously its role as guardian of sacred sites. Their two counterparts on the east pavilion chimneypieces, on the other hand, make plain the Church's obligation to promote charity and social melioration. Both pictures deploy biblical narratives to make a point about the Church's contemporary responsibilities. Much smaller than Panini's view paintings and the product of two artistic hands, *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* (Plate 24) and *Christ and the Canaanite Woman* imagine the Gospel stories in lush, idyllic settings. Orizzonte painted the verdant landscapes and Costanzi provided the figures. Costanzi, a major historical painter whose career as a public artist was in decline in the 1740s, often played the part of *figurista* for landscape artists such as van Bloemen. The gentle, placid, arcadian landscape is peopled with restrained, classicized figures in the Bolognese baroque manner inspired by Annibale Carracci and Domenichino. Each artist received 80 scudi for his efforts, far less than the 300 paid to Panini, but considering the collaborative effort and the more modest scale of the east chamber canvases, they were a lucrative venture in terms of labour intensity.<sup>33</sup>

Costanzi's vignettes for Orizzonte's landscapes call attention to Lambertini's belief in Christian charity and were almost certainly his idea.<sup>34</sup> In the story of the Good Samaritan, recounted in Luke 10:25–37, Jesus tells the disciples about a man who was robbed, beaten, and left for dead. Ignored by two Israelites who passed him on the road, a Samaritan took pity on him and took him to an inn, paying for lodging and promising to return to discharge any additional debts. Samaritans and Israelites were traditional enemies, and the story was interpreted as a call for Christians to come to the aid of anyone in need, regardless of creed. It is not difficult to understand why it was chosen for the *Caffeaus*, since it promotes enlightened Catholicism's agenda of social utility. Muratori's *Treatise concerning Christian Charity* argues for a practical charity not governed by abstract principles, and he cites the Good Samaritan as the best exemplar of Christian mercy.<sup>35</sup> The narrative of the Canaanite woman, like the Samaritan an outcast from the Israelite community, is a similar story about healing and support for the suffering.

By spring 1744, the *Caffeaus* was finished and ready for the pope's private reflection, for receiving guests with minimal formality, for enjoying warm caffeinated beverages in a garden setting, and for any other purpose deemed appropriate by its proprietor. Later the same year, on 3 November, the *Caffeaus* was the setting for arguably the most

important papal audience of the eighteenth century. Gian Paolo Panini visually immortalized the meeting between the Lambertini pontiff and the Neapolitan monarch, and careful study of *King Charles VII of Naples Arriving at the Caffeaus to Meet Pope Benedict XIV* sheds considerable light not only on the protagonists and their historical significance, but also on how the *Caffeaus* helped communicate the image of a reinvigorated papacy. It additionally evokes the altered nature of papal relations with Catholic monarchs in the Age of Reason, and, like most aspects of enlightened Catholicism, such efforts were innovative and cautious, progressive and traditional.

The audience with Benedict XIV inspired the Bourbon monarch to commission two commemorative view paintings – *King Charles VII of Naples Arriving at the Caffeaus to Meet Benedict XIV* (Plate 25) and *Charles VII Arriving in the Piazza di San Pietro*.<sup>36</sup> Panini's festive picture critiques Fuga's architecture by making the building grander and more decorative. He habitually changed the appearance of actual edifices in *vedute* paintings not from caprice, but from a desire to show how in his opinion its design could have been improved.<sup>37</sup> The artist positioned the seated pontiff in the left pavilion in a space that not only is architecturally impossible, given the structure's floor plan, but also is historically inaccurate, because the audience took place in the east pavilion, as a number of contemporary sources affirm. Although Panini likely visited the *Caffeaus*, such a representation suggests he was not present at the event. The crowd is an invention. The king's rank and the meeting's importance required an appreciative audience.

Charles's visit to Rome was his first. In 1733, he had wanted to meet Pope Clement XII, but for political reasons his wish was unfulfilled. One of the Bourbon dynasty's major aims in the War of Polish Succession (1733–6) was to wrestle the kingdom of Naples from Hapsburg control, a dominion established by the treaties that ended the War of Spanish Succession (1701–14). Don Carlos, duke of Parma and Piacenza, as Charles VII of Naples was then styled, left his capital and advanced south through Florence, Siena, and Arezzo to attack Naples. Clement XII proclaimed neutrality in the conflict and did not encourage the diplomatic overtures from the Bourbon ruler because Charles accepted the duchy's investiture without acknowledging the pope's feudatory rights.<sup>38</sup> Corsini was never reconciled to what he considered a usurpation of a papal prerogative. Bourbon relations with Benedict XIV, however, were cordial. Lambertini accepted the political realities of the investiture while maintaining the prerogative

in principle and was eager to end years of conflict with Spain, Naples, and Parma.

Pope Benedict was given little warning of the monarch's approach and learned only the evening before the audience that Charles was at the city's northern gate. Hasty but detailed preparations were in place and protocols for the visit had been established. Lambertini was to receive the king at the *Caffeaus*, where the crowd could be better controlled, the conversation discreet, and the formalities minimal. It was an unorthodox site for a highly unusual meeting. Fortunately, many of the documents detailing the preparations, the audience, and its immediate aftermath are preserved in the Biblioteca Nazionale in Rome as well as in several surviving letters.

"Piano risultato" describes the protocol and order of activities for Charles's *Caffeaus* audience and tours of Saint Peter's and Saint John Lateran.<sup>39</sup> The considerable detail indicates how careful planning for such an informal and "spontaneous" visit could be and is a tribute to the efficiency of the papal functionaries put suddenly into action. On 2 November, late in the afternoon, the king appeared at Villa Patrizi, just outside Porta Pia, where he planned to spend the night. Benedict sent a delegation of welcome, edibles, and wine and also provided an escort of Swiss Guards to accompany the monarch for the visit's duration. In a letter written to his old Bolognese friend Marchesa Bentivogli Duglioli, Lambertini recounted how everything was done in great haste but came off splendidly. He griped about the tremendous expense, claiming that in less than twenty-four hours a sovereign's visit had cost him more than a six-month *villeggiatura* (an autumnal holiday passed in the Roman campagna that lasted about six weeks, so Benedict is exaggerating for effect) at Castelgandolfo, concluding: "It is a curious thing, but true."<sup>40</sup> The lament makes more sense when one considers the fact that Charles had almost 500 people in his entourage, all of whom had to be fed and the elite among them given presents.

The next day the monarch and his retinue entered Rome on horseback and traversed the mile from Villa Patrizi to Piazza del Quirinale. The king dismounted at the garden gates and was greeted by the papal master of ceremonies and other high-ranking clerics. A booming cannon salvo erupted from Castel Sant' Angelo.<sup>41</sup> The onlookers in Panini's painting are mere "extras," but those closest to the monarch include individuals listed in the historical accounts, including cardinals Acquaviva and Belluga. Charles's ally, the duke of Modena, and the general of the Bourbon army, Count de Gages, stand immediately behind the

king. On entering the *Caffeaus*, Charles VII was ushered into the papal presence by Valenti Gonzaga and Colonna. Once inside, he knelt and kissed the pope's slipper.<sup>42</sup>

Many mentioned the traditional foot kissing, and some objected. Witnesses from both the papal and the royal parties confirm it took place, despite the fact many later claimed the king had declined to perform the customary act of obeisance. One account states that when the monarch saw the pope, "he kneeled once, came closer and kneeled again to kiss the feet of His Holiness, who received and embraced him with such a demonstration of tenderness and emotion all the witnesses were moved."<sup>43</sup> The manuscript "Piano risultato" states that the king genuflected three times instead of two and kissed both the foot and the hand of the pontiff, and he was then kissed in turn on both cheeks.<sup>44</sup> Benedict responded to a letter from De Tencin that mentioned Charles's "humiliating" act of reverence. The pontiff lost patience with the critics, complaining "when a King comes to Rome to visit the church of Saint Peter's, and to kiss the foot of a man who, however unworthy, is nonetheless the successor of Saint Peter and Vicar of Christ in this world," such an act should not be controversial.<sup>45</sup> Lambertini also considered the king of Naples his feudatory. Kissing the slipper was as much an act of obeisance to a suzerain as a Catholic monarch humbling himself at the feet of a pope.

Once the formal greeting was concluded, hierarchical distinctions disappeared. Benedict and Charles were left alone in the east pavilion for a conversation that lasted about ninety minutes. They sat in identical armchairs upholstered in velvet and trimmed with gold fringe. The text "Minuto ragguaglio" indicates that the meeting took place "in the chamber of the garden casino, and precisely that one, where there is a noble little fireplace and a divan," or low settee, which could only describe the east pavilion.<sup>46</sup> This assertion is confirmed in a three-volume guidebook to Rome published anonymously (but probably by Filippo de Rossi) in 1750, hoping to cash in on the pilgrim and tourist market during the Holy Year. *Roma antica, e moderna* states:

the east [pavilion] is the most noble and the most ornate, because besides being all arrayed in noble yellow curtains, with grotesques picked out in gold, brilliantly worked by Cocciolini [*sic*], and faux-gold stuccoes, [it] has in the four corners a great quantity of antique Porcelain, very well arranged. The landscape artist Francesco van Blomen [*sic*] the Fleming, called Monsù Orizzonte, painted the two pictures there, put in the middle

of the two principal walls, and decorated by most noble frames, gilded in gold; and Pompeo Batoni from Lucca made both the picture in the center of the ceiling as well as the four ovals in the corners above the cornice. It was here where the reigning pontiff received in audience the King of the Two Sicilies Don Carlo di Borbone, Infante of Spain, in 1744.<sup>47</sup>

If this description is accurate, then Panini's famous painting places the pope in the wrong pavilion. It is one instance among many when the artist altered settings for aesthetic or dramatic effect, and cautions scholars about making assumptions about such historical events based on artistic renderings, however unmediated they may appear.

After the audience ended, Charles rose and the seated pope embraced him. The king repeated the customary genuflections and departed, his host suggesting he visit the Trevi fountain on his way to St Peter's. Walking back up the garden path to the iron gates, Charles remounted and departed, passing down the hill to the Trevi, "where he stopped for more than a while and with great pleasure observed the abundance of water so well governed, and the structure of the magnificent fountain so noble."<sup>48</sup> After the Trevi, he passed through Piazza Colonna and Piazza Navona (he must have traversed Piazza della Rotonda in front of the Pantheon), crossed Ponte Sant'Angelo and entered St Peter's square. Panini's second commemorative painting shows the monarch's arrival there. All things considered, the relative informality of King Charles's visit to Benedict XIV and to the chief shrines of Roman Catholicism marked a new departure in Settecento diplomacy while impressing Catholic Europe with the papacy's augmented efforts to engage the modern world.

Eighteenth-century coffee culture was a vital component of enlightened, progressive sociability. In addition to the positive physical effects of caffeine consumption, stimulation of intellectual and cultural exchange was a highly desirable goal for those interested in modernizing society and updating its institutions. As a site where a pope could appear more human and relate humanely to visitors, even royal ones, the *Caffeaus* stands as a monument to Benedict XIV's moderation and affability. From receiving a Catholic king with whom good relations were essential to advising a financially strapped prelate about the best course for his career, the *Caffeaus* gave Benedict good publicity in progressive European circles and contributed to the high regard in which even many Protestants held him. The innovation of the building's design, paired with the hybridity of modernity and tradition seen in

the interior decorations, is a metaphor for the middle ground occupied by enlightened Catholic thinking. From a practical point of view, the *Caffeaus* passed muster as a place for extraordinarily important audiences. The relative informality of the encounter, the absolutely private conversation, and the seemingly heartfelt exchange of compliments were arguably a new tack in the papacy's diplomatic attempts to engage a rapidly secularizing society. That this sea change happened in a papal coffeehouse is apposite. Although the frugal Benedict XIV often fretted about expenses, he must have thought the 12,725.83 scudi expended for the construction and decoration of the *Caffeaus* was money spent well.<sup>49</sup>

## NOTES

- 1 This idea is the major theme of my book *The Visual Culture of Catholic Enlightenment*. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2014.
- 2 For a brief survey of Corsini initiatives on the Quirinal hill, see Feo, *La Piazza del Quirinale*, 95–102.
- 3 Pastor, *History of the Popes*, 27–8.
- 4 For an excellent study of the Holy Office and book censorship, see Wolf, *Index*, with extensive bibliography.
- 5 Rosa, s.v., “Benoît XIV.”
- 6 Chaussinand-Nogaret, *Choiseul (1719-1785)*, 30–1.
- 7 Pantanella, “Il Caffeaus,” 294.
- 8 Giuntella, *Roma nel Settecento*, 26–7.
- 9 Canepa, “From Degenerate Scoundrel to Noble Savage,” 143–6.
- 10 Northall, *Travels through Italy*, 161.
- 11 Girardot, *Correspondance de M. de la Rochefoucauld*, 175.
- 12 Ranft, *Merkwürdige Lebensgeschichte alle Cardinäle der Röm. Cath. Kirche*, 2: 297. Many visitors found the relaxation of papal protocol and court etiquette in the *Caffeaus* remarkable.
- 13 Caraccioli, *Eloge historique de Benoist XIV*, 68–9.
- 14 Barroero and Sussino, “Arcadian Rome,” 56–7.
- 15 Stoschek, *Das ‘Caffeaus’ Papst Benedikts XIV*, 148–50.
- 16 Sussino, “Alle origini della pittura neoclassica,” 13–14.
- 17 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 126. The audience is described in a letter dated 22 November 1743.
- 18 Pantanella, “Il Caffeaus,” 294–6.
- 19 Stoschek, *Das ‘Caffeaus’ Papst Benedikts XIV*, 159–61.

- 20 Santuccio, "Sfogliando il Cracas," 277. A number of eighteenth-century popes collected and displayed porcelain, not only as luxurious rarities but also as visual markers of modernity.
- 21 Cassidy-Geiger, "Princes and Porcelain on the Grand Tour of Italy," 209.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 230–3.
- 23 Maino, *Benedetto XIV e le arti del disegno*, 323–56, with additional bibliography.
- 24 Missirini, *Memorie per servire alla storia della romana Accademia di S. Luca*, 212–13.
- 25 Menozzi, "Lecture politiche della figura di Gesù," 135–8.
- 26 Barberini, *Prediche dette nel Palazzo Apostolico*, 1: 469.
- 27 Arisi, *Gian Paolo Panini*, 392–3.
- 28 Pantanella, "Il Caffaeus," 302–3. Fuga and Panini were friends. The former's daughter married the latter's son in 1754.
- 29 Stoschek, *Das 'Caffaeus' Papst Benedikts XIV*, 163–4.
- 30 Biasiotti, "Benedetto XIV," 144.
- 31 Bowron and Kerber, *Pompeo Batoni*, 25–7.
- 32 Clark, *Pompeo Batoni*, 228.
- 33 Clark, "An Introduction to Placido Costanzi," 62.
- 34 Pantanella, "Il Caffaeus," 298.
- 35 Muratori's emphasis on the Good Samaritan as an exemplar for modern charity is discussed in Miller, *Portugal and Rome c. 1748-1830*, 3–5.
- 36 Arisi, *Gian Paolo Panini*, 414.
- 37 Marshall, "Giovanni Paolo Panini as Architectural Critic," 136–7.
- 38 Anes, "Don Carlos en Italia," 28–9.
- 39 "Piano risultato da diversi congressi tenuti d'ordine di Nro Sigre dagli Emi Valenti Segretario di Stato, Girolamo Colonna Pro-Maggiordomo, e da mons.re Leali P.o Ma.ro di Cerimonie Pontif.e con previa informazione dell'Emo Acquaviva Plenipotenziario Del Re di Napoli presso la S. Sede, intorno al modo, e forma, con cui poteva Carlo Pmo Re delle Due Sicilie riceversi in Roma, essere dal Papa, e finalmente trattenersi," *Varie* 471, #4042 ff. 24 *recto*–27 *verso* (Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Rome).
- 40 Manzone, *Frammenti di lettere inedite di Benedetto XIV*, 15.
- 41 "Piano risultato," ff. 25 *recto* and *verso*.
- 42 Giovanni Merenda, "Memorie del pontificato di PP. Benedetto XIV," Ms. 1613, ff. 55 *recto* and 56 *verso* (Rome: Biblioteca Angelica).
- 43 Anonymous, *Relazione della venuta in Roma*.
- 44 "Piano risultato," f. 25 *verso*.
- 45 Morelli, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 1: 226.
- 46 "Minuto raggaglio del ricevimento fatto in Roma li 3. Novembre 1744

per ordine della Santità di n.ro Sig.re Papa Benedetto XIV. della Maestà di Carlo P.mo Re delle due Sicilie," *Varie* 471, #4042, 28 *recto*–54 *recto* (Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Rome)

- 47 Anonymous, *Roma antica, e moderna*, 2: 333–4. The publication is dedicated to Valenti Gonzaga.
- 48 "Piano risultato" f. 47 *recto*.
- 49 The payments are listed in Biasiotti, "Benedetto XIV," 143–4.

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## **PART VI**

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### **Art and Architecture across Italy and the World**

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## 16 Pedagogy in Plaster: Ercole Lelli and Benedict XIV's *Gipsoteca* at Bologna's Istituto delle Scienze e delle Arti

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JEFFREY COLLINS

Patronage studies typically target projects with the boldest fingerprints, most often new works of art or architecture conceived and pushed forward by a single individual. This chapter investigates a more complex case that yoked the converging interests of diverse stakeholders in reproducing existing masterpieces. Benedict XIV's long campaign to provide a gallery of plaster casts after ancient and modern statuary for Bologna's pioneering Istituto delle Scienze e delle Arti illuminates important debates about artistic education, sculptural display, and Bologna's aspirations as a cultural capital. By seeking to broaden access to aesthetic knowledge, Benedict's *gipsoteca* affirms his interest in the arts and exemplifies the spirit of Enlightenment. But in its many twists and turns and attempts to satisfy competing publics, the project also shows how eighteenth-century ideals ran up against institutional realities in ways that ultimately limited its impact.

### **Lux et Veritas: Lelli and Lambertini**

By autumn 1744, the learned Bolognese churchman Prospero Lambertini – now Pope Benedict XIV – was having second thoughts about his beloved Istituto delle Scienze e delle Arti, founded in 1711 by Count Luigi Ferdinando Marsili and installed in 1714 in Bologna's sixteenth-century Palazzo Poggi.<sup>1</sup> One of Lambertini's first acts as pope had been to promise the Institute his private library and commission a vast new public reading room northeast of the existing courtyard. That project now seemed a bridge too far, and, writing privately to a friend, he confided his fear that "the Institute's new library will never be filled with books, either because so many volumes will never be assembled, or

because by the time one part is collected and installed, those already there will have been ruined." Benedict wondered instead

if it might be more expedient to leave the new structure as a gallery in which to place the casts [*modelli*] in plaster of the most noble statues in Rome, on the example of Louis XIV, who had exactly the same casts made for Paris. We remember there are already some at the Institute, donated by the good Cardinal Gozzadini; but they are few. One would need to see how many statues the new site could accommodate with symmetry; and if one didn't want to install the casts there, one could substitute the room where the books are now, and determine how many casts it could hold.<sup>2</sup>

Benedict's proximate concern was the daunting scale of architect Carlo Dotti's new Aula Magna (Plate 26), a lofty, columnar hall that might well have seemed better suited to house antique statuary than a still-modest collection of books. With its soaring vaults inspired by ancient Roman baths, such a gallery – besides uniting all Rome's sculptural treasures – would have outdone even the Capitoline Museum in spatial grandeur. In the event, Benedict sent his trusted auditor, datary, and former student, Monsignor Giovanni Giacomo Millo, on a reconnaissance trip; after inspecting the site, Millo allayed the pontiff's doubts and convinced him to pursue his original plan. Fourteen years later, the new library opened to international acclaim, its magnificent walnut shelving designed by the multi-talented sculptor and anatomist Ercole Lelli (1702–66).<sup>3</sup> Still, the fact that Benedict contemplated devoting the Institute's largest and grandest room to plaster casts encapsulates his vision of the foundation as a union of art and science and the flagship for reviving Bologna's faded reputation as a multidisciplinary centre of learning.<sup>4</sup>

In both goals Benedict followed the footsteps of General Marsili, a well-travelled soldier, diplomat, and amateur scientist who, as a member of both London's Royal Society and Paris's Royal Academy, was conversant with pedagogical developments across Europe. Ignoring Bologna's hidebound university, Marsili conceived the Institute not as a traditional degree-granting body but as a collection of laboratories predicated on first-hand observation, experimental methods, and the sharing of resources. Marsili himself donated antiquities, weapons, models of ancient obelisks and modern fortifications, and an impressive collection of corals.<sup>5</sup> Benedict took Marsili's lead, presenting the Institute with 20,000 volumes and manuscripts, as well as telescopes,

microscopes, maps, surgical tools, "Etruscan" vases, a stuffed crocodile and a leatherback sea turtle from Ostia, a primitive flute made from a human tibia, 1,500 ancient Roman coins, and much more.<sup>6</sup> In October 1742 he commissioned Lelli to prepare eight life-size wax anatomical models in various states of dissection for use as teaching tools, putting him in charge of the resulting Camera della Notomia and, after 1747, the famed collection of optical instruments acquired from the estate of the Roman optician and astronomer Giuseppe Campani (1635–1715). Lelli's oversight of both lungs and lenses reflected the Institute's commitment to empirical learning: as the German traveller Johann Wilhelm von Archenholz explained, its collections formed, "so to speak, an encyclopedia for the senses."<sup>7</sup> Pierre-Jean Grosley, visiting in 1758, judged the Institute superior to all previous public foundations, ancient or modern: here, "the sciences and the arts are assembled together in one of the finest palaces of the city ... here is whatever the citizen's interest, and the foreigner's curiosity can desire."<sup>8</sup> Joseph Jérôme de Lalande was even more expansive in 1765, calling the Institute "the most remarkable thing in Bologna and indeed all of Italy regarding the sciences."<sup>9</sup> Visitors lauded its vast and busy library (containing some 115,000 volumes by Lalande's day), astronomical observatory, chemistry lab, museums of natural history and physics, and rooms of civic, military, and naval architecture. "Now imagine," wrote Grosley, "all these advantages heightened by the voice, and the lectures of able professors in every art and science; and this gives an idea of the magnificence of this foundation, which holds the greater part of its riches from Benedict XIV's love to his country."<sup>10</sup>

Not least of the teaching programs were those of painting and sculpture run by the Accademia Clementina, a body founded with Marsili's support in 1709 and moved to Palazzo Poggi in 1712 as a key component of the Institute (Figure 16.1). As in other such schools, instruction rested on the twin pillars of life drawing and the copying of approved artistic models, including modern paintings and prints and, above all, antique sculpture. Yet Bologna, as Benedict knew, lacked significant antiquities and would have to rely on plaster copies of unobtainable originals.<sup>11</sup> Marsili pioneered the practice in 1714, when he and the Bolognese Cardinal Ulisse Giuseppe Gozzadini sent the Academy six casts from Rome (the *Farnese Hercules*; the *Belvedere Apollo*, *Torso*, and *Laocoön*; the *Borghese Gladiator*; and the *Medici Venus*), along with several heads and nine sections of Trajan's Column. Though not numerous, they illustrated diverse physical and gestural types and formed the core



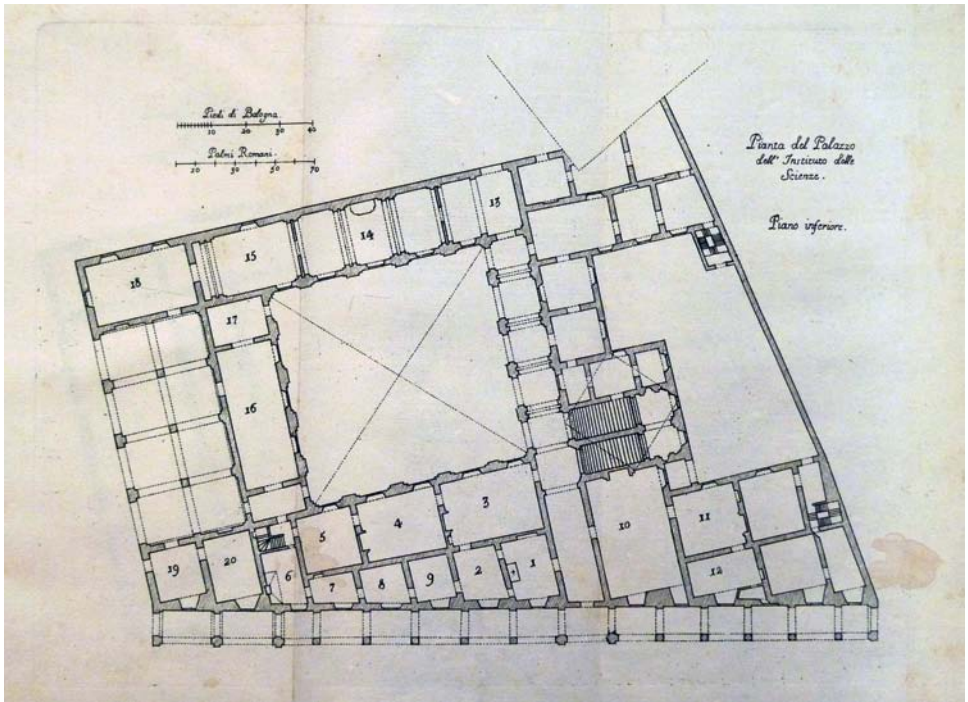


Figure 16.1 Ground floor of the Instituto delle Scienze e delle Arti, as installed in Palazzo Poggi, ca. 1750 (southwest at top), showing the Accademia Clementina's (winter) Scuola del Nudo (14); the Stanza delle Statue (15); the Stanza dell'Antichità (18); and the undercroft of the new library (unnumbered, at left). From G.G. Bolletti, *Dell'origine e de' progressi dell'Istituto* (1751). Photo by author.

of a teaching museum. Indeed, a 1739 drawing by the Academy's secretary Giampietro Zanotti (Figure 16.2) depicts the Hercules at the centre of the "Stanza delle Statue" established next to the life-drawing room and also containing skeletons, an *écorché* (a flayed figure illustrating the muscles), copies of ancient vases, architectural drawings, and original terracottas by modern sculptors, including Alfonso Lombardi, Gianlorenzo Bernini, Alessandro Algardi, and François Duquesnoy.<sup>12</sup> Yet even these pedagogical resources did not prevent recurring complaints that the Academy's meetings were poorly attended, its classes infrequent, and students loath to enter its competitions.<sup>13</sup> Morale improved when



Figure 16.2 Giampietro Zanotti, *The Sala del Nudo at the Accademia Clementina, with a model being positioned by the drawing master and a cast of the Farnese Hercules beyond*, 1739, pen and brown ink over black chalk, the outlines indented for transfer. 10.3 × 14.6 cm. The drawing (reversed for engraving) looks northeast from the life-drawing room (Fig. 16.1, #14) into the original Stanza delle Statue (Fig. 16.1, #15). The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program).

Benedict established a free summer drawing school in March 1753 – soon followed by one in Rome – but the need for more permanent models remained.

While Benedict tackled other problems at the Institute and the metropolitan cathedral, it fell to Lelli to promote a true *gipsoteca* as part of a broader instructional reform.<sup>14</sup> The polymathic Lelli – gunsmith, painter, sculptor, architect, engraver, and three-time Academy *principe* – was an apostle of anatomy for artists and viewed ancient statues as essential complements to his waxes. His 1747 mission to Rome to retrieve

the Campani instruments must have cemented his sense that artistic instruction in Bologna would be forever hampered without access to the corpus of esteemed prototypes that made the Eternal City Europe's artistic Mecca. Perhaps aware of Benedict's own interest, Lelli seized the occasion to develop a list of desired casts and push the idea with the pope. His co-conspirator was the Bolognese *letterato* Flaminio Scarselli, then secretary of Bologna's Roman embassy and a familiar of Lambertini who used his access to promote the *gipsoteca*.<sup>15</sup> Yet the project took time to bear fruit. On 21 June 1752, urging absolute secrecy, Scarselli informed Lelli that Benedict had been reminded of their cherished project and seemed ready to order the casts. But the pontiff remained concerned about the lack of an appropriate location: could Lelli re-send the wish list he had placed in the pope's hands, and confirm, if Scarselli remembered right, that the plasters would be installed upstairs in the former library, above the Scuola del Nudo? But as Benedict still doubted that that gallery – then tentatively destined for memorials to the Institute's benefactors – was large enough, Lelli should also include a drawing or demonstration proving that all the statues would fit.<sup>16</sup> Three weeks later Scarselli acknowledged receipt but urged patience until timing improved for another run at the pope; meanwhile, he would ask the Institute's senatorial governors (the *Signori Assunti* or *Assunteria*) to enlist the support of Giorgio Doria, Bologna's cardinal legate, who had endorsed the idea to Benedict after the last prize ceremony. Scarselli also predicted that the Assunti might soon call Lelli to testify about the casts' potential cost and location: if so, he should give his candid professional opinion but conceal their correspondence to avoid arousing gossip or suspicions that might jeopardize their plans.<sup>17</sup>

Scarselli proved prescient, and on 19 August 1752 Lelli presented the Assunteria and the legate with his confidential proposal to revise the Academy's curriculum on the basis of new casts. Praising the Academy's achievements despite its meagre budget, Lelli noted how much its reputation would rise if it could acquire "exact and faithful copies [*modelli*] of those never sufficiently praised statues located in glorious Rome, to supplement the few we currently possess." If properly installed, such casts would "increase the glories of the already sumptuous Institute" and help "young students learn what the Roman school, and the Divine Raphael, learned: I mean, the most correct proportions, and the exact idea of true beauty." All the quicker would those advantages flow, Lelli continued, if students could study these statues and the nude model

not just in winter, as at present, but in summer, as in the academies of Paris, Rome, and Florence. The extra cost would be minimal, since neither lamps nor heat would be required. Best of all, studying by natural light would reveal both those precise outlines and infinite degrees of shading invisible by candlelight, whose stark silhouettes and total shadows confuse even assiduous pupils, who now go elsewhere for private study. But if Bologna's Academy could add a daytime summer academy to its existing winter school, Lelli explained, then it would truly lack for nothing in terms of convenience, utility, and honour.<sup>18</sup>

Lelli outlined the revised curriculum: from Easter through May (it being still too cold for a man to pose nude for two hours without a fire), students could observe, study, and copy ancient Greek statues, if only there were casts fine enough to capture the "justness of proportions," the "beauty of the ideas," and the "variety of characters" so gracefully expressed by the statues' "divine authors [*artefici*]." The nude academy could then run diurnally from 1 June through July, almost twice its present duration; every Thursday, students could pass to the study of Lelli's own anatomical models, multiplying their usefulness and satisfying students' "ardent desire" to discover and correct errors encountered with the live model. The Academy's eight teaching directors would require compensation, but a small stipend and a gold medal worth 10 scudi presented at graduation would surely suffice. Lelli himself was happy to teach pictorial anatomy free of charge. Apart from the casts, all these improvements could be provided with an additional 100 scudi per year from Cardinal Aldrovandi's legacy. Given His Holiness's love of the Academy, Lelli was sure he would support such a plan "without the slightest pressure," demonstrating his triple attachment to the arts, public benefit, and his homeland.<sup>19</sup>

### **A Profitable Partnership: Benedict and Farsetti**

Although we cannot know which arguments swayed the pontiff, they must have been buttressed by his fortuitous discovery of a collaborator in the person of Filippo Farsetti, a wealthy Venetian nobleman whose interest in the arts was perhaps even keener than Lambertini's own. Although Farsetti is best known today for his collecting of modern terracotta *bozzetti*, this activity was just part of a larger ambition to relaunch the arts in Venice on firm historical foundations.<sup>20</sup> In January 1753, Charles Natoire, director of the French Academy in Rome, informed his superior in Versailles, Abel-François Poisson de Vandières

(the future marquis de Marigny and brother of Mme de Pompadour), that Farsetti was assembling a choice collection of casts of statuary (his primary interest) with the aim “of forming in Venice a gallery where the Venetian school might study the correct method of drawing.” Not all lovers of Rome were happy to see Farsetti “carry off her curiosities,” but money, Natoire observed, had a way of moving mountains. Farsetti’s breakthrough was to secure Benedict’s permission to take moulds of about fifty of “the most distinguished antiques and others of the most famous modern pieces,” together with a 6,000 scudi subvention, on the sole condition that he provide a full set of casts to the Academy in Bologna. The campaign had generated a stir in Rome, Natoire concluded, and “at the moment one sees nothing but mold-makers scattered all around the city, both in the churches and the palaces.”<sup>21</sup>

The pact between Farsetti and the pope thus seemed a marriage made in heaven: Bologna would get its *gipsoteca* with minimal cost to the papal exchequer, while Farsetti’s nascent school in Venice would obtain the blueprints of fifty masterpieces, more than any similar holding except the French Academy. The roster of reproductions, formalized in the contract dated 20 April 1755, included four works from the Vatican’s Belvedere Courtyard; thirteen from the papally controlled civic collection at the Capitoline; eight from Villa Medici; three from Palazzo Farnese; one each from Villa Borghese, Villa Albani, Villa Mattei, and Palazzo Pighini; and four from Roman churches.<sup>22</sup> Villa Ludovisi caused a hiccup, however, since the Prince of Piombino flatly refused Farsetti’s request to mould the *Paetus and Arria* and the seated *Mars*, papal imprimatur or no. Farsetti next requested aftercasts from the copies at the French Academy, but after consulting with Vandières, Natoire agreed this end run would offend the prince, who ultimately bypassed Farsetti and made his own casts for the pope – then promptly broke the moulds.<sup>23</sup> The French Academy did let Farsetti copy its rare cast of the *Germanicus* (which Louis XIV had exported to Versailles in 1686) in exchange for a copy of Bernini’s *Santa Bibiana*, which Natoire judged “one of his finest pieces.” But even with papal support Farsetti proved unable to obtain moulds for ten works on the original list, which had to be substituted for by others from Farsetti’s own holdings – presumably the reason the Institute received casts of eleven statues in the grand-ducal collections in Florence.<sup>24</sup> Despite these hurdles, moulding proceeded apace, and by September 1753, Bologna’s ambassador, Fulvio Bentivoglio, informed Lelli from Rome that Farsetti had sent 100 crates to Venice, of which fifty-four had arrived, and he hoped the rest would be concluded in a year.<sup>25</sup>

Attention could now turn from gathering the templates to creating the finished products. The 1755 contract stipulated that Farsetti was to deliver all fifty casts to Bologna within two years, providing at least three months' notice before shipment. Although his cargo was exempted from customs fees and inspections, Farsetti was fully responsible for the costs of transporting and installing the statues in a space to be appointed by the Institute. Quality would be judged by a team of professors, and if any casts were found inferior to those at Rome's French Academy, Farsetti would be obliged to replace them at his own expense. The logistical challenges were colossal if one considers that large plasters of this type were shipped not whole but in dozens of separate sections to be mounted, joined, and patinated by specialists – Marsili's *Hercules* alone had required eleven wooden crates in 1714 and the assistance of a master craftsman sent from Rome. Benedict's request that Lelli represent the Institute in Venice led to further questions: should he simply reject substandard casts or swap them for alternative subjects from Farsetti's stock, even if not on the list? Should he be present for both packing and embarkation and remain until the shipping was complete? Although the replies are unrecorded, on 1 October 1757 Benedict commended Farsetti for the statues' arrival, high quality, and successful installation, while Farsetti sent Lelli his own concluding expression of thanks and appreciation.<sup>26</sup> Natoire, meanwhile, happily reported to Paris on 22 September 1756 that both the *Santa Bibiana* and the *Meleager* had arrived as a gift from "M. l'abbé Frasseti," who had refused to allow the Academy to cover any costs.<sup>27</sup>

### **Moving Rooms: Millo and Malvezzi**

Any academic administrator in charge of allocating space knows the deep and potentially toxic swamp of campus politics. This proved no less true at the Institute, where the challenge of accommodating fifty additional statues in an already crowded palace provoked inevitable clashes about where the new *gipsoteca* would be housed, how it would be arranged and lit, and by whom and for what purposes, it would be used. Benedict delegated the task to Gian Giacomo Millo, whom he had since created cardinal, and Bolognese Senator Sigismondo Malvezzi, the Institute's president, long-time supporter, and next-door neighbour.<sup>28</sup> As the delivery date approached, it thus fell to Millo and Malvezzi, assisted by Ercole Lelli, to solve the thorny problem of location.

Fortunately for historians, their discussions are preserved in three written exchanges mediated by the Bolognese embassy in Rome.<sup>29</sup> Despite intentions, the *gipsoteca*'s location was still unresolved by June 1757, when the Academy's minutes record the casts' arrival "at this very moment" and Millo forwarded his first set of questions to Bologna.<sup>30</sup> After establishing that Farsetti had delivered forty-eight statues and eight busts (substitutes for the two Ludovisi statues)<sup>31</sup> Millo inquired if all these objects would be kept separate or intermingled with the eleven statues already present? Intermingled, Malvezzi replied, although for reasons of lighting, convenience, and distribution only four old casts would be retained and the inferior duplicates sent to other rooms. What would it cost, Millo asked, to paint the pope's arms on the pedestals, and would there be some commemorative inscription? About 30 scudi each, answered Malvezzi, and the Assunteria would indeed place an inscription in the vestibule, visible to anyone entering the rooms or observing the statues through the gates. His answer shows that by this time the upstairs ex-library had been discarded in favour of space on the ground floor, including a vaulted, rectangular hall adjoining the old "Stanza delle Statue," built below the new library in the early 1740s and previously housing the antiquities (Figure 16.1, #18, and Plate 27), and a somewhat longer, two-part hall to the northeast, built in the mid-1750s as the chemistry lab, the two to be joined by a small atrium or vestibule opening off a subsidiary courtyard. Besides preserving proximity to the drawing rooms and providing a separate entrance for visitors, this solution maintained the old tradition of displaying statues on the *pianterreno*, largely because of their weight.

Yet the Bolognese were not satisfied with colonizing existing rooms, and Millo's second set of *proposte*, drafted by Scarselli in early July, addresses their proposal to expand the *gipsoteca* with a third, perpendicular gallery extending south into the Institute's garden.<sup>32</sup> Sceptical, the cardinal requested a scaled rendering, complete with bases and pedestals, showing how the collection could be installed in the existing space, together with a similar plan and cost estimate for the new room if the others proved insufficient. Not quite complying, Malvezzi – or, more likely, Lelli – provided three drawings: (1) a ground plan (Figure 16.3) distributing sixty-one pedestals in both existing rooms (in black) and in the "Camera da farsi" (in grey); (2) an east-west section (Figure 16.4) showing the interior volumes and fenestration; and (3) an exterior view from the south, illustrating the existing and proposed galleries beneath the towering Aula Magna.<sup>33</sup> The pair also provided

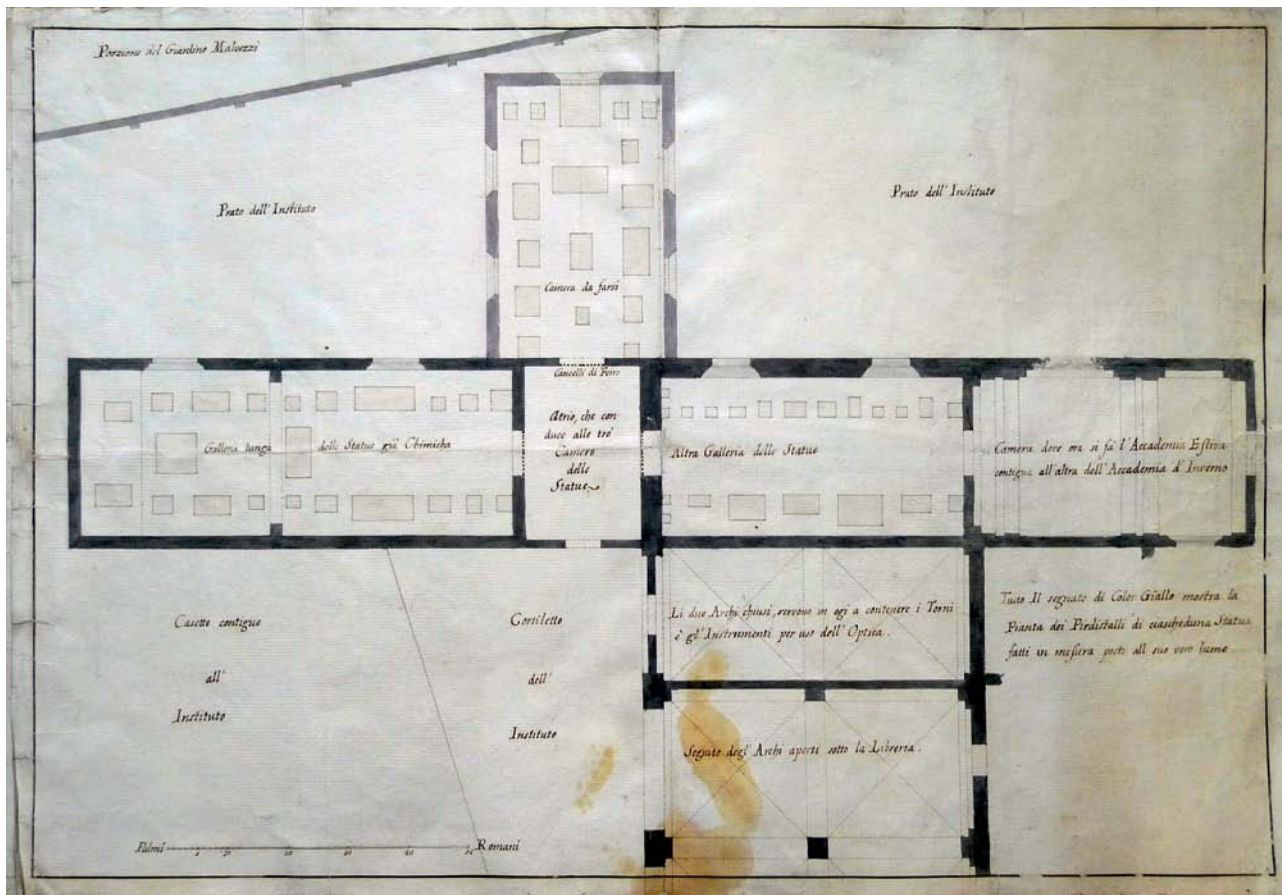


Figure 16.3 Ercole Lelli, Project for installing the expanded cast collection, ca. June 1757, showing sixty-one pedestals distributed among three rooms (from left): “Galleria lunga delle Statue già Chimica”; “Camera da farsi”; “Altra Galleria delle Statue” (Fig. 16.1, #18). Archivio di Stato di Bologna, Assunteria di Istituto, Diversorum, b. 5, fasc. 22, number 18. Photo by author.



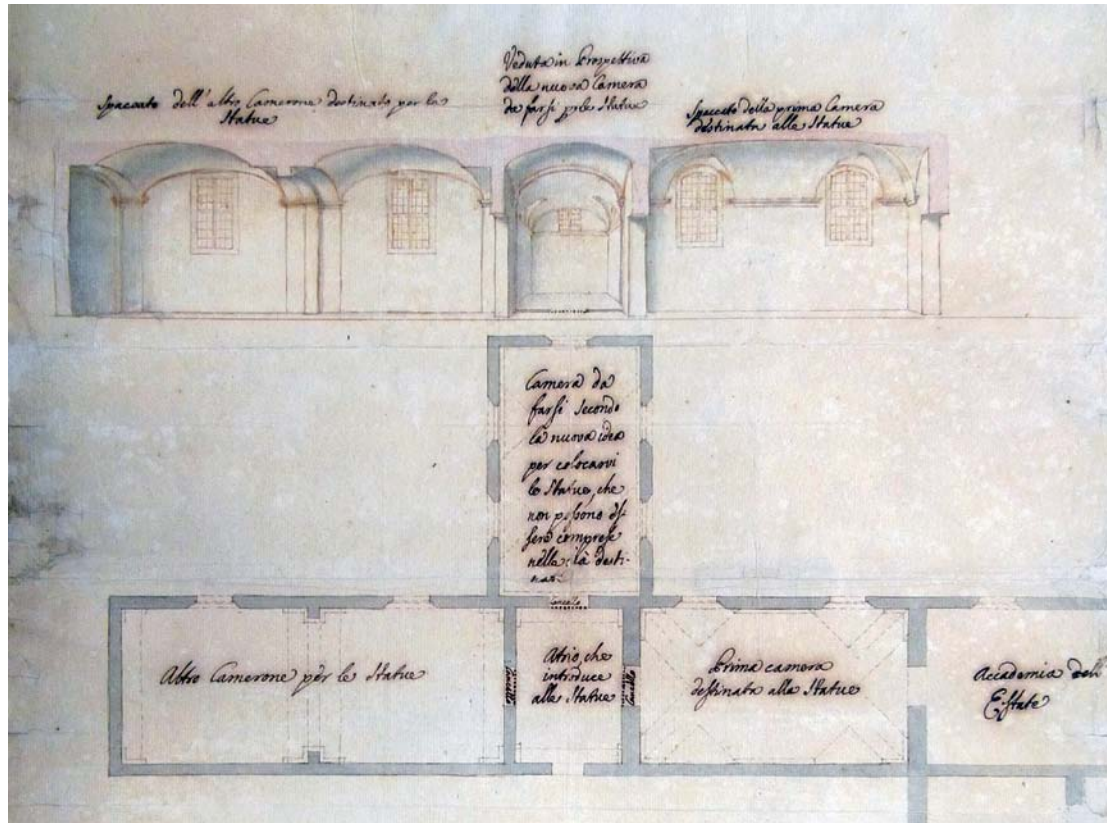


Figure 16.4 Ercole Lelli, Project for installing the expanded cast collection, ca. June 1757, showing (from top left) “Spaccato dell’Altro Camerone destinato per le Statue”; “Veduta in Prospettiva della nuova Camera da farsi per le Statue”; “Spaccato della prima Camera destinata alle Statue”; (bottom), “Altro Camerone per le Statue”; “Atrio, che introduce alle Statue”; “Camera da farsi secondo la nuova idea per collocarvi le Statue, che non possono essere comprese nelle già destinate”; “Prima camera destinato alle Statue”; “Accademia dell’Estate” (Figure 16.1, #15). Archivio di Stato di Bologna, Assunteria di Istituto, Diversorum, b. 5, fasc. 22, number 20. Photo by author.

estimates showing that the fifty-eight new pedestals (evidently including the two from the Prince of Piombino and all eight Farsetti busts) would cost 218 scudi if fabricated in wood and 230 scudi if in stone, including paint, papal arms, and rotating mechanisms thought necessary for effective study. The new room itself, including a final white-wash and matching iron gate, would cost 568½ scudi.

But it was not just cost that worried Millo, whose next queries suggest an amateur's interest in architecture and display.<sup>34</sup> His Eminence was concerned, Scarselli explained, that the proposed gallery would darken the library and existing rooms and resemble an unattractive barn (*capannone*) when seen from the garden. And, if built, should it not be as wide as possible to provide maximum light for the collection's best statues, which required viewing from all angles? As for the pedestals, Millo and his advisors were convinced they should be of stone and not rotate as proposed. Malvezzi and Lelli did their best to rebut Cardinal Millo's objections, explaining that the summer teaching room had indeed once held casts, but that these had been removed when the nude class was instituted, for fear of damage from the students. As for blocking the new library, although the addition would reach the level of the great window, it was sufficiently offset so as to leave the *finestrone* unencumbered and fully visible from both Malvezzi's and the Institute's gardens. Nor would the new room be ugly, while its width – and here the pair must have held their tempers – would be the same as the others and certainly sufficient for the purpose. Lelli in particular must have bristled at Millo's absentee second-guessing, since the addition's five large clerestory windows – four lunettes east and west and a squarish opening to the south – were evidently designed to provide precisely the diffused, natural illumination he found essential for revealing contours and volumes, without casting distracting shadows despite the dense configuration of seventeen substantial pedestals. Each of the older rooms, by contrast, featured two low, south-facing windows that would create glare behind the casts and limit where students could sit (Plate 27). In those spaces, all that could be done was to pull the pedestals away from the walls and position each, according to the caption, for its proper illumination (*all suo vero lume*) (Figure 16.3). Yet symmetry was also desired, and by lining the statues up in rows, Lelli and his draughtsman – if he used one – did their best to keep the central axis clear and create a balanced arrangement.<sup>35</sup>

However, Millo seemed unconvinced, and Scarselli closed his communiqué by noting that the cardinal, after “better considering the

proposal for a new room," felt that if one were required it should be built not in the garden but in the undercroft beneath the library, where two full-height windows, answered by two new doors onto the adjoining hall, would provide sufficient space and light at little cost. At worst, this new room could be used for service and storage until several small adjoining houses could be acquired to extend the gallery proper. At this Malvezzi retorted that the site was occupied by the Campani optical instruments, already relocated to make room for the new library staircase. What was worse, banishing a portion of the statues here would destroy that striking prospect (*quel colpo d'occhio*) that could be obtained only by revealing all the statues to the visitor in a single glance, greatly enhancing their effect (*comparsa*). It would also mean doubling the guards, since students would need to work in multiple rooms, whereas the proposed plan required only a single custodian stationed in the central vestibule. Finally, building the new room – and here Malvezzi echoed Millo's own words – would provide direct, even light from both sides, a useful and indeed necessary provision for appreciating the finest statues.

Malvezzi had won his point, and there was no more talk of placing statues beneath the reading room. But Millo continued to resist, and the third and final exchange confirms his determination not to be seduced into a building project.<sup>36</sup> Instead, Millo proposed to commandeer the well-lit room just east of the Scuola del Nudo (the former Stanza delle Statue) where the Academy now held its summer life-drawing classes (Figure 16.1, #15; see also Figure 16.3 and Figure 16.4, at right). Its position in line with the other three, he reasoned, would create a "straight, continuous, and very handsome gallery" large enough for all the statues, if one included the former vestibule. The summer school, of course, would have to be relocated. Was there another room available? If not, what might it cost to purchase and convert an adjoining house? Or could the Campani lathes and lenses be moved there, and the summer life class held below the library? How well enrolled was it, compared with the winter school? Against this onslaught Lelli and Malvezzi mounted their best and last defence, observing that such a restricted plan would require both placing statues in the middle of the rooms (thus destroying the desired enfilade) and opening new windows. Even then, it was hardly a continuous gallery as the cardinal supposed, since the three interrupting doors could not be widened without weakening the upper storeys. Visitors looking through the entrance gate thus would see only the statues in the first room and one or two in the next.

Allowing strangers to enter the galleries by themselves was hardly safe. Nor was there any other room for summer classes. The adjoining house would cost 1,000 scudi (almost twice that of the new room), plus 600 scudi to convert it for drawing, and double that if still used for the lenses. In any case, the undercroft was utterly unsuited to the summer academy, which was, if anything, even more popular than the winter one, as it was precisely the former that drew foreigners.

Millo, however, remained unmoved. On 30 July, Scarselli reported by special express post that, after reviewing the senator's replies, the cardinal felt obliged to insist on his proposal and terminate discussions with His Holiness, "so as not to run the real risk of alarming or irritating him to no avail."<sup>37</sup> Both light and space would be adequate if not ideal – after all, statues occupied the middle of galleries both in the proposed addition and at the Capitoline. Time was also a factor, since construction would delay installation and spark further complaints from Farsetti's modeller, who already feared that moisture from new pedestals would damage the casts. A damp new room would be even riskier. As for the experience of foreign visitors, they were either connoisseurs ("intelligent and distinguished persons") who would not be content to look from a distance, or plebeians who had as little need to see the casts as they did any of the Institute's holdings. Serious visitors of all ranks would have to enter the galleries, as they would the other rooms and those at the Capitoline, where the guardian showed each statue one by one. Millo's analogy with Rome is telling and suggests his vision of the *gipsoteca* as both a teaching tool and a tourist attraction.

Impatient to proceed, Millo instructed Malvezzi not to disturb partition walls or widen doorways, although he agreed to provide funds to open new windows (never accomplished). The adjacent house was currently too expensive, and if the summer academy could not be relocated, perhaps by adding windows in the winter academy, then he would try to find some stopgap by next season. His Holiness, however, was willing to let it go now that the nude class was available all winter and the new statues year round. The school's budget could be reassigned and the balance, after the new pedestals and windows were paid for, used to acquire Dr Galli's fine collection of obstetrical instruments. Finally, the cardinal urged Malvezzi and the Assunti to bring the long-desired *gipsoteca* immediately to completion, lest the pontiff misinterpret a delay as reluctance or refusal. Malvezzi and Lelli were beaten, with no choice but to settle for a conventionally linear, if less than ideally luminous, gallery.

### Looking and Learning: Students and Tourists

Neither Millo, who died on 16 November 1757, nor Benedict, who followed on 3 May 1758, lived to see the new *gipsoteca*. With them expired any notion that the casts would constitute a new civic amenity, and when the gallery finally opened on 16 April 1759, with Lelli as director, the focus was largely on internal discipline and security rather than public access. In a retreat that could not have pleased Lambertini, the Assunteria specified that the rooms were to open for study for just two hours each weekday from the first Monday after Easter until the summer nude academy started in mid-June. To ensure respectful behaviour, the director, who had the only keys, must remain present and available for instruction, sending a substitute only in case of illness. He must inform the Academy's *principe* of all pupils wishing to enrol and must expel all violators, who could be reinstated only by the Assunteria.<sup>38</sup> The director, moreover, was not to admit the merely curious during lessons, nor was he obliged to open the rooms to foreigners – and never to their servants – at other times, except when specifically so ordered in writing. Tourists, the familiar logic went, could see well enough through the iron gates. Whether or not these provisions were enforced, they marked a step backwards towards paranoia and narrow thinking. The precious casts needed protection, to be sure, but the ideal of open access enshrined at the Capitoline, Millo's recurring reference point, had vanished.

What did the new gallery offer those lucky enough to pass the gates? Since the cast collection departed Palazzo Poggi with the Academy in the early nineteenth century and only partially survives, the fullest picture is provided by a detailed inventory taken on 26 March 1766, when Lelli's former assistant Domenico Piò (1715–99) succeeded him as custodian-director upon the former's death.<sup>39</sup> Although it does not specify position, the counterclockwise sequence, correlated with details in Malvezzi's plan (Figure 16.3) and successive inventories, permits a reconstruction of the installation's appearance and aims. For the most part, Lelli maintained the criteria foreshadowed in the project for Cardinal Millo. Balancing the needs for illumination, circulation, and order, Lelli arranged most of the casts in two parallel rows, the finer works facing the windows and smaller busts or reclining figures placed opposite so as not block the light. Symmetry was favoured both within these rows and on the end walls, either by centring the largest or most important statue or by creating balanced groupings.

Furthermore, whenever possible, casts were juxtaposed or clustered to highlight formal or conceptual similarities and/or contrasts, thereby enhancing their pedagogical value.

Absent the new room, Lelli's challenge was to actualize these principles despite the greater density. As Millo envisioned, visitors entered the *gipsoteca* from the Academy's original (winter) Scuola del Nudo on the west, first encountering the space vacated by the summer drawing school.<sup>40</sup> In the middle of the room stood a cast of Giambologna's *Neptune* from Bologna's public fountain, a recent gift from the Royal Academy of Parma in thanks for the senate's permission to make a copy for its use. The right-hand or southeastern side was roughly centred on the *Pighini Meleager* (Plate 28), placed near or against the wall but offset to take account of the room's single window. An icon of the youthful male ideal, the *Meleager* was flanked on the right by two beautiful youths (the *Capitoline Antinous* and the *Ganymede* from Florence) and to the left, near the window, by two low female statues, the *Capitoline Agrippina* and the *Crouching Venus* from the Uffizi.<sup>41</sup> The left wall presented further male types, clustered by provenance: *Laocoön* near the centre, flanked by the *Belvedere Apollo* and *Antinous* (all three from the Vatican statue court) with the *Bacchus* and *Silenus* from Villa Medici at each end. The room was complemented by a grille-fronted cabinet set into the far wall and containing thirty-seven heads, busts, and a "Puttino" (largely donated by Lelli, according to Bolletti) and by the (now ten) bas-reliefs from the Column of Trajan attached to the entrance wall.<sup>42</sup>

The next room, containing six busts and nineteen statues, again echoed but condensed the earlier plan for eight busts and thirteen statues. The right side presented smaller figures representing specific types: the *Apollino* from Villa Medici, the *Idol* from Florence, a putto by Duquesnoy from Palazzo Farnese, a head of the Roman Emperor Geta (one of six Farsetti busts in the room), the *Ganymede* from Villa Medici, a head of Silenus, the *Uffizi Morpheus*, a *Niobid* from Villa Medici, and the *Mattei Horse*, a flayed or *écorché* specimen particularly useful to students, donated by the Tuscan sculptor Agostino Cornacchini. The east wall was bookended by two standing, togate figures – the so-called *Marius* and *Zeno* from the Capitoline – flanking two male and two female busts, together with the small *Mattei Ceres* (identified in the inventory as the *Dea Tellure*). To the left stood the larger and more complex masterpieces: the *Germanicus*; the *Capitoline Antinous*, *Paetus* and *Arria* (apparently opposite the window), and the seated *Mars* from

Villa Ludovisi; *Niobe and Her Daughter* from Villa Medici; *Silenus with the Infant Bacchus* from Villa Borghese (opposite the other window); and *Mercury and the Faun* from the Uffizi. The *Borghese Gladiator*, a staple of teaching exercises routinely drawn from all angles, appropriately occupied the middle of the room.

The third chamber, which apparently still served as an alternative gated vestibule, contained only the colossal *Farnese Flora* in majestic isolation – at over eleven feet, taller even than the *Hercules* and requiring an appropriate viewing distance. The last and largest room, first targeted for twenty-two full-size statues, now sheltered twenty-five statues and two busts, including several modern works. The right (window) side offered an anthology of reclining or crouching figures – the *Dying Gladiator*, the *Vatican Cleopatra*, the *Uffizi Wrestlers*, Duquesnoy's mourning putto from the tomb of Jacob van Hase in Rome, the *Fallen Warrior* from the Capitoline (in fact, a wrongly restored *Discobolus*), and Guglielmo della Porta's *Justice* from the tomb of Paul III at St Peter's.<sup>43</sup> The end wall offered another symmetrical composition, with the two *Della Valle Satyrs* flanking busts of Domitian and of Bernini's *Apollo* from Villa Borghese.

The adjoining north wall presented six standing specimens of female beauty sure to spark *paragoni*. The *Medici Venus*, widely considered the most beautiful antique female nude, thus stood next to the *Capitoline Flora*, renowned for its drapery. To their left, two modern female saints – Duquesnoy's *Santa Susanna* (Plate 29) and Bernini's *Santa Bibiana* – encapsulated stylistic alternatives from seventeenth-century Rome, followed by two further ancient models of female perfection, the *Callipygian Venus* and a small but alluring *Venus with a Shell*. In a similar comparative vein, viewers next encountered a pair of sixteenth-century *Bacchuses* closely inspired by the antique, one by Michelangelo and the other by Sansovino. Further west, a cluster of four male statues – the *Belvedere Torso*, the *Hercules and Hydra* from the Capitoline (dramatically restored by Algardi), the *Uffizi's Arrotino*, and Giambologna's *Mercury* – displayed a quartet of useful poses ranging from rest to fight to flight. The instructive sequence was closed by the *Uffizi Cupid and Psyche*, the only work, apart from *Paetus and Arria*, that represented both sexes in a single composition. Marsili's *Farnese Hercules* dominated the room's centre, together with the two *Furietti Centaurs*, installed in positions that evoked their placement in the main salon at the Capitoline just months before.<sup>44</sup> The inventory finished with ten chairs “for the convenience of the draughtsmen and painters,” reminders that these

rooms were teaching laboratories, just like those of chemistry, obstetrics, or dioptrics.

Rich as it was for students, the *gipsoteca* seems to have disappointed tourists and connoisseurs expecting a modern museum. Grosley, otherwise impressed by the Institute, in 1758 found the cast collection too dense, noting that it literally filled three large rooms and suggesting that it "be distributed in other apartments, which it will embellish without losing anything of its value: the whole being thus crowded together, has too much the appearance of a warehouse; besides, a fine statue is no where misplaced."<sup>45</sup> Lelli and Malvezzi seem to have been right about the need for more space; was it partly this realization that induced the Assunteria to limit tourist access? Two decades later, guidebook writer Giuseppe Angelelli felt compelled to apologize for the casts' humble material, explaining that Bologna lacked marble quarries.<sup>46</sup> The impulse may reflect the Institute's increasing attraction for VIPs, including Emperor Joseph II in May 1769, Archduke Maximilian Francis of Austria in October 1775, Archduchess Christina and Duke Albert of Saxe Teschen in January 1776, and Benedict's own successor, Pius VI (Giovanni Angelo Braschi, r. 1775–99), on his way back from Vienna in May 1782. Pius, at least, seemed pleased, having come of age in Benedict's Rome and patterned aspects of his cultural patronage on Lambertini's. After inspecting the obstetric models and watching chemistry experiments, Pius "proceeded to the Scuola del Nudo and to the Camere delle Statue, praising their collection" – if not their installation, which must have seemed backward compared with his own cutting-edge galleries at the Museo Pio-Clementino.<sup>47</sup> Pius proved just as interested in the series of papal medals, promising to send his own, and, above all, in Bernardino Regoli's virtuoso mosaic rendition of Giacomo Zoboli's portrait of Benedict XIV. Restored by Lelli after damage in transit, the mosaic dominated the Institute's main reception hall, where Braschi scrutinized it at length while "commending that pontiff's memory and acts."<sup>48</sup> Just like Grosley and the students, Pius had encountered a warehouse bursting with approved models, copies, and translations – which was, of course, the *gipsoteca's* *raison d'être*.

### Conclusion: The Aura of the Copy

In the end, neither Benedict's nor Farsetti's hopes for a spacious, well-lit statue gallery – a public branch of Rome abroad – were fully realized. Nor did the Institute singlehandedly revive *Bologna la dotta*, remaining,



for Archenholz, a tree planted in sterile soil, a child's plaything, a "scientific Trojan Horse."<sup>49</sup> Still, Benedict's project exemplifies a characteristic instinct to blend his particular love for his homeland – Grosley called him a "munificent patriot" – with a wider view of the public good. Antiquity was the rage in eighteenth-century Europe, but the question was how to leverage it. Whereas the Bourbon court at Naples restricted diffusion of discoveries from the buried cities of Vesuvius to the point of barring visitors from making notes or sketches, Benedict gambled that the diffusion of authorized copies would increase, not lessen, the value of Rome's originals. The ripples would have spread even wider if the young English architect Matthew Brettingham, in Rome in 1753, had realized his plan to commission from Farsetti a full third set of casts of "all or near all the finest Statues in Rome both Antient and modern" to anchor a new "Accademy of Design" in London.<sup>50</sup> This proposal, too, met obstacles, but had it succeeded, Benedict's ambitions for Bologna might have changed the history of British art.

Benedict's donation must also be seen as part of a larger faith in the value of good models for both educating students and edifying the public. That conviction oriented his patronage, as Francesco Algarotti acknowledged in 1756: "I hear that Bologna and Rome, the Institute and the Campidoglio, are growing richer by the day through the pope's munificence. Two great Museums, two temples, are rising there to the three sister arts, becoming stores of every beauty; fragments of ancient architecture, paintings, and statues that will form precepts and examples for studious youth. I'll tell you an idea that came to me in this regard for making my own contribution to such a great enterprise, adding another drop [*gocciola*] to the sea."<sup>51</sup> In Algarotti's case the exemplar was a section of an ancient cornice (*gocciolatoio*) he offered to the Institute or the Capitoline, as the pope preferred. Benedict chose the latter – where it was scorned – but Algarotti's understanding of both sites as reservoirs of beauty (*conserve di ogni bello*) is striking.

Finally, the concern jointly shared by Benedict, Lelli, Millo, and Malvezzi for how those beauties would be viewed by an increasingly sophisticated and demanding public suggests the *gipsoteca's* links to broader developments in European museology. Far from constituting an isolated case, Benedict's insistence that Bologna's new casts be situated and exhibited for maximum benefit is paralleled in his detailed enquiries to Magnani about the clarity of the Venetian glass ordered for the anatomy room, the design of special medal cabinets sent from Rome, and suggestions for how to secure "Etruscan" vases atop the

library's bookcases. Copies though they were, the Institute's casts were central to its mission of instructing through strategic exhibition. Plaster was not marble, as Angelelli admitted, but if measured ounce for ounce, and properly displayed, its power to inspire was unequalled.

## NOTES

- 1 This study is dedicated to the memory of my beloved aunt and friend Janet Meyer. In conformity with the sources, I have retained the eighteenth-century name and spelling "Istituto" rather than the modern "Istituto" often used by Italian scholars. All translations are mine.
- 2 Benedict to Marchese Paolo Magnani, 31 October 1744, in Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV al Marchese Paolo Magnani*, 319–20: "Ci andiamo figurando, che la nuova biblioteca dell'istituto non sarà mai riempita di libri, perché o non si uniranno mai tanti libri, o perché quando se ne sarà ammassata una parte da riporvi l'altra che v'era sarà già andata in malora. / Proponiamo se fosse più espediente il lasciare la nuova fabbrica in qualità di galleria, riponendovi in essa i modelli in gesso delle più nobili statue che sono in Roma. / Coll'esempio di Luigi XIV che fece fare pure gli stessi modelli per Parigi. Ci ricordiamo, che nell'istituto ve ne sono alcuni regalati dal buon cardinal Gozzadini: ma son pochi. Bisognerebbe far vedere di quante statue collocate con simetria sia capace il nuovo sito; e quando in esso *non si volessero mettere i modelli, si potrebbe sostituire la camera, ove ora sono i libri, e riconoscere di quanti modelli essa sia capace.*" The omission of key phrases (here italicized) in previous scholarship has confused Benedict's initial idea, in which Ercole Lelli (see below) may already have had a part; cf. Maino, "Magistero e potestà pontificia sull'Accademia Clementina di Bologna," 335, and *L'immagine del Settecento*, 87; and Pagliani, *L'orma dell' bello*, 23. Maino's important studies (see also *Gaetano Gandolfi*, 13ff) offer the fullest assessment to date of Lambertini's involvement in the Academy, while Pagliani's book, with its partial catalogue of surviving casts and documentary appendix, provides the starting point for any discussion of the *gipsoteca*.
- 3 On Millo's 1744 inspection trip, see Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 273, 332. On the building (but not the *gipsoteca*) see Lenzi, "Le trasformazioni settecentesche: l'Istituto delle Scienze e delle Arti," in Cavina, *Palazzo Poggi*, 58–78. On Lelli, see below, n14.
- 4 Benedict expressed his optimism about the Institute to Magnani on 1 January 1746 (Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 415): "Il tutto va a meraviglia, e ci creda, che mettendosi fuori a tratto a tratto quanto vanno

- lavorando questi virtuosi, la nostra commune patria riassumerà nel concetto degli uomini di garbo il vero titolo di madre de studij, se non per le materie legali, almeno per le scienze fisiche.”
- 5 On Marsili (also spelled Marsigli) see Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian, “Una vita al servizio di un progetto: Luigi Ferdinando Marsili e l’Istituto delle Scienze,” in Cavina, *Palazzo Poggi*, 184–90. For Marsili’s donations see Archivio di Stato di Bologna, Assunteria di Istituto, *Diversorum* (henceforth ASB, *Diversorum*), b. 31 [Accademia Clementina], fasc. 1.
  - 6 For a partial list, see ASB, *Diversorum*, b. 13, fasc. 5, noting “Artefatti antiche e moderne” sent by the pope on 10 April 1745, for installation “nella Stanza delle Antichità”; see also *Novelle letterarie*, 12 December 1755. On Benedict’s “refoundation” of the Accademia Clementina see Maino, “Magistero,” 331ff, and *L’immagine*, 81–98.
  - 7 Archenholz, *England und Italien*, 2: 78: “Es ist gleichsam eine sinnliche Encyklopädie.”
  - 8 [Pierre-Jean Grosley], *New Observations on Italy and its Inhabitants*, 1: 130–1 (originally published as *Nouveaux Mémoires, ou Observations sur l’Italie*, where cf. 1: 207–8).
  - 9 Lalande, *Voyage d’un François en Italie*, 2: 28–9; the description of the Institute continues through 47.
  - 10 Grosley, *New Observations*, 1: 130.
  - 11 On the Accademia Clementina, initially composed of forty painters, sculptors, and architects, see Zanotti, *Storia dell’Accademia Clementina*; Bolletti, *Dell’origine e de’ progressi dell’Istituto delle scienze di Bologna*, 26–39; and a rich modern bibliography. On Benedict’s consciousness of Bologna’s comparative lack of antiquities, see Prodi and Fattori, *Le lettere di Benedetto XIV*, 419 (8 January 1746).
  - 12 For a resume of the donations, including casts presented by Marsili’s brother, bishop of Perugia, and the modeller charged with their installation, see ASB, *Diversorum* b. 31 [Accademia Clementina], fasc. 1, fols 221v through 223r.
  - 13 See, for instance, ASB, *Diversorum*, b. 30 [Accademia Clementina], fasc. 23.
  - 14 On Lelli (in Rome in June 1747), see Medici, “Elogio d’Ercolo Lelli”; Briganti, *La pittura in Italia*, 1: 276 (discussion by Maino), 2: 764–5 (biography by Nicosetta Roio); Maino, *L’immagine*, 84ff (insisting on Benedict’s driving role but with some confusions about chronology); and Messbarger, *The Lady Anatomist*, 20–51.
  - 15 For Scarselli’s role in a subsequent proposed donation see Pasquali, “Francesco Algarotti.” For his own donation of gold medals to the Institute see Angelelli, *Notizie dell’origine*, 98 (an expanded edition of Bolletti’s 1751 guidebook).

- 16 Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (henceforth BUB) Mss. Italiani 3882, capsula LVIII, item A 13 (5 letters to Lelli from Flaminio Scarselli from Rome, 1748–52), dated “Roma 21 Giugno 1752” and beginning “Dopo lungo silenzio ho il piacere di scriverle con qualche speranza, che non sia p. essere del tutto inutile il nostro carteggio ...” Bolletti’s 1751 *Dell’origine* (cf. Fig. 16.1) identified the space as “Atrio destinato per le memorie de’ Benefattori dell’Istituto,” a sign that its use was still under discussion.
- 17 BUB, Mss. Italiani 3882, capsula LVIII, item A 13, dated “Roma 12 Luglio 1752” and beginning “Se il potere corrispondesse alla mia buona volontà ...”
- 18 ASB, *Diversorum*, b. 30, fasc. 25, a fair copy beginning “Lo stato presente dell’Accademia de Pittori è poco comodo.”
- 19 However, Lelli was hoping for a paid appointment as the collection’s curator, which did not materialize until 1759 (see below); on 17 February 1753 Mons. Millo informed Lelli that budgetary constraints and objections from the Assunti had prevented him from securing Lelli “la Custodia delle Statue,” but that the pope hoped to provide some assistance from the Aldrovandi bequest (BUB, Mss. Italiani 3882, capsula LVIII, item A 9, three letters from Millo to Lelli).
- 20 I am currently preparing a detailed study of Farsetti and his academy, including questions of pedagogy and display.
- 21 Montaignon, *Correspondance des directeurs*, 10: 434 (letter 4942, Natoire to Vandières, 17 January 1753).
- 22 The contract, based on Benedict’s *motu proprio* of 16 April 1755 and signed by Cardinal Girolamo Colonna di Sciarra for the pope and Niccoli Coduzzi for Farsetti, noted ten changes to the original list of works but still included the Ludovisi statues and wrongly ascribes the *Dea Tellure* (the so-called *Mattei Ceres*, not acquired for the Vatican until 1770) to the Belvedere. For the full text, published in 1756, see Pagliani, *L’orma*, 153–6.
- 23 Montaignon, *Correspondance des directeurs*, 10: 442 (letter 4946, Natoire to Vandières, 14 March 1753) and 447 (letter 4948, Vandières to Natoire, 8 April 1753). On the moulds, see Lalande, *Voyage*, 2: 44.
- 24 Montaignon, *Correspondance des directeurs*, 10: 434 (letter 4942, Natoire to Vandières, 17 January 1753); Natoire clarified that the Academy had two casts of the *Germanicus* and that the one in the main apartment would not be touched.
- 25 BUB, Mss. Italiani 3882, capsula LVIII, item A 17, Bentivoglio to Lelli, 13 September 1753.
- 26 De Angelis, *Prospero Lambertini*, 314; ASB, *Diversorum* b. 31, fasc. 2, an undated “memoria” to the Bolognese ambassador; and BUB, Mss. Italiani

- 3882, capsula LVIII, item A 18, an undated letter from Farsetti to Lelli beginning "Or che tutto è non che finito mà dimenticato."
- 27 Montaignon, *Correspondance des directeurs*, 11: 159 (letter 5195, Natoire to Marigny, 22 September 1756).
- 28 Malvezzi, who had donated a whale's rib in 1738 (Bolletti, *Dell'origine*, 90), also brokered Benedict's large gift of master prints in the 1750s.
- 29 ASB, *Diversorum*, b. 31, fasc. 12, first grouping, comprising three sets of questions/proposals from Rome with answers/responses from Bologna in a different hand, arranged in parallel columns; two supporting lists of expenses; a letter from Scarselli to Malvezzi dated 30 July 1757, beginning "All'Em.o Millo ho comunicato"; an anonymous letter (evidently also to Malvezzi) dated 6 August 1757, beginning "Io temo"; and a folded sheet beginning "Venendo ora." Although largely undated, this cluster is clearly out of order both in the fascicle and in the transcription by Pagliani in *L'orma*, 157–60, where it is somewhat misleadingly considered a single document. The detailed engagement with questions of installation suggest that Lelli, not Malvezzi, was the driving force behind the proposals discussed below.
- 30 ASB, *Diversorum*, b. 31, fasc. 12, first grouping, unsigned and headed only "Domande" (left) and "Risposte" (right). For the Academy's minutes and proposed thanks to the pope, see Pagliani, *L'orma*, 27.
- 31 *Geta, Silenus, Augustus, Ariadne, Alexander, Faustina, Domitian*, and Bernini's *Apollo* from his group of *Apollo and Daphne* at Villa Borghese; see the 1766 inventory below.
- 32 ASB, *Diversorum*, b. 31, fasc. 12, first grouping, as above, headed "Proposte al Sig.e Sen.re Malvezzi, secondo gli ordini dell'Emo-, e Rmo- Sig.e Card. Millo," in the hand of Scarselli, with a closing date of 2 July 1757. This exchange contains two inserts marked A and B, estimating costs as below.
- 33 ASB, *Diversorum*, b. 5, fasc. 22, numbers 18–20, now separated but clearly prepared (perhaps by Lelli) in the summer of 1757 to accompany Malvezzi's second exchange with Cardinal Millo. The depiction of just sixty-one pedestals suggests that only three of the Institute's existing casts, with bases, were to be integrated with the pope's gift, likely for reasons of space.
- 34 Millo may also have sought advice from his protégé Carlo Marchionni, whom he successfully promoted that year to prestigious posts as Architetto generale of the Camera Apostolica and the Palazzo Apostolico, and Architetto revisore of St Peter's.
- 35 "Tutto il segnato di Color Giallo mostra la Pianta dei Piedistalli di ciascheduna Statua fatti in misura posti all suo vero lume." A study of the shapes and sizes might clarify the subjects intended; busts, for instance, are largely clustered in the western room, whereas the square pedestal in

- the middle of the eastern room is presumably the *Hercules*. Several features of the drawings, which seem to show only two lunette windows in the section, suggest that they are not the products of a professional draughtsman.
- 36 ABA, *Diversorum*, b. 31, fasc. 12, "Progetto, e domande dell'Emo-, e Rmo-Sig.r Card:le Millo al Sig.re Sen.re Malvezzi," beginning "I. Il Sig.re Card:le propone di valersi della Camera destinata in oggi per l'Accademica del Nudo in tempo d'Estate."
- 37 ASB, *Diversorum*, b. 31, fasc. 12, first grouping, letter in Scarselli's hand, beginning "All'Emo- Millo ho comunicato il foglio delle risposte di V. E. al suo progetto."
- 38 ABA, *Diversorum*, b. 30 [Accademia Clementina], fasc. 26, beginning "Il Sig.r Sec.rio de l'Acad.a Clement.a per parte degli' Ill.mi et Ecc.i Sig.i de l'Ass.ria è avvisato," dated 5 April 1759 "di Palazzo." Two further drafts give the director more leeway about admission and timing; see also a satirical distich apparently left in the drawing rooms.
- 39 ASB, *Diversorum*, b. 31, fasc. 12, "Inventario delle Statue di gesso collocate nella Galleria delle Statue dell'Instituto contigua alla Scuola del Nudo: il qual Inventario è stato fatto li 26. marzo 1766. in occasione di farne la consegna al Sig.r Domenico Pio destinato Custode, e direttore di detta Galleria," transcribed by Pagliani in *L'orma*, 162–3, who also outlines the collection's later history.
- 40 The entrance wall bore a 1757 inscription commemorating Benedict's donation of "statuas ectypas ... summo artificio factas multoque aere comparatas"; see Angelelli, *Notizie*, 89.
- 41 Listed merely as "Venere" but presumably the *motu proprio*'s Uffizi "Venere a sedere," a statue described in 1598 as "Venere di marmo a sedere a nat<sup>le</sup> che si lava"; see Haskell and Penny, *Taste and the Antique*, 321.
- 42 By 1780, this cabinet (which Bolletti described in 1763 as "un armario elegantemente disposte") had been supplemented with display tables and the reliefs moved to end wall of the eastern room, a position confirmed by 1803 inventory; see Angelelli, *Notizie*, 90–1, and Pagliani, *L'orma*, appendix, 165.
- 43 According to a common early reading, della Porta's figure was identified as "Verità" both here and in the 1755 *motu proprio*. Unusually, this side of the room had fewer pedestals than first projected (six rather than eight), since each was comparatively wider. The row's terminal figure, an upright "Venus" from Villa Albani now in the Louvre (listed in 1803 as "una Teti" [*Thetis*]), also needed a broad base to accommodate the ship's prow restored by Cavaceppi.
- 44 This placement may have been provisional, since by 1803 the centaurs had taken the place of the *Della Valle Satyrs* on the end wall. On the installation of the Capitoline salon, see Collins, "A Nation of Statues, 193–4.

- 45 Grosley, *New Observations*, 1: 130–1.
- 46 Angelelli, *Notizie*, 88.
- 47 Collins, *Papacy and Politics*, ch. 4, and “Nation of Statues,” 199–209.
- 48 ASB, *Diversorum* b. 18 fasc. 16 (Joseph II), fasc. 18 (Archduke Maximilian), fasc. 19 (Archduchess Christina), fasc. 23 (Pius VI, 23 May 1782). On Pius’s links to Benedict see Collins, *Papacy and Politics*.
- 49 Archenholz, *England und Italien*, 2: 79.
- 50 Kenworthy-Brown, “Matthew Brettingham’s Rome Account Book,” 102–6.
- 51 Algarotti to Flaminio Scarselli in Rome, in *Opere del conte Algarotti*, *Edizione Novissima* (Venice: Carlo Palese, 1794), 9: 178–9 (where misdated 27 February 1751; see Pasquali, “Francesco Algarotti,” 159, 165): “Sento che Bologna e Roma, l’Istituto e il Campidoglio si vadano arricchendo alla giornata per la munificenza del Papa. Due gran musei, due tempj s’innalzan quivi alle tre arti sorelle, si fanno quivi conserve di ogni bello; frammenti di antica architettura quadri e statue, che saranno precetti ed esempj alla studiosa gioventù. Le dirò fantasia, che a tal proposito mi è surta in mente di contribuire anch’io a sì grande impresa, di portare una gocciola al mare.” Algarotti puns on Palladio’s term for “drip moulding.”

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*busta 5*

fasc. 22 [architectural plans and drawings related to the Istituto, removed for conservation in 1992 and now kept unfolded with other plans from the *Diversorum* in a large folder in “Cassetiera F”].

*busta 13*

fasc. 5 [a note of gifts of “Artefatti antichi e moderne” sent by Benedict XIV on 10 April 1745 for installation “nella Stanza delle Antichità”].

*busta 30* [Accademia Clementina]

fasc. 23 [later labelled “1744 Proposte circa il buon andamento delle scuole”].

fasc. 25 [later labelled “1752 Scuola del Nudo e delle Statue (Proposte del Lelli)”].

fasc. 26 [later labelled “1759 / Capitoli pel Direttore della Galleria e Custode delle Statue”].

*busta 31* [Accademia Clementina]

fasc. 1 [later labelled "Doni di oggetti d'arte di varie genere (dal Card. Casoni, dal Gen. Marsili, dal Ema- Gozzardini, dal Monsig. Marsili, e da altri)].

fasc. 2 ["Contratto di Statue fatto dalla S. M. di Bened: XIV a comodo dell'Instituto dall' Abb:e Farsetti di Venezia"].

fasc. 12 [large group of documents later labelled "1757 / Disposizione di locali e collocamenti di statue (proposte del Card. Millo) / Inventario di modelli in gesso 1766"].

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## 17 Ethnicity, Empire, and “Europe”: Jesuit Art in China during the Papacy of Benedict XIV

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KRISTINA KLEUTGHEN

The papacy of Benedict XIV (1740–58) in Europe occurred towards the second half of the High Qing period (1661–1795) in China, an era defined by the successive reigns of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911) emperors Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong. During this period, a number of Jesuits served the Chinese court as cartographers, translators, mathematicians, scientific advisors, and artists in the hopes of converting the emperor (and therefore the nation) to Christianity through innovation and intellect. However, in the mid-eighteenth century the policies of both the Qing court and Pope Benedict doubly constrained their evangelical activities and practices of cultural accommodation. These constraints coincided with an unprecedented period of Qing imperial ethnocultural consolidation, empire expansion, and international exchange that required an intense image-making campaign. For this campaign, the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–95)<sup>1</sup> relied specifically on three Jesuit painters, who were arguably the missionaries most often in contact with the throne at the time. Consequently, the energies of these Jesuits were directed fully towards their imperial service, required by both the emperor and the pope, to focus on art rather than Chinese conversion. Despite the limitations, these men not only created some of the most iconic illustrations of the Qing empire at its height, but through their work were essential to sustaining the Jesuit mission in China despite Benedict’s policies against transcultural Christianity.

### **Jesuit Acculturation Practices and the Chinese Rites Controversy**

Arriving in China in 1582, late in the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) adapted the general Jesuit policy of acculturation and

accommodation for the Asian missions to the Chinese situation. Rather than employing the practices and terminology of Buddhist monks to present themselves within religious culture, the Jesuits instead adopted the dress, language, and customs of the highly educated Confucian scholar-official class in order to strengthen their self-presentation as educated men with privileged knowledge and to better appeal to this elite group with its significant social, cultural, and political power. Recognizing the cultural importance of traditional and Confucian rituals such as ancestor veneration, the Jesuits accommodated these native Chinese religious practices and employed some established Chinese terms for Christian terms and concepts. Ricci even related Confucianism and Christianity directly in his 1584 treatise, *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (Tianzhu shiyi)*, which used the rational, erudite rhetoric of the educated class to emphasize the similarities between what might otherwise have been treated as competing belief systems. These accommodations, together with the emphasis on knowledge, initially helped the Society of Jesus succeed in making a number of converts among Chinese scholar-officials, and the mission increasingly began to seek the conversion of the Ming emperor himself in order to transform the nation from the top down.

In 1644, after the fall of the ethnically Chinese Ming dynasty and the establishment of the Manchu Qing dynasty, the Jesuits intensified their campaign to convert the new rulers. Rather than relying on scholar-official elite culture as they had previously, now they employed European science, mathematics, astronomy, cartography, and art. These subjects particularly appealed to the Kangxi emperor (r. 1661–1722), who sought to consolidate imperial control through technical knowledge and mathematics<sup>2</sup> (which included linear perspective in painting) and helped assure the Jesuits' high position as respected imperial advisors. In 1692, although he himself had not converted, Kangxi issued an Edict of Toleration that allowed both the Jesuits and their Chinese converts to practise Christianity in peace, and the Jesuits themselves were actively engaged at court as imperial advisors, artisans, and servitors.

Along with the Jesuits, the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Augustinians all were evangelizing in China during the seventeenth century, although with much less success. These other Catholic orders vehemently disagreed with the Jesuit acculturation policy and refused to allow any accommodations for Chinese customs, just as they refused such accommodations in other missions around the world. This disagreement extended even to the very terms used to name the divine

in Chinese: the non-Jesuit groups preferred the neologism “Lord of Heaven” (*Tianzhu*) rather than the traditional, familiar Chinese terms for the divine such as “Heaven” (*tian*) and “God” or “Supreme Emperor” (*Shangdi*), which the Jesuits allowed. Furthermore, these other groups argued that ancestor veneration, which grounded the Confucian customs of the court and the elite, as well as the traditional folk beliefs of the common people were incompatible with Christianity in general and the first commandment in particular. In contrast, the Jesuits argued that ancestor veneration was more of a social custom than a sacred rite, and that veneration of Confucius in particular was a civil rather than a religious matter. The Jesuits promoted the successes achieved by their acculturation policies as evidence in support of their position, but that success incited further envy and disapproval among the other missionary groups competing for the prize of converting China to Christianity.<sup>3</sup>

The resulting debate over what native customs to allow or deny within Chinese Christianity became known as the Chinese Rites controversy and laid the foundation for Benedict XIV’s policies towards Jesuit activities in China.<sup>4</sup> Although the Chinese Rites debate began in 1645, it reached its zenith in the early eighteenth century. Pope Clement XI (r. 1700–21) promulgated the decree *Cum Deus Optimus* in 1704 and the bull *Ex Illa Die* in 1715, which together unequivocally condemned Chinese terms for the divine, ancestor worship, and Confucian rituals as practices that conflicted with Catholic teaching, and prohibited them among Chinese converts. Declaring that he had never seen a document that contained “so much nonsense”<sup>5</sup> and not differentiating the Jesuit approach from that of the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Augustinians, the previously tolerant Kangxi banned Christian evangelism in China outright in 1721. However, he did allow the Jesuits to remain at court, and some missionaries continued to operate clandestinely in the provinces, far from the capital and imperial oversight. Despite these bans, the Jesuits achieved some limited ecclesiastical acceptance of traditional Chinese customs in the semi-secret “Eight Permissions” enumerated by the papal legate, Archbishop Carlo Ambrogio Mezzabarba (1685–1741), such as the right to keep ancestral tablets and to place plates of food before them in symbolic acknowledgment of family. These were inconsistently enforced because they contradicted the papal bull, and their very existence not only increased dissent between the Jesuits and other Catholic orders but also kept the issue of the Chinese Rites controversy alive in Europe.

Expanding on his father's policies, in 1724 Kangxi's son and successor, the Yongzheng emperor (r. 1723–35) banned Christianity entirely and ordered all Chinese Christians to renounce their foreign faith. Furthermore, he expelled all missionaries to Macau except those serving the court in technical capacities, a practice that his successor Qianlong continued. Christianity in China was thus officially limited to those few Jesuits allowed to serve the court, but from the European perspective, it was not until the start of Benedict XIV's papacy that the Rites controversy was concluded. Writing first in 1742 and again in 1744, Benedict reiterated Clement's decree in his respective bulls, *Ex Quo Singulari* and *Omnium Sollicitudinum*, which conclusively denounced the rites in question, explicitly revoked the "Eight Permissions," and forbade any further debate on the matter. This final prohibition on indigenized Chinese Christianity, acculturation and assimilation practices, and any discussion of the subject resulted in significantly reduced Jesuit evangelical activity in China. However, Jesuit artists, scientists, and intellectuals continued to arrive at the court until the Society of Jesus was officially suppressed in 1773, which was announced in Beijing in 1775.

### Jesuit Artists in China

Despite these prohibitions and the resulting tension between Rome and Beijing in the eighteenth century, the three Jesuit artists serving the Qianlong court during Benedict's pontificate enjoyed great success and favour. The most famous of these, and indeed of all the European artists ever to serve the court, was undoubtedly the Milanese Giuseppe Castiglione (known in Chinese as Lang Shining [1688–1766]). Castiglione did not originally intend to join the Church: he was instead a trained professional painter and, although there is no evidence of direct apprenticeship, claimed to follow the Jesuit master *quadraturisti* Andrea Pozzo (1642–1709), whose illusionistic *quadratura* paintings covered the ceiling of Sant'Ignazio, the Society's mother church in Rome.<sup>6</sup> Castiglione joined the novitiate in January 1707 at age nineteen and was registered on that day as "novice coadjutor assigned to the Chinese Province," which suggests that the Society chose Castiglione specifically to meet the needs of the China mission.<sup>7</sup> His training as a professional painter was essential to this assignment: the 1704 departure of the last trained European painter sent to the Qing court, the layman Giovanni Gherardini (1655–1723) attached to the French Jesuit mission, had left an artistic vacuum that the Kangxi emperor was keen to fill.

Castiglione arrived in Beijing in 1715, taking up his post just as Clement's anti-Rites bull was announced and Jesuit scientific influence at the court was waning. Although none of his works from the Kangxi era remain, he served as both a painter and a painting teacher, activities that continued during the Yongzheng reign.

During Benedict's papacy, Castiglione served the Qianlong emperor as one of that ruler's most respected and productive artists: he worked as an enamel-painter, an architect, and a painting teacher, but was most famous for his skill in producing sensitive, realistic portraits of the emperor and his family. Castiglione was never fully ordained and remained a lay brother, which was not uncommon for professional artists and artisans who joined the Society as adults, as it allowed Rome to deploy their talents where they might be most effective rather than specifically requiring them to proselytize. In Castiglione's case, this lay brother status further contributed to his focused activity as a court painter rather than a missionary in the typical sense of the term. Never returning to Europe, Castiglione served Qianlong faithfully until his death in 1766 and was buried in Beijing. Although favoured during his lifetime with the honours of a third-rank mandarin, the burial riches and posthumous promotion to vice-minister that Qianlong bestowed upon the artist were unprecedented for a foreigner, demonstrating the ruler's respect and personal affection for both the artist and the man who had served three successive Qing emperors for more than fifty years.

For more than twenty years, Castiglione was the only trained European painter at the Qing court until the arrival of the French Jesuit Jean-Denis Attiret (known as Wang Zhicheng [1702–68]) in 1737.<sup>8</sup> A talented painter from an active family of artists and artisans in Dole,<sup>9</sup> Attiret also served Qianlong for the rest of his life, but is perhaps better known in the West for his letters written to French colleagues and published in the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*. Most famously, Attiret authored the description of the Qing imperial Perfect Brightness Garden (*Yuan-mingyuan*) that profoundly influenced the European fashion for chinoiserie in garden design.<sup>10</sup> As a fully professed Jesuit, however, Attiret seems to have felt confined by his role as a court artist and the pressures placed upon him to produce any subject upon demand. At least as early as 1743 he complained of the strictures on his time and activities: "My purpose for coming to China was not for painting; and the reason why I am not willing to go home to Europe is not because I cannot give up painting. I am only obeying the will of God for the sake of His gospel.

Though I serve all day long in the inner court, I am simply imprisoned there. When the Sabbath or a feast comes around, I can find no time for prayer; I am given no opportunity to practice holy rites ... If my service to the Emperor did not secure an eternal reward for me in Heaven, I should certainly go away indignantly."<sup>11</sup>

Attiret's comments intended for readers at home clearly suggest a missionary painter frustrated because he is unable to fulfil his intended evangelical goals for the Church. Yet even more evocatively, they indicate service so gruelling that he is unable even to maintain his private prayers and priestly obligations given imperial demands on his time (and perhaps an imperial desire to minimize Christian activities as much as possible), illustrating the persistent Jesuit struggle with the imbalance of worldly responsibility and divine devotion. Nevertheless, Attiret remained a faithful and respected imperial retainer until his death in Beijing in 1768.

The third European painter active during Benedict's papacy was the Bohemian Ignatius Sichelbarth (known as Ai Qimeng [1708–80]), who arrived in Beijing in 1745.<sup>12</sup> Born in Nejdeč (now part of the Czech Republic), as the artist who transitioned the cohort of Jesuit painters out of the Castiglione era Sichelbarth became a third-rank official in 1777 and remained at the court until his death in 1780. Very little is known about his life prior to his arriving in China, and few individual works are signed by or can be attributed to him. But the archives of the imperial painting academy document his consistent participation in imperial commissions as well as numerous collaborations with his Chinese and Manchu court painter colleagues. Ultimately, he became known as a talented portraitist and animal painter who served Qianlong for thirty-five years, and was the last of the painters who originated during Benedict's papacy.

During the 1740s and 1750s, despite Benedict's prohibitions, Castiglione, Attiret, and Sichelbarth together continued a form of Ricci's policy of acculturation in the works of art they produced for Qianlong. All three were attached to the Wish-Fulfilling Studio (*Ruyiguan*), the branch of the imperial painting academy populated by the emperor's best artists and artisans who collaborated to produce large, luxurious, colourful works executed in a blend of Chinese and European techniques that have come to epitomize High Qing imperial art. This uniquely Qing court style combined Chinese brushwork, aesthetics, and subjects with European techniques such as perspectival spatial rendering, three-dimensional forms created through foreshortening and highlighting, and convincingly modelled portraits. Notably absent in these paintings are cast shadows and

*chiaroscuro* shading, particularly on faces, in conformity to Chinese aesthetic tastes. Many eighteenth-century Chinese viewers (and Qianlong in particular) consistently perceived such dark areas as dirty marks on the painting surface rather than shading, so these artists instead used light and highlight to create volumetric forms.

Qianlong maintained an active role in the imperial painting academy, particularly the elite branch of the Wish-Fulfilling Studio. He would first commission one or more artists to produce a draft of a painting, then critique the draft, often requesting changes to it before finally ordering its execution, and ultimately approving the finished work after any requested changes had been made to that version. Following standard imperial academy practice, the European, Chinese, and Manchu painters of the Wish-Fulfilling Studio typically collaborated on commissions, each contributing his individual talents in painting faces, robes, architecture, landscape, flowers, and so on to create what would theoretically be the best possible work. Often these paintings are unsigned: only rarely do the many works from the former Qing imperial collection display the complete list of the many hands involved in their creation, although sometimes the full range of these names can be established from the painting academy archives.

Despite the fact that Castiglione, Attiret, and Sichelbarth all were Jesuits, the subject matter of their paintings is consistently and entirely Qing: since these subjects were provided by the emperor, there is neither overt nor concealed Christian symbolism in any of them. Any animal or plant that might have had a deeper meaning in the context of Christian Europe also had a specifically Chinese symbolism that was paramount at the Qing court, particularly as proselytization was forbidden and the emperor determined the subjects of all commissions. Paintings might occasionally incorporate motifs that can also be seen in intentionally Christian images, but any Christian symbolism these artists might have concealed in Qing court art in order to aid in conversion would have missed its mark entirely.<sup>13</sup> Instead, the emphasis was on these Jesuits' abilities to create seemingly documentary images of people and events important to the Qianlong reign and therefore to the perception of it both at the time and in the future.

### **Art of Ethnicity**

Especially during the early years of Benedict's papacy, Qianlong worked to strengthen the perception of his ethnic identity. Ethnic identity was



vitally important to the Qing emperors: as Manchus, they claimed kinship with the Mongol descendants of Genghis Khan and originated north of the Great Wall – and therefore outside the boundary that traditionally defined “China.” The minority ruling Manchus were ethnically and culturally distinct from the majority Han Chinese population within a diverse empire that also included Mongols, Tibetans, and Muslims. The Manchus maintained their ethnic identity, and therefore superiority, particularly through culture and activity. It can be said that the Han Chinese scholar-official elite valued the sedentary mental accomplishments of classical education, literary skill, and connoisseurial abilities, while the Manchus prized the active physical achievements of equestrian skill, hunting, archery, and general martial prowess in addition to Manchu language and dress. Although this assessment admittedly risks oversimplifying the complexities of these ethnic divisions,<sup>14</sup> the dramatic physical activities of the Manchu ruling minority nonetheless distinguished them from the Han majority and provided ways of maintaining Manchu traditions against the threat of Han cultural temptations.

Beginning in 1741, as a means of maintaining both Manchu traditions and Mongol kinship, Qianlong revived his grandfather Kangxi’s practice of autumn hunts on a biannual schedule at Mulan, the private imperial game reserve approximately 300 miles north of Beijing at the southern edge of the Mongolian steppe. To commemorate the reinstatement of the hunts, Qianlong commissioned a series of at least seven large hanging scroll paintings that show him hunting wild game such as bear, deer, tigers, and geese at Mulan.<sup>15</sup> Characteristic of the action in these paintings is seen in a detail of *Portrait of Qianlong Hunting a Wolf* (1742, Plate 30), which depicts the emperor in Manchu robes riding on a white horse while aiming an arrow at a wolf, who runs in front of him through the red-leafed forests of the autumnal Mulan landscape. The emperor is dressed not in elaborate embroidered court robes of imperial yellow, but rather in a plain, monochromatic jacket, riding robe with split skirt, and black boots, a costume reflecting the Manchu values of frugality and simplicity as well as practicality for hunting. He is poised to shoot, both hands firmly on bow and arrow while he directs his horse with his knees in a bold display of strength and skill in both toxophily and equestrianism. The proximity of the horse to the dangerous wolf, both animals depicted in flying gallop with all four legs off the ground to indicate their swiftness and momentum, further demonstrates the emperor’s bravery as well as his ability to maintain his seat at full speed without using the reins.

Rather than showing the impending moment when the arrow inevitably struck the wolf and claimed the wild animal for the emperor, this painting and all the others in the series illustrate the moment of greatest skill and muscular tension just before the kill, showcasing the abilities required of a good Manchu. Although the painting is unsigned (as were most imperial portraits), the emperor and horse are attributable to Castiglione for the deftly realistic portraiture and dramatic postures seen for both the man and his mount. The realism and motion of the emperor and the animals, along with the anticipation of the resulting kill, suggest an instant occurring during the Mulan hunts that was then documented for posterity in the painting. However, in such cases the truth of the hunts becomes a constructed, artificial composition of idealized moments staged within highly controlled imperial events imbued with profound ideological and ethnic significance. Many paintings other than those in the Mulan set depict Qianlong hunting, with the emperor often produced by the Jesuit artists skilled at portraiture so that he is always immediately identifiable, and in such works he therefore always recognizably embodies Manchu ideals in the face of Han culture. Although Castiglione's hand can also be identified in portraits of Qianlong performing Han cultural roles, particularly those of a scholar or poet, the Mulan hunt series is unique in its presentation of confident and skillful huntsmanship, horsemanship, and archery across a large set of paintings.

### Art of Empire

One of the goals of the Mulan hunts was to strengthen Qing tribute relations with the Central Asian groups on the northwestern borders as part of Qianlong's approach to expanding the empire. The Qing maintained an active tributary system with the Kazakhs, Kirgiz, Turkic Muslims, Tibetans, and Mongols, ethnic and cultural groups that historically shared the nomadic equestrian culture of the Manchus. The issue of whether Qing gifting interactions with various regional groups was tribute (implying sovereignty) or trade (implying something closer to equality) has been hotly debated.<sup>16</sup> The imperial tribute system, which enacted gift exchange rituals between various kingdoms and the Qing court, was a highly idealized means of diplomacy through economic exchanges that were often perceived differently by giver and recipient. But both archival records and tribute paintings (*zhigongtu*) demonstrate that the Qing consistently conceptualized both the rituals

(in which foreigners presented local products unique to their regions to the Qing court) and the goods themselves as tribute rather than trade, implying the giver's acknowledgment of Qing superiority and sovereignty as well as his own inferior vassal status. Whatever the reality of the tributary system and how it functioned, in tribute paintings the Qing were consistently implied as sovereign, even when the emperor was not depicted.

Tributary groups often presented the Qing with magnificent horses and other local exotic animals as living tribute gifts that reflected the diversity of the empire. These special creatures, sometimes shown with their ethnic handlers, are frequently immortalized as one type of image in the historical genre of tribute paintings. One of the few works signed by Ignatius Sichelbarth is his album *Ten Fine Dogs* (c. 1745–58, [Plate 31](#)), which depicts distinctive tribute dogs from Tibet or Europe received over a period of more than a dozen years. Sichelbarth was perhaps best known for his skills as an animal painter and often painted the tribute animals Qianlong received. In this album, each leaf depicts a long-legged tribute hound in a Chinese landscape, accompanied by a short text written by a high-ranking court official on a separate page, naming and praising the dog as an individual specimen within the larger group.<sup>17</sup> The seemingly tangible texture of their canine coats, the extremely subtle shading with which Sichelbarth modelled them, and their varied poses further suggest that these are portraits of particular dogs with distinct personalities, rather than simply generic images of tribute animals. Given that all the individual dogs are collected in a single album and neither handlers nor other figures are represented, the animals themselves stand in for the tributaries. Their individualized presentation in an album produced over thirteen years ensured that the gifts symbolizing Qing sovereignty lived on long after their diverse givers had returned home.

Qianlong commissioned a large number of tribute paintings during the 1740s and 1750s, often showing Central Asian groups who occupied the desert region on the northwest frontier of the Qing empire. This is significant because the relationship between one of the most powerful groups there, the Zunghar Mongols, and the High Qing emperors had been tense for decades, resulting in numerous clashes with the Qing and other Mongol groups over the definitions of states and borders during the Kangxi and Yongzheng reigns.<sup>18</sup> Formal tribute-trade between the Qing and the Zunghars was re-established in 1739 and included embassies to the capital to present tribute gifts (including

animals) to Qianlong, which were depicted in paintings.<sup>19</sup> But internecine conflict precipitated by the 1745 death of their leader, Galdan Tseren, soon divided the Zunghar state, which by 1752 had witnessed a brutal internal power struggle and resistance to the Qing. By the end of 1754, Qianlong had decided to send 50,000 troops to quell the unrest and take control of the region, beginning with three campaigns fought successively between 1755 and 1759 to pacify the Zunghar Mongols and Muslim Khojas.<sup>20</sup> Qianlong's northwest pacification campaign was ultimately successful, expanding the Qing domain by nearly 1.5 million square miles with the addition of Xinjiang (literally "New Border") province. Yet these conflicts created no small amount of pressure for Qianlong and demanded his constant attention during the 1750s. Consequently, illustrations of Qing sovereignty over their tributaries were of paramount importance during this period and even after. In the early 1760s the northwestern campaigns were immortalized first in monumental wall-mounted paintings installed in court buildings and then in copperplate engravings designed by the Jesuit artists and printed in France.<sup>21</sup> This project began Qianlong's commissions in this foreign medium that would later expand to many sets depicting his other battles, as well as one of his garden-palaces (discussed below).

In this context, when the Khalka Mongols, another group that had previously been Qing tributaries but later broke away, requested to become official subjects again in 1754, Qianlong received them with great ceremony at the imperial summer retreat in order to demonstrate the great beneficence of the Qing towards its prodigal tributaries. The Mountain Retreat for Escaping Summer Heat (*Bishu shanzhuang*) was at Chengde, a town south of the Mulan hunting grounds but still well north of the Great Wall and therefore conceptually outside Han Chinese territory in the area historically populated by nomadic groups such as the Manchus and the Mongols. Initially hoping to take advantage of the emperor's absence from the capital for this event, Jean-Denis Attiret prepared to go on retreat in order to renew "the spiritual forces that one needs here more than anywhere else," as his colleague and French mission head Jean Joseph Marie Amiot (1718–93) said.<sup>22</sup> However, the very next day, Attiret was called to Chengde to paint portraits of some of the key figures and sketch the ceremonies, abruptly ending his retreat and demonstrating that imperial service continued to frustrate the exercise of his faith.

Several of these portraits still exist,<sup>23</sup> but the most impressive and ideologically complex work to result from this event is the massive

wall-mounted painting *Imperial Banquet in the Garden of Ten Thousand Trees* (1755, [Plate 32](#)), which Castiglione, Attiret, and Sichelbarth produced collaboratively with Chinese painters from the Wish-Fulfilling Studio after Attiret's sketches produced on site. The painting purports to record the ceremony confirming the return of the Mongol tribe to the Qing, to the extent that the face of each participant is individualized. The ceremony took place in the distinctive Mountain Retreat landscape that blended recreations of southern Chinese pagodas (visible at the top right of the painting) with the mountainous landscape of the Manchu homeland (at top left) and the grasslands of the Mongolian steppes, all in a microcosm of the empire.<sup>24</sup> The perspectival orthogonals of the red acrobatic structures in the extreme foreground and the neat rows of courtiers and Mongols converge above the white ceremonial yurt where the Khalkas will formally become Qing subjects. The scene and setting emphasize the splendour and authority of the Qing imperium as the central, primary governing power, while the uptilted ground plane enables a birds-eye view of the entire ceremony and surrounding landscape, fusing Chinese and European pictorial techniques for the greatest visual effect. Qianlong is larger than life, hierarchically sized to indicate his supremacy as he progresses to the ceremony. Although not an accurate representation in terms of scale, his recognizable visage, unquestionably painted by one of the Jesuits, confirms his actual presence at the ceremony. Through its naturalistic techniques, modified perspectival spatial rendering, monumental scale, and meticulous detail that together illustrate the pomp and circumstance of the occasion, the painting presents itself as a documentary record painted from life. The painting was later mounted on the wall of a building at the Mountain Retreat where Qianlong received other non-Chinese groups; the impressive size, intense detail, and realistic European techniques in the paintings all serving to trumpet Qing sovereignty over the border tribes in a time of war.

### **Art of "Europe"**

In addition to ethnic consolidation and the empire's expansion into Central Asia, the 1740s and 1750s was also a period in which Qianlong took a stricter approach to Western contact.<sup>25</sup> Although all Christian missionary activities had been officially prohibited in the wake of the Chinese Rites controversy, in the late 1750s officials in Zhejiang province reported pockets of clandestine Christian proselytization in Ningbo, one of the port cities then also used for Sino-western trade.

In 1757, Qianlong limited all Western trade to the port of Guangzhou (Canton) and required that each arriving Western vessel be guaranteed and supervised by a Chinese mercantile house. In 1760, he further restricted when this trade could occur and with whom, as well as where in Guangzhou Westerners could live during the trading season. Coupled with the earlier restrictions, this 1757–60 initiative produced the famous Canton system that governed Sino-Western trade up to the First Opium War (1839–42).

Despite tightening such regulations for Westerners, Qianlong's well-known fascination with European and occidentalizing goods continued unabated. During Benedict's papacy, the other major Jesuit artistic enterprise for the Qing court was the European Palaces (*Xiyanglou*), a Sino-European fantasy garden attached to the imperial Eternal Spring Garden (*Changchunyuwan*) next to the Perfect Brightness Garden. The first stage of the project was built between 1747 and 1759: multi-storeyed stone buildings designed by Castiglione were decorated with baroque and Chinese ornamental touches in polychrome glazed tiles, and European-style hydraulic fountains populated with bronze animals punctuated the seventy-five acre garden, which also included a European-style maze (the first in China). The garden was laid out with the symmetry and long perspectives of Renaissance Europe, which created a single perfect viewing position for any given scene, a position that only Qianlong would occupy. The buildings housed many of Qianlong's European curiosities and diplomatic gifts from the West (he would have called them "tribute gifts") as well as domestically produced "occidenterie."<sup>26</sup> In addition, their interiors were decorated with European-style paintings produced by Castiglione, Attiret, Sichelbarth, and their Chinese colleagues.<sup>27</sup> Qianlong also employed the skills of the engineers, botanists, and clockmakers among Beijing's Jesuit polymaths and his own workshop artisans in order to create this monument of European artistic and scientific abilities in a Chinese context.<sup>28</sup> Today a park of dramatic ruins, the most complete suggestion of how the site might have appeared at the time is preserved in a set of engravings known as the *Pictures of the European Palaces and Waterworks* (1781–6) designed by the Manchu court painter Ilantai (act. ca. 1750–90), one of Castiglione's last surviving students.<sup>29</sup> Although produced after Benedict's papacy, the engravings provide a glimpse of the Jesuit-designed site during its heyday.

Most evocatively, at the far eastern end of this garden, Qianlong commissioned monumental perspectival illusionistic paintings depicting a European village to be installed on massive stone screens (Figure 17.1).

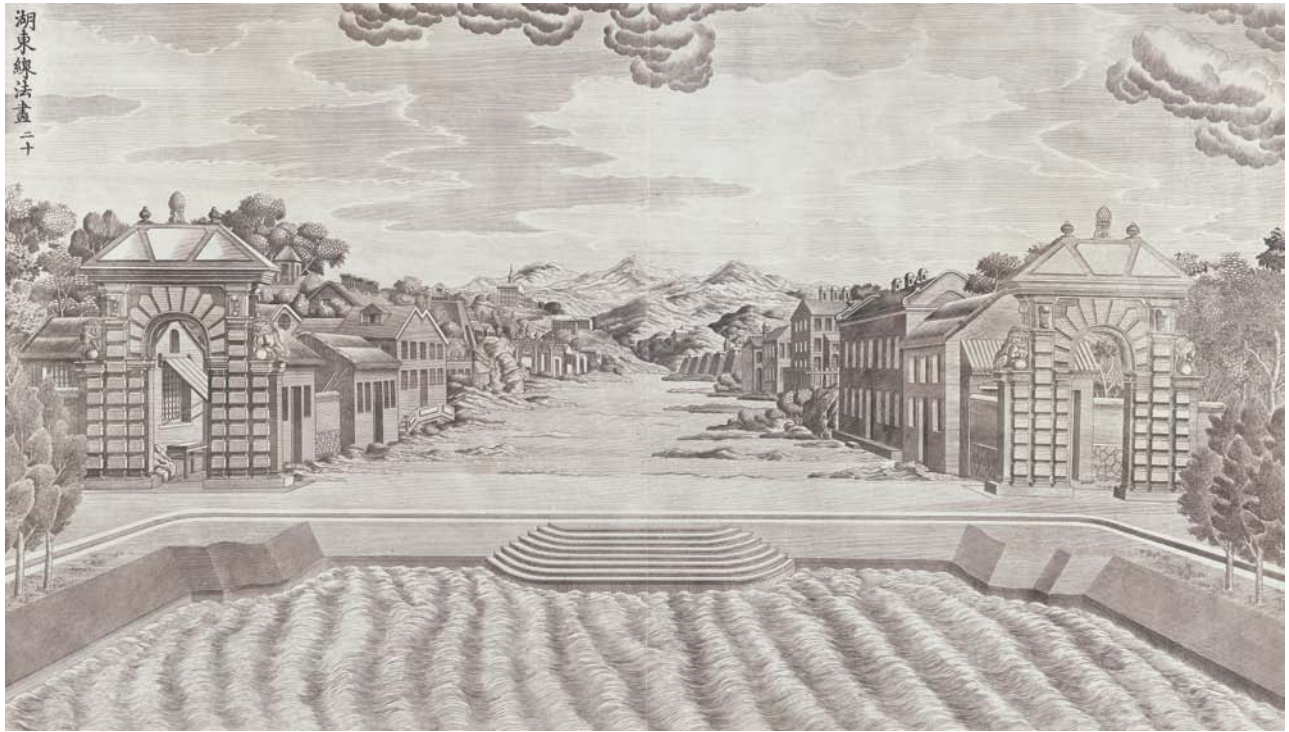


Figure 17.1 Ilantai, "Perspective Paintings East of the Lake," Plate 20, *Pictures of the European Palaces and Waterworks*, copperplate engraving, 1786. Getty Research Institute.

When viewed from across a narrow rectangular lake, the scenography suggested that Europe was accessible merely by simply sailing towards it. However, the engraving demonstrates that the view was always intended to be discovered as what the court knew as “scenic illusion paintings” (*tongjinghua* or *xianfahua*): monumental perspectival works that were also the products of the marvellous visual technologies introduced by the Jesuit artists at court. Captioned as “Perspective Paintings East of the Lake” rather than “European Villages East of the Lake,” the twentieth and final print in the engraving series demonstrates that Qianlong found greater significance in the painted *images* of foreign structures than in their actual construction, thereby emphasizing the recognition and identification of the view as material objects and painted illusions.

As the “Middle Kingdom” at the centre of the known universe, China was historically believed to exist in a hierarchical, concentric organization with barbarians on the periphery and vassal states closer to the centre. In addition, according to Confucian beliefs, a virtuous emperor also occupied a symbolic, immutable centre towards which all people would naturally move in obedient homage. Although there is no evidence that Qianlong considered Europe to be formally part of the Qing empire and he expressed no colonial ambitions towards it, the physical presence of even a vision of Europe within an exoticized occidentalizing garden is deeply meaningful. As visualizations of the superiority of the Qing empire, these paintings of a European village align perfectly with the illustrations of Qing Manchu ethnicity and power over Central Asia that is visualized in other paintings from the same period.

### **Benedict, Qianlong, and the Jesuits in China**

It is deeply significant that the largest percentage of Qianlong’s ethnic images, tribute paintings, and the European Palaces were produced during the period of increased attention to the margins of empire and contact with non-Qing groups that coincided with Benedict’s papacy. Benedict’s conservative policies towards China contrast sharply with his approaches elsewhere in the world, and the Jesuit mission suffered as a result of these strictures in combination with Qing court policies. Yet despite these constraints, the three Jesuit artists serving the Qianlong emperor during the Benedict papacy enjoyed such favour and regard precisely because of their work during this period, which coincided with



a pressing need for seemingly truthful images of a powerful emperor in control of a vast empire that touched distant lands. Paradoxically, Benedict's bull ending acculturation and the Qing court policies ending evangelization facilitated the period of greatest Jesuit artistic activity at the Qing court, freeing the Jesuit artists to focus all their efforts on imperial service during an unprecedented campaign of image-making in response to issues at the empire's periphery. This era produced magnificent works that continue to visually define the powerful, multicultural High Qing empire. Even today scholars struggle to separate the image of the Qing presented in these paintings from the facts about trade, tribute, and diplomacy recorded in archives and political documents, demonstrating the success of Qianlong's choice of the Jesuits to depict these events and sites. Despite the general failure of the Jesuit mission in East Asia, the accomplishments of the Jesuit artists at the Qing court during Benedict's papacy persist as exemplars of Sino-European contact during the golden age of late imperial China.

## NOTES

- 1 Elliott, *Emperor Qianlong*.
- 2 Jami, *The Emperor's New Mathematics*.
- 3 Brockey, *Journey to the East*, 151–63.
- 4 Standaert, *Chinese Voices in the Rites Controversy*; Mungello, *The Chinese Rites Controversy*; Minamiki, *The Chinese Rites Controversy*.
- 5 Li, *China in Transition*, 22.
- 6 On Castiglione, see Loehr, *Giuseppe Castiglione*; Ishida, "A Biographical Study of Giuseppe Castiglione"; Beurdeley, *Giuseppe Castiglione*; Musillo, "Bridging Europe and China," and "Reconciling Two Careers"; Naquin, "Giuseppe Castiglione / Lang Shining."
- 7 Musillo, "Bridging Europe and China," 111.
- 8 Although Matteo Ripa (1682–1746) also briefly served the Kangxi emperor as a court artist, by his own admission he was a very poor painter.
- 9 Dary, *Jean-Denis Attiret*.
- 10 Attiret, "Lettre du Père Attiret, peintre au service d l'empereur de la Chine."
- 11 "Lettre de Frère Attiret, de la Compagnie de Jesus," trans. in Ishida, "A Biographical Study of Giuseppe Castiglione," 91.
- 12 Zetl, *Ignaz Sichelbarth, 1708-1780*; Olivová, "Ignác Sichelbarth, SI."
- 13 China's Jesuits did produce religious images during the seventeenth century prior to the start of the Qing dynasty, most notably woodblock

printed books, but none survive from the eighteenth century. Some authors have tried to read specifically Christian symbolism into the Jesuit artists' works, but even they concede that the symbolism is, at best, ambiguous. See Siu, "China and Europe Intertwined."

- 14 Elliott, *The Manchu Way*.
- 15 For illustrations of some of the others, see Hong Kong Museum of Art, *A Lofty Retreat from the Red Dust*, 270–9, cats 68–71; Desroches, *La Cité Interdite au Louvr*, 284–7, cats 139–40; Rawski and Rawson, *China: The Three Emperors*, 394–5, cat. 29.
- 16 Fairbank and Ssu-yü, "On the Ch'ing Tributary System"; Millward, "Qing Silk-Horse Trade"; Di Cosmo and Wyatt, *Political Frontiers*; Perdue, *China Marches West*; Di Cosmo, "Kirghiz Nomads on the Qing Frontier."
- 17 Rawski and Rawson, *China: The Three Emperors*, cat. 84, 410–11.
- 18 Perdue, *China Marches West*, chaps 6 and 7, esp. 240–70.
- 19 Lin, "Qianlong chunian Zhunge'er bu shouci ruzang aocha"; on the effects of this in Qing court tribute paintings. see Kleutghen, *Imperial Illusions*, chap. 4.
- 20 Qianlong's Ten Great Campaigns included two against the Zunghar Mongols (1755–7); one to pacify what became Xinjiang province (1757–9); two to suppress the Jinchuan rebels in Sichuan (1747–9, 1771–6); one to suppress rebellion in Taiwan (1787–8); one in Burma (1767–71); one in Vietnam (1786–9); and two against the Gurkhas in Nepal (1790–2). See Zhuang, *Qing Gaozong shi quan wu gong yan jiu*; Elliott, *Emperor Qianlong*, 88–100.
- 21 Guardiola, *Les batailles de l'empereur de Chine*; Newby, "Copper Plates for the Qianlong Emperor."
- 22 Sommer, "A Letter from a Jesuit Painter in Qianlong's Court at Chengde," 173. The letter was written by Jean-Joseph Marie Amiot, SJ, to a Father de la Tour, and dated Beijing, 17 October 1754.
- 23 See Dary, *Jean-Denis Attiret*, 31–3.
- 24 Forêt, "The Intended Perception of the Imperial Gardens of Chengde."
- 25 Rowe, *China's Last Empire*, 142–4.
- 26 Kleutghen, "Chinese Occidenterie."
- 27 Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens, "Europeomania at the Chinese Court."
- 28 French mathematician and astronomer Michel Benoît, SJ (Jiang Youren, 1715–74) was responsible for engineering the hydraulics that supported the fountains, while botanist Father Pierre d'Incarville (Tang Zhizhong, 1706–57) and clockmaker and machine designer Brother Gilles Thébault,

SJ (Yang Zixin, 1703–66) also contributed their respective skills in garden design and ironwork.

29 On Ilantai, the engravings, and the scenic illusion paintings in the next section, see Kleutghen, *Imperial Illusions*, chap. 5.

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## 18 Academic Practice and Roman Architecture during the Reign of Benedict XIV

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TOMMASO MANFREDI

*Translated by Christopher M.S. Johns*

The painter Sebastiano Conca, during his second term as *principe* (prince, or president) of the Roman Accademia di San Luca from the end of Clement XII Corsini's papacy into the beginning of Benedict XIV Lambertini's (1739–41), posed an unusual request to his academic colleagues recorded by the Academy's historian Melchiorre Missirini.<sup>1</sup> Conca urged every painter, sculptor, and architect to write a theoretical treatise on his own discipline that was to be read by a committee, collected into a single volume, and then published. In so doing, Conca wanted to emulate other European academies and, at the same time, contradict those who dismissed Roman academicians as "simple functionaries in the various liberal arts."<sup>2</sup>

Conca did not exempt himself from his challenge to his fellow artists. He understood that he himself embodied the figure of the master artist, gifted with exceptional technical skills and aesthetic talent, but relatively lacking in theoretical preparation. For this reason, his initiative was both personal and highly exceptional.<sup>3</sup> The *principe* was attempting to reinvigorate a process introduced by his renowned predecessor in the Roman Academy, Federico Zuccari (ca. 1540–1609), which unfortunately had only limited success, as Romano Alberti recounted in *Origine, et progresso dell'Accademia del Disegno, de pittori, scultori et architetti di Roma* (1604). The *principe*'s initiative was specifically intended to emulate the practices of the French Royal Academy. Despite the formal connection between the Accademia di San Luca and the Académie de France à Rome codified in 1676, the relationship between the two institutions was unequal and favoured the latter, in part thanks to Louis XIV's establishment of the Académie de France à Rome in 1666 as a pedagogical institution for only the most promising pupils: the *pensionnaires*,

who received a stipend from the crown to continue their studies. Membership in the pontifical academy was more broadly based.

The Académie de France à Rome, a sort of “branch campus” of the Académie Royale in Paris, was placed under the supervision of the French royal arts administration. In this context, the pontifical Accademia di San Luca twice appointed as its *principe* directors from the Académie de France à Rome: Charles Errard (1672 and 1678) and Charles François Poerson (1714–18 and 1721–2).<sup>4</sup> They predictably encouraged the participation of young French students in the sporadic Roman art and architecture competitions, which were intended to test the initial results of their studies of the artistic and architectural heritage of Rome. However, after Poerson’s appointment ended in 1722, the connections between the two institutions progressively diminished and, in 1739, during Conca’s second term as *principe*, the French ended the collaboration for reasons unrelated to artistic issues. Beginning with the account of the unilateral cessation of the relationship between the Roman and Parisian academies at the time of Conca’s theoretical initiative, this chapter will describe the evolution and transformation of the Roman academic world during the papacy of Benedict XIV and in particular its impact on the conception and remarkably pragmatic approach to the teaching of architecture in the middle decades of the eighteenth century.

### The Academy: Competitions and Competitors

On 2 August 1738 Paul-Hippolyte de Beauvilliers, duke of Saint-Aignan and France’s ambassador to the papal court, asked Jean Jacques Amelot de Chaillou, Louis XV’s minister of foreign affairs, if he considered it appropriate for young French artists residing in Rome to participate in the upcoming student competitions at the Accademia di San Luca.<sup>5</sup> In these competitions, called *concorsi clementini* in honour of Pope Clement XI, who instituted them in 1702, students competed in painting, sculpture, and architecture. French participation was problematic because the new cardinal protector of the Accademia di San Luca was the papal *camerlengo* (chamberlain) Annibale Albani (nephew of Clement XI), who was considered to be anti-French. Moreover, Albani intended to dedicate the award ceremonies for the competition winners that took place on the Capitoline Hill to Prince Friedrich Christian of Saxony, heir of Augustus III, king of Poland, still formally an enemy of Louis XV in the years immediately following the War of the

Polish Succession (1733–6).<sup>6</sup> On 19 August Amelot responded to the duke, quelling any doubt: “Since there is no necessity for our nation’s students to work for the prizes of the Academy of Saint Luke, it is better that they absent themselves.”<sup>7</sup> Therefore, on 17 January 1739, a week after the awards ceremony had taken place, the ambassador reported that according to the directive no *pensionnaires* had participated.<sup>8</sup> Not even the sculptor Jean-Baptiste Pigalle, a former student of the Académie Royale in Paris (but who was not a *pensionnaire*), was present at the awards ceremonies, despite having won second prize in the sculpture category. Having falsely declared himself to be from the papal enclave of Avignon in southern France (and therefore not a subject of Louis XV), he participated in the competition, despite the French ambassador’s prohibition, but was later persuaded by the duke of Saint-Aignan to renounce it.<sup>9</sup>

The young Pigalle nonetheless in compensation received as a gift a replica of the gold medal awarded to the winners of the last Grand Prix in Paris from the royal minister Philibert Orry, Louis XV’s “arts czar” (*surintendant des bâtiments du roi*).<sup>10</sup> The director of the Académie de France à Rome, the painter Jean-François De Troy (1679–1752), presented the symbolic object to the young sculptor, judging it to be “better than those [medals] that are given by the Academy of Saint Luke as prizes.”<sup>11</sup> De Troy decided that as compensation for being prohibited from entering the Roman competitions, *pensionnaires* who were already in possession of royal Grand Prix medals should also have a modest monetary reward. Only in the case of the architect Jean-Laurent Legeay did the director consider it necessary to provide reputational reparation, sending to France the young architect’s prospectus design for “a large square for a capital city,” prepared for the first class of the *concorso clementino* of the Accademia di San Luca before the prohibition to enter the competition was announced. In that way, at least it could at least be appreciated in Paris.<sup>12</sup> Above and beyond the political implications of the ban on participation in the *concorsi clementini* by Louis XV’s *pensionnaires* in Rome, the French authorities were also condescending towards the Roman competitions in general and were uneasy about French artists in Rome operating outside the jurisdiction of the French Academy. Only a decade later did they come to understand that the *concorsi* were the best means by which an unknown foreign artist, even a French one, could gain professional prominence in the artistic capital of Europe. Thus, the return of independent French artists working in Rome to the



competitions in 1750 was unsurprising, even if current *pensionnaires* were still prohibited from participation.<sup>13</sup>

The Jubilee year of 1750 marked the end of the economic emergency occasioned by the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–8) that had forced the Accademia di San Luca to suspend its competitions in order to apply papal funding to retire its debts.<sup>14</sup> In summer 1752, the Roman Academy's influential protector, Cardinal Silvio Valenti Gonzaga (1690–1756), made a request to the painter Charles-Joseph Natoire (1700–77), successor to De Troy as director of the French Academy in Rome, to consult the statutes of the Académie Royale to see if anything beneficial in them could be adapted by the Accademia di San Luca.<sup>15</sup> We have no other information regarding the changes Valenti Gonzaga intended to bring to the Roman Academy based on the French institution's statutes, but to the practised eye of a great admirer of the arts like Valenti the profound differences already existing between the Roman and French institutions could not be ignored, whether on constitutive or formative grounds, and he found the current situation in the papal establishment lacking in comparison with the Académie de France.<sup>16</sup>

The Accademia di San Luca was established in 1577 as a free community of artists under the benign protection of the papacy, which was also one of the major patrons of its members. Each year the academicians collectively appointed their own primary officers, beginning with the *principe*. He then personally appointed the secondary officers from among all the professionally active members (*accademici di merito*). Painters, sculptors, and architects at various times occupied all the chief offices, and the papal academy tended to mirror the dominant professional groups of the artistic and cultural panorama in Rome. However, corporate interests did not necessarily coincide with talent, at least for artists from the Papal States, and the election to membership of non-resident artists was much less closely regulated, owing to the patronage of prominent individuals outside the States of the Church and to the number of relatively wealthy sponsors of individual artists who helped finance the Academy.<sup>17</sup>

The Parisian Académie Royale d'Architecture, on the other hand, was wholly dependent on the king, both through the political involvement of the superintendent of the king's buildings as well as the artistic and professional influence of the first architect to the king (*premier architecte du roi*), who was also its director. The institution wanted to define national style, but also attempted to establish norms and guidelines of every kind, all in the context of a rigid professional hierarchy among its

members, who entered the institution by royal appointment. The Académie d'Architecture, according to the statute of 1728, was composed of thirty-two architects, half of the first class, half of the second. Every Monday (excluding religious feasts and holidays from the beginning of September to the beginning of November) the two groups alternated in presenting lectures on themes chosen annually, ranging in topic from the form and appearance of column capitals to the developmental stages of a work in progress. These activities would soon come to have considerable influence on architectural pedagogy in Rome.

In a comparison of the administrative structures of the Roman and French academies in the realm of architecture, there were few differences in the context of pedagogy. Both called for weekly lessons: the Parisian, two (Tuesday and Friday) for all ten months of the academic year; the Roman, one (Sunday), from May to September. However, there were substantive differences regarding instructors and various didactic elements. The *professeur d'architecture* of the Académie Royale was a royal appointment and included direction of a structured teaching model in the form of a biennial or triennial course that, beginning in 1730, was dedicated to mathematics and taught by an adjunct professor under the *professeur's* supervision. At the Accademia di San Luca, the professorial role was voluntary and various academicians, based on their availability, took turns teaching architecture, above all perspective (*prospettiva*) and geometry (*geometria*). In the French institution, however, a single faculty member who usually was not overly engaged in professional practice was in charge of instruction. The ex-French *pensionnaire* Antoine Deriset, appointed to the position in 1728, is an example of such a professor.<sup>18</sup>

To become one of the Académie Royale's pupils, a male had to be at least sixteen years old, of good morals, well conducted, and Catholic. He also needed to know how to read and write and to be familiar with the essential rules of arithmetic and the rudiments of design; above all, he needed an established academician's patronage. More or less the same rules applied to the architectural students of the Accademia di San Luca. In both cases, the culmination of their studies took place at the competitions. But once again, these experiences were rather different in the two academies. The Grand Prix competitions for painting, sculpture, and architecture were reserved exclusively for academic students, in a single class. The architectural competitions begun in 1720 followed more closely codified procedures. On a predetermined day in April or May, one of the themes proposed by the Academy would be randomly

chosen. On that day, competitors would develop a proposal in the form of a draft, under strict supervision. Then, whoever survived the first selection would be given approximately three months to complete the proposed work and submit it to a committee of academicians for evaluation. These competitions were simultaneously taking place in the fields of painting and sculpture. Of the three prize-winners in each category, the first had the opportunity to accept a four-year residence at the Académie de France à Rome as a means to perfect his skill through the study of ancient and modern works in preparation for ultimate employment in governmental architectural initiatives.

Similarly, the *concorsi clementini* for painting, sculpture, and architecture were designed solely for students. However, de facto, they were also open to those artists present in Rome who met the requirements of age and educational formation, as long as they received Academy support. For each of the three arts, the competitions were subdivided into classes corresponding to the educational level of the candidate. Despite the published annual deadline, in the middle decades of the eighteenth century the competitions took place at widely spaced and often irregular intervals, unlike their French counterparts. From the moment the announcements were published the candidates had at least six months to develop their proposals. This process took place completely outside the Academy, without any guarantees about the originality of the works. After submission they were compared with the established style of the artist, and the competitors were then subjected to an additional task (*prova*), which was announced on the same day and which they had only two hours to complete. After the evaluation was made, three distinct committees chose the winners of the nine classes (three in each medium) of the competition. The prizes consisted exclusively of the medals awarded them during an elaborate ceremony on the Campidoglio (Capitoline Hill), a site of tremendous importance to ancient Roman history and recently the site of the newly opened Capitoline Museums under Clement XII and Benedict XIV.

Evidently, the system for the French competition also attempted to guarantee the originality of the student projects, but not for their actual execution. Conversely, the Roman procedures exposed the inventive phase of the project to external influences, beginning with the masters having contact with the competitors, and only afterwards were they inclined to question the projects' originality as evidenced through evaluation of the second *prova*. Moreover, the anonymity of the projects was entirely fictitious. In fact, in the highly unlikely case the judges did not

personally know the competitor, they could deduce his identity from the project's style, which was almost inevitably reflective of that of his master. The pupil's success was also his teacher's, virtually necessitating intervention and even abuses of power by the masters or by the noblemen and cardinals who protected and supported them.

Given this context, the absence of foreign competitors for the French Grand Prix is understandable and it thus helped to establish a more cohesive national stylistic identity. On the other hand, the Accademia di San Luca permitted the participation of students not attached to the institution's members, helping to foster a more cosmopolitan, international style. At the *concorso clementino* in 1738, the absence of the highly talented Legeay in the first class of architecture ensured the success of the Italians Carlo Mondelli and Carlo Innocenzo Sala, who in their proposals for a grand city square adhered to the cultural and professional positions of their respective masters.<sup>19</sup> Mondelli, student of leading papal architect Luigi Vanvitelli, identified himself with Roman classicism through the use of historical references to the most notable projects of the Vatican complex, from Saint Peter's Basilica to the front-facing piazza by Gianlorenzo Bernini. Sala, an Italian pupil of the above-mentioned Deriset, reintroduced his master's characteristic compositional and modular schemes. Various formal inconsistencies are evident in a small number of Deriset's constructions; both his church of SS Nome di Maria and the small square adjacent to Trajan's column influenced Sala's competition project. Deriset's theories, very important for Sala, are seen to advantage in the report formulated during his six years as a member of the commission charged with judging the competition models for the façade of San Giovanni in Laterano.<sup>20</sup> Conca, as *principe* of the Academy, served as chair of the committee. He considered Galilei's proposal commonplace and too heavy in its use of the orders and insufficient in design, and he claimed it did not follow the great traditions of Roman architecture, which required ornamental columns and more pronounced relief. He was favourable to the façade projects of Vanvitelli and Nicola Salvi, especially the latter, who was also the architect of the Trevi fountain.<sup>21</sup> The first prize, awarded to a pupil of Vanvitelli at the *concorso clementino* of 1738, thus constituted a personal vindication for his master. The prizes awarded to three of Vanvitelli's other students in 1750 were his crowning professional achievement, as we shall see in due course.

Nevertheless, in the Academy of Saint Luke's competition theme of an imposing college for teaching mathematics and the fine arts

(*magnifico Collegio ... per insegnare le Matematiche e le Belle Arti*), neither the first-place entry of Francesco Sabatini (Figure 18.1), nor those of the runners-up Gaetano Sintes and Francesco Collecini, demonstrate any element of novelty. Rather, all evidence points to the fact that their projects aligned closely with those of the first two winners at the *concorso clementino* of 1708 on an analogous theme of an arts academy building by the French *pensionnaire* Pierre De Villeneuve and the Polish architect Benedikt Renard, respectively. With more than forty years between them, Vanvitelli's three pupils, evidently on the direction of their master, were developing the same formal models their predecessors had created under the direct influence of Louis XIV's architect Jules Hardouin Mansart in Paris and Carlo Fontana in Rome, visualizing the supreme importance of adhering to Roman traditions. It was as a proponent of Fontana's classicism that Vanvitelli presented himself in his major works, executed in the 1730s and 1740s, such as the Lazzaretto (plague hospital) and the Arco Clementino in Ancona, the renovation of the monastery of Sant'Agostino in Rome, and the internal organization of the Roman basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli. Vanvitelli and Salvi, losers in the competition for the façade of San Giovanni in Laterano, with the projects in Ancona and the Trevi fountain, respectively, became bitter opponents of the intrusive presence of Galilei in the Roman architectural scene. After the Tuscan architect's death, both Vanvitelli and Salvi contributed to reaffirming the Roman architectural tradition in which they had to reposition themselves, accompanied in this process by their rival Ferdinando Fuga, who like Galilei had enjoyed the favour of Pope Clement XII.<sup>22</sup> It may be the bitterness of the infighting in the Roman art and architectural establishment that led Cardinal Valenti Gonzaga to attempt a reform of the Roman Academy by incorporating French pedagogical and theoretical practices.

Aesthetic retrospection was a major feature of Benedict XIV's personal moderation and cultural pragmatism, and it is mirrored in microcosm in Roman architectural practice at midcentury. Lambertini's decided opposition to all forms of nepotism led him away from the footsteps of his Corsini predecessor, avoiding employment of "family" artists and the manipulation of the visual arts for personal aggrandizement. This approach left Benedict free to manifest his own scepticism regarding contemporary architecture, even with regard to those architects he commissioned. He did not hesitate to judge the renovation of the basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme by Domenico Gregorini and Pietro Passalacqua as "a modern mess" (*una porcaria moderna*),

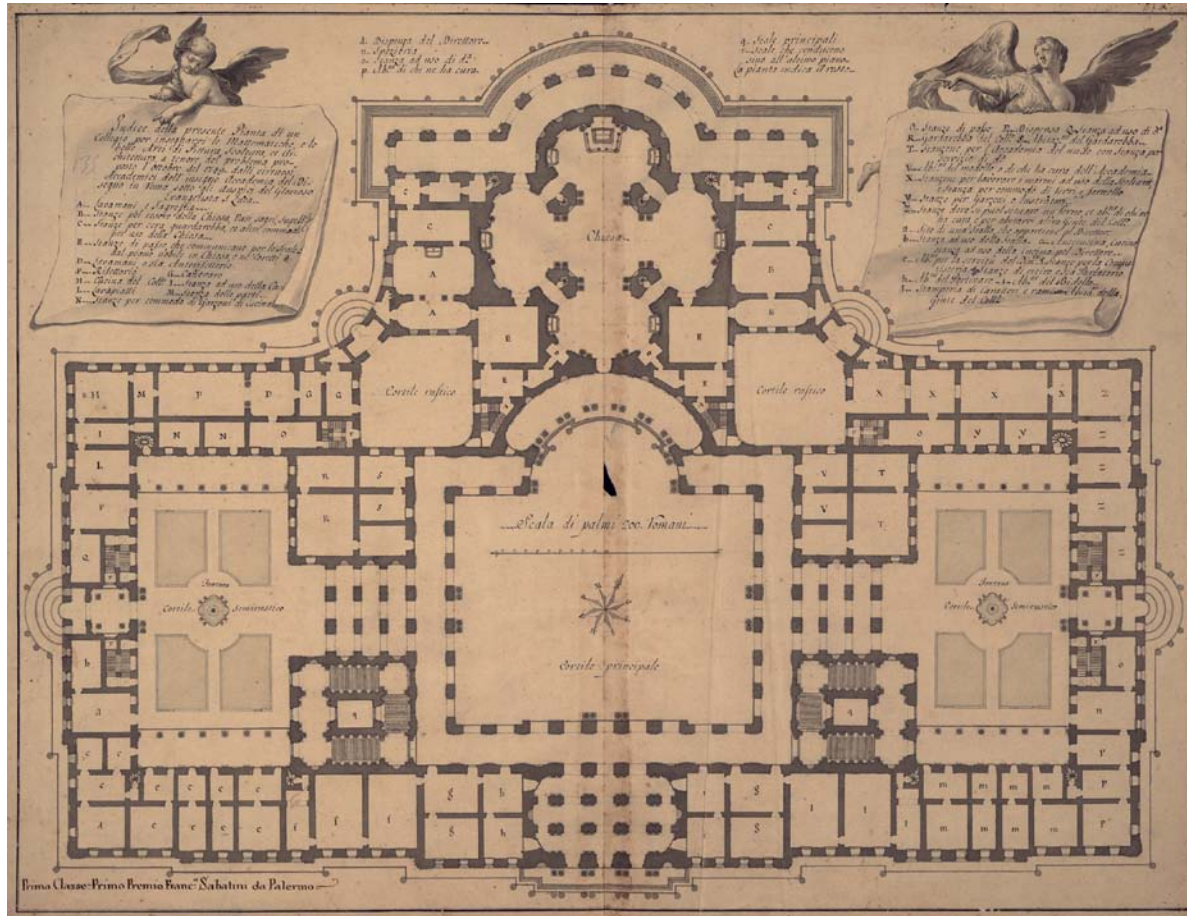


Figure 18.1 Francesco Sabatini, *Progetto di un "Magnifico Collegio da potervi insegnare separatamente le Matematiche e le Belle Arti di Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura,"* first prize of the first class of architecture of the Concorso Clementino of 1750, floor plan of the ground floor, ASASL 462.

a restoration of an early Christian building positioned between Borrominian revival and Juvarrian nostalgia. With similar bluntness, he characterized the interior of the venerable basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, undertaken by architect Ferdinando Fuga, as “a ballroom” (*una sala da ballo*), which was previously restored by Fuga along with the façade.<sup>23</sup> Both restorations date to the first decade of the Lamberini pontificate. After the holy year of 1750, Benedict XIV did not initiate any grand architectural ventures, but focused on relatively minor projects such as the rebuilding of the church of Ss Marcellino e Pietro and repairs to the Pantheon. In the absence of serious building opportunities, Vanvitelli and Fuga increasingly directed their attention to Naples, where they were employed by King Charles of Bourbon (later Charles III of Spain) to design a new palace at Caserta outside the capital and the *Albergo dei Poveri* (workhouse for the poor) in the heart of the city.<sup>24</sup> The latter project is an outstanding example of enlightened absolutism in the interest of promoting the welfare of the ruled rather than simply glorifying the ruler.

The “degraded” state of architectural affairs in Rome was lamentably clear to an astute and resourceful observer like the celebrated Venetian architect and printmaker Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–78), so much so that in 1743 in the introduction to the *Prima parte di Architetture e Prospettive*, he declared himself free and emancipated from the “decayed” state of Roman architecture. A project for a grand teaching college (Figure 18.2) included in Piranesi’s *Opere varie* constitutes an eloquent analysis of his carefully pondered choice to employ his extraordinary skills as a designer in the creation or, rather, re-creation of fantastic and imaginative architectural pieces, instead of those confined by the limitations of composite commissioned work, that is to say, things that were actually built. Piranesi’s college design was an extension and amplification of entries from the first class in architecture of the *concorso clementino* in 1750. A confrontation with the architect Sabatini’s designs for that competition embodies the great distance of the Venetian artist from Roman academicism. It is also, in the event, distanced from all constructive and productive logic. According to the testimony of the prominent British architect William Chambers, Piranesi designed a college building in response to accusations by some French *pensionnaires* that he was incapable of envisioning functional buildings.<sup>25</sup>

Before coming to Rome, Chambers spent a year studying architecture in Paris at the *École des Arts*, founded in 1743 by the architect and theoretician Jacques-François Blondel (1705–74).<sup>26</sup> Endorsed with considerable

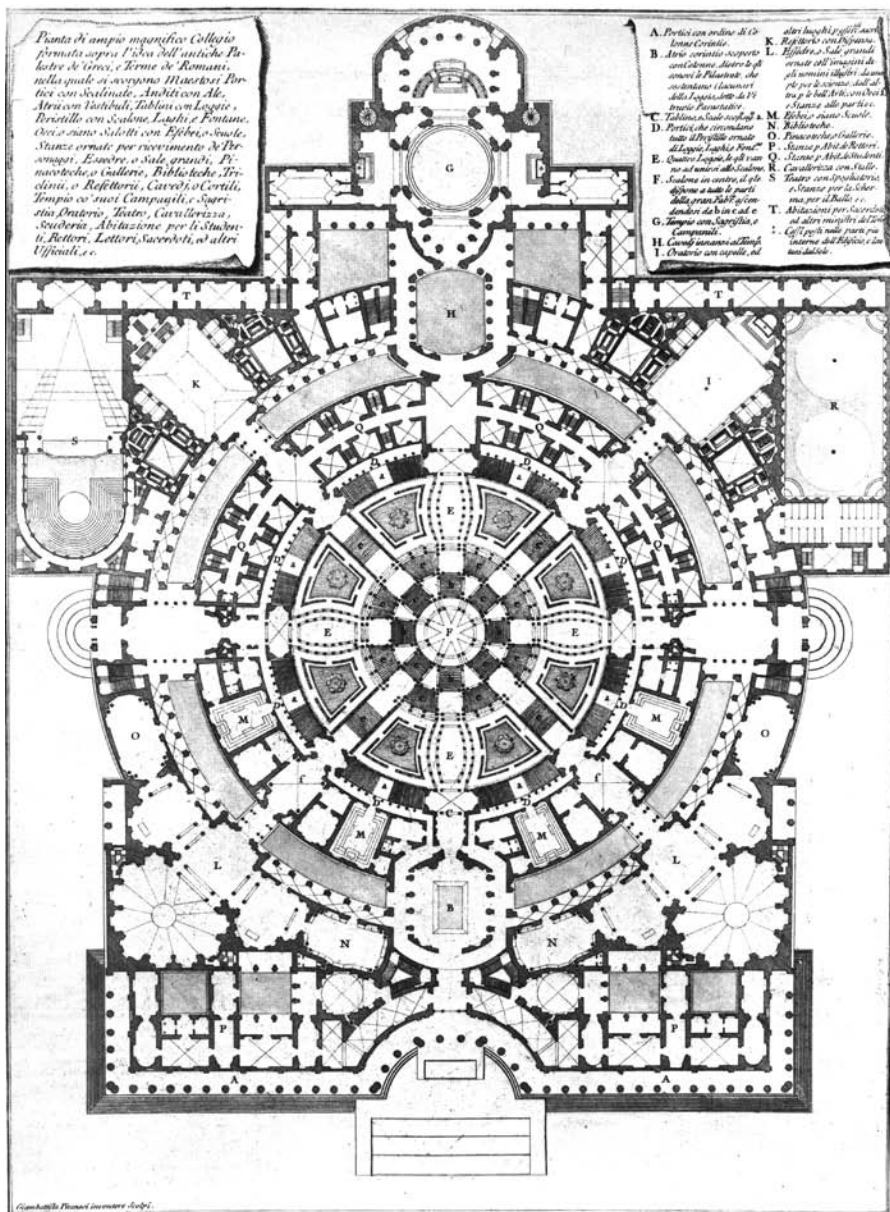


Figure 18.2 Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Pianta di un ampio magnifico Collegio formata sopra l'idea delle antiche Palestre de' Greci, e Terme de' Romani*, engraving (from *Opere varie di Architettura, prospettive, groteschi, antichità*, Rome 1750).



reluctance by the Académie Royale d'Architecture, the École surpassed contemporary pedagogical conventions by adopting a course of study inspired by an expansive and interdisciplinary vision of architecture. This progressive vision was fully developed in Blondel's *Cours d'architecture*, published in 1771.<sup>27</sup> Blondel's teachings had a decisive impact on Chambers. During his residence in Rome from 1750 to 1755, Chambers developed Blondel's principles, refining an integral vision of art and architecture that in 1768 led him to promote the institution of the Royal Academy of Arts in London, founded in that year by George III with Joshua Reynolds as its charter president. The establishment of the British institution indicates how international and interconnected official academies had become by the second half of the eighteenth century. No one was in a better position than Chambers to evaluate the current state of Italian architecture in a polemical international context and criticize with increasing impatience every remnant of the Roman baroque tradition in contemporary design. A striking example of this impatience is recorded in the letter Chambers wrote from London to his pupil Edward Stevens in Rome in the summer of 1774. This missive represents the most significant historical document detailing the nature and meaning of the formative journey to Rome made by many young architects from all over Europe in the second half of the 1700s, especially before the countries from which they were coming had established their own national institutions based on the French prototype. In the letter, Chambers harshly condemned contemporary Roman architecture, blaming its "deficiencies and bad taste" on the lingering influence of seventeenth-century architect Francesco Borromini (1599–1667), whose style was considered bizarre and undisciplined by the second half of the Settecento. Chambers bemoaned "all the later Architects of Rome, excepting Salvi, who had indeed no general principles to guide him, yet sometimes fortunately hit upon the right, as appears by parts of his fountain of Trevi." He dismissed Fuga and Vanvitelli, both highly favoured papal architects during the reign of Benedict XIV, as "blockheads."

Chambers also suggested to Stevens that, in order to improve, an architect must refine his skills in drawing various subjects, from the human figure to ancient ornaments, but he must also acquire useful information from whoever possessed it, Romans, foreigners, and above all, famous artists, among them Piranesi, who is characterized as "extravagant" and "often absurd." The antique was the key to reform and improved taste. According to Chambers, several *savants* and

connoisseurs of discernment could vouch for the superlative glory of ancient Rome. Among them was the Florentine Giovanni Gaetano Bottari (1689–1775), who was the librarian and chief cultural advisor to the Corsini family and who in 1754, during Chambers’s Roman sojourn, published the first volume of *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura e architettura* and the highly influential *Dialoghi sopra le tre arti del disegno*. The *Dialogues concerning the Three Arts of Design*, although written twenty years earlier, was quite pessimistic about the current state of Roman architecture and its practitioners, pinpointing its decline in the baroque era and in the early years of the eighteenth century to the lack of “general principles,” by which he meant universal, classicizing rules. It was the same subject about which Chambers had admonished Nicola Salvi. This is a provocative issue that requires further examination.

### **Architecture: Idea and Practice**

Bottari arrived in Rome from Florence in 1730 as part of the Corsini entourage, his great patron Cardinal Lorenzo Corsini having just been elected pope. Bottari, at the age of forty-one, already possessed an international reputation as a scholar, man of letters, historian of art, and theologian.<sup>28</sup> Having been in the service of the Corsini family for more than a decade, Clement XII asked him to act as the family’s cultural advisor and rewarded him with several influential posts, including the chair of ecclesiastical history and polemics at La Sapienza, the leading Roman university, in 1731. He was also named the Corsini family’s personal librarian and confidential chaplain in 1735. Four years later, he became prefect of the Vatican library. Such heavy obligations caused him to give up his professorship at the university in 1739. These appointments vastly increased Bottari’s influence in Roman and even European cultural circles, above all those patronized by Cardinal Neri Corsini (1685–1770), a determined reformer who wished to transform every sector of Roman society, including those of art and architecture, on the principles of progressive Catholic thinking and opposition to the ideology and practices of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). In a number of other aspects of Roman cultural reform, Pope Benedict XIV had a similar agenda.

Bottari’s artistic concepts were deeply affected by the Tuscan Renaissance artist Michelangelo’s monumental idealism. In this sense, he directly shaped the philosophical and aesthetic choices of the Corsini family’s Roman cultural, artistic, and architectural initiatives. He influenced the

iconographic program of the family chapel in the basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano commissioned from the architect Alessandro Galilei, called from Florence for the purpose,<sup>29</sup> and of the Corsini Library in the family palazzo on the via della Lungara begun by Ferdinando Fuga in 1736.<sup>30</sup> Bottari also influenced the competition to construct the new façade of the Lateran basilica.<sup>31</sup> Looking to the future, he cultivated a friendship with Cardinal Prospero Lambertini, who once having risen to the papal throne as Benedict XIV confirmed Bottari as his personal chaplain and as one of his principal cultural advisors. Recognizing the Florentine savant's distinguished scholarship and international reputation for learning, the pope appointed him to three of the four academies established shortly after his papal election: ecclesiastical history, history of Church councils, and Roman antiquity. Bottari was certainly adept at navigating the troubled waters of papal patronage in the Eternal City.

As a proponent of broadly based reform, Bottari became a leading advocate of progressive, anti-Jesuit ideas in Rome and gathered around himself an influential group of like-minded intellectual luminaries. This progressive trend is often described as Roman Jansenism, and it was very different from the more controversial French variety. Rather than focusing on issues of grace and episcopal authority, as was the case in France, Bottari and his associates were far more interested in instituting changes to culture, literature, and the arts and in rejecting Jesuit traditions they considered out of step with progressive thinking, dismissing them as "obscurantist." However, Bottari was certainly no revolutionary, either as a religious figure or as a literary one. In the face of opponents to the Republic of European Letters, in which he declared himself a member, he was still tied to the past. With little aptitude for or sympathy with original critical thinking, he tended instead to perpetuate historical traditions and their canonical hierarchies.

Bottari championed a finely tuned and emphatic literary-philosophical style of writing in *Dialoghi sopra le tre arti del disegno*. His ideas were presented in an imaginary conversation between two deceased and well-known individuals: the scholar Giovan Pietro Bellori (1613–96), an important biographer of Italian artists and an aesthetic theorist who was evidently Bottari's intellectual alter ego, and the renowned painter Carlo Maratti (1625–1713), *principe* of the Accademia di San Luca and the great exemplar of the classical tradition in Roman painting. Maratti was widely respected in the middle of the Settecento, despite having died in 1713. The Romanized classical baroque style he passed on to a legion of students was highly favoured by Benedict XIV. In the fictive

colloquy between Bellori and Maratti, Roman architecture was said to be on the verge of exhaustion. The primary motive for its demise was a complete lack of knowledge of the profound essence of the discipline on the part of practising architects, who were accused of lacking interest in studying its cultural and aesthetic traditions.<sup>32</sup>

In a highly pessimistic “conversation,” Maratti and Bellori lament that all is lost, above all the “perfected Greek forms” embodied in the straightforward rationality that had been the hallmark of the Florentine Renaissance as well as the capacity of architects to understand and interpret these forms through creative genius, embodied to the highest degree in Michelangelo.<sup>33</sup> There is no lack of Tuscan patriotism in Bellori’s argument. Unlike most progressive, classicizing critics, Bottari appreciated the seventeenth-century architect Francesco Borromini, describing him as “one of the most notable talents among modern architects.”<sup>34</sup> For Bottari, the vein that connected Michelangelo to Borromini was the ability to recognize and then surpass the achievements of the past. He strongly condemned Borromini’s imitators and their tendency towards excessive ornament as an end in itself that all too often was “bizarre” and lacking in dignity. Their errors, Bottari opined, were the consequence of poor architectural training.<sup>35</sup>

According to Bottari, the study of architecture by young Roman men was based exclusively on a pedantic, uncritical, and superficial reading of the highly influential Renaissance treatise *Regola delli cinque ordini d’architettura* (*Canon of the Five Orders of Architecture*), published by Giacomo Vignola in 1562; this crucial text addresses, among other things, the proper manner of emulation of canonical models. This was achieved by imitating the architectural processes and ornamental elements of their masters or of other contemporary architects. Thus, individual invention was closely linked to the replication of approved models guided by the master’s decisive influence. In this respect, Bottari blatantly denounced the lack of a broadly based general culture in students and their difficulty in thinking outside the repertoire and empirical practices of their teachers. As a result, the quality of the originals was perceived through secondary imitations, rather than in terms of aesthetic innovation: the copy without genius, the process without an idea.<sup>36</sup> Declaring that the creative process at the heart of architectural design was irretrievably lost, Bottari blamed the architects who were practising with little innovative criteria and teaching without a sound theoretical method, ignoring the quality of the design and also neglecting the intensive study of the human

figure whose mastery had raised painters and sculptors to such high standards.

From Bottari's point of view, among those who were working in the field of architecture, including academic professors, none were familiar with "true and genuine principles," nor were they interested in directing "student studies, let alone wider concerns."<sup>37</sup> After Carlo Fontana (1638–1714), no major Roman architect had published a theoretical or historical text pertaining to architecture. The only ones who demonstrated some theoretical interest were Antoine Deriset, the amateur architect Count Gerolamo Theodoli, and the painter Niccolò Ricciolini, none of whom was professionally active by the end of the Lambertini pontificate. In this context, it is important to note that Galilei was not a member of the Accademia di San Luca, his professional credentials as an architect and author of a treatise on architecture written in English during his residence in London from 1714 to 1719 notwithstanding.<sup>38</sup> It is just as significant that in Florence an English visitor, Edward Wright, considered Galilei to be "the most obliging, the most communicative, and of the greatest Civility in all respects that I think we met with in our Travels."<sup>39</sup> While in Rome, using the words of economic theorist and artist biographer Lione Pascoli (1674–1744), Galilei was seen as "an innovative architect much attuned to detail."<sup>40</sup> Because of his deficiencies in the field of design, Galilei did not fully embody the ideal architect championed by Bottari, although he came close. Nevertheless, in Clement XII's Rome, it was Galilei who was most closely linked to the retrospective vision of the Renaissance professed as abstract "Greek" purity. His death foreclosed the only alternative to the authority of the Accademia di San Luca in architecture, a situation inherited by Benedict XIV, who also pursued a major program of building and renovation. In this sense, the acknowledgment of Bottari as an honorary academician (*accademico d'onore*) on 12 May 1738 could indicate a mutual understanding, placed in direct correlation to the invitation Conca made to artists to ponder the intellectual aspects of their profession.<sup>41</sup> Bottari issued a similar challenge in the *Dialoghi*.

The limited reform of the Accademia di San Luca by Cardinal Valenti Gonzaga, partly based on the example of the Parisian Académie Royale, may also be due to Bottari's influence.<sup>42</sup> It is possible that such reforms were related to the creation of the Accademia del Nudo established by Benedict XIV with the help of Valenti Gonzaga and Cardinal Girolamo Colonna di Sciarra in 1754. This pontifical institution radically altered the teaching methodology of painting and sculpture

through a prolonged and intensive program of study of the posed nude male model, and it was free to the international cadre of students who flocked to Rome. With the exception of French architect Antoine Deriset, who continued to provide instruction in geometry and perspective, the example of the Accademia del Nudo unfortunately had no measurable impact on the Academy's architectural pedagogy.

In 1754, when Bottari finally published his condemnation of modern Roman architects, he saw the decayed state of the profession as little altered. Of the three major architects who entered the Academy during the papacy of Clement XII, Salvi had been dead three years, while Vanvitelli and Fuga were travelling between Rome and Naples and continued to confront and antagonize one another at every turn, including at the Accademia di San Luca.<sup>43</sup> Against the backdrop of his pupils' success in the competitions, Vanvitelli dismissed Fuga's political prominence. His bitter rival was elected *principe* in 1753, an appointment reconfirmed in 1754 despite the fact that Fuga was rarely in Rome.<sup>44</sup> Among the architects who later became theorists, only Carlo Marchionni, elected on 14 February 1740, could compare himself to Vanvitelli as a practitioner and proponent of the classical tradition.<sup>45</sup>

To Bottari, Salvi and Vanvitelli nonetheless remained the most significant representatives of the group of architects to whom he expressed opposition in the *Dialoghi*. He accused Vanvitelli of having tampered with two celebrated architectural masterpieces by Michelangelo – inexpertly marring the interior of the basilica di Santa Maria degli Angeli and altering the cupola of Saint Peter's.<sup>46</sup> Salvi, on the other hand, was reprimanded with regard to the Trevi fountain for having imitated Bernini (in disrepute in eighteenth-century architectural discourse) in the plastic configuration of the rocky foundation, for the improper use of the Corinthian order in the partition of the architectural backdrop, and for other errors of omission that to Bottari's eyes rendered the structure beyond the pale of good taste (*buon gusto*).<sup>47</sup> Having been publicly accused of artistic and technical incompetence, in October 1754 Vanvitelli rebuked the "malignant hypocrite Bottari," who "does not understand architecture and should not speak about it."<sup>48</sup> Regarding the cupola of Saint Peter's, the architect ridiculed Bottari's belief that Michelangelo was incapable of ever making a mistake.<sup>49</sup> Vanvitelli's aversion to Bottari was generated by concern for his own professional credibility, that of his friend Salvi, and that of all the elite professionals of the Roman architectural establishment, believing himself to be its leading light.

In an attempt to protect his professional reputation, Vanvitelli first planned to publish a harsh retort to the *Dialoghi*, possibly in the form of other imaginary dialogues by famous deceased architectural experts.<sup>50</sup> He then convinced his friend Francesco Salmi to write a libellous pamphlet against Bottari and Fuga, outlining all their unsuccessful architectural “disasters” that had been concealed, owing to friendships and the communal support and protection of fellow academics, above all those from the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.<sup>51</sup> While angrily filling his copy of *Dialoghi* with scathing comments and acidic notes, Vanvitelli never considered the idea that the author’s motivations could be purely intellectual. He could not forgive the fact that Bottari had singled him out as the standard-bearer of the pragmatic and unstudied Roman tradition, led astray by an ill-intentioned concept of authority and resistance to innovation and external influences. He further scolded the Roman and Italian cultural and artistic world in general. The architect’s disdain for Bottari was at the root of his hostility towards antiquarians, amateurs, and others who he felt were unqualified to be deemed professionals.<sup>52</sup>

## Conclusion

William Chambers, near the end of his Roman sojourn in the final years of Benedict XIV’s pontificate, perceived changes in Roman architectural pedagogy and practice through the lens of the *concorsi clementini*. In the first class of architecture in 1754, on the theme of “a great cathedral church with cupola and bell tower,” both Filippo Marchionni, pupil of his father, Carlo, and the architect Pietro Camporese surpassed the independent French competitor Denis Claude Legeay. The *pensionnaires* of the French Academy in Rome, none of whom wanted to participate in the competition despite the withdrawal of the official prohibition, left Legeay in an isolated position.<sup>53</sup> In the second class, on the theme of a “villa with two storeys for an important person,” Ermenegildo Sintesi, another in a long line of Vanvitelli’s pupils, and Giovanni Antinori, a student of the architectural amateur nobleman Girolamo Theodoli, obtained the prize.<sup>54</sup> According to Chambers, it appeared that, with the exception of the Frenchman, all the winners were closely aligned to the traditions of Roman classicism. It was in the third class, however, that the Englishman was in a position to note a distinct change with respect to the past. The winning project, proposed by another “independent” French architectural student, François Demesmay, on the theme

Antoine Deriset proposed of the “plan, elevation and reliefs [...] of the Pantheon, called the Rotonda” (Figure 18.3) was not only extraordinarily more demanding compared with previous third-class competitions but, more important, it situated itself in the full debate that followed regarding damages suffered to the venerable building’s vault in May 1753 and the great question of the imminent restoration of the roof.<sup>55</sup> In fact, Demesmay did not limit himself to submitting the relief plan of the monument but also attached a complete philological reconstruction of its earlier configuration, supplementing it with original contributions. These were largely the discoveries of previous authors such as Famiano Nardini and Carlo Fontana. This procedure was precisely the type of historical awareness and sensitivity long advocated by theorists, above all by Giovanni Gaetano Bottari.

During the final years of Benedict XIV’s pontificate the Accademia di San Luca became much more open to proponents of the antique, even if by means of the less travelled path of the third class of the *concorsi clementini*. The new receptivity was fundamental in preparing the way for the advent of neoclassicism. In 1755, in a similar vein, the Academy admitted the amateur nobleman architect Berardo Galiani (1724–74) as a professional member (*accademico di merito*), his advocacy of the more stringent ancient classicism of Vitruvius (as opposed to Renaissance architects such as Vignola) being considered an asset rather than a liability.<sup>56</sup> In the same year, the antiquarian Ridolfino Venuti (1705–63) was also admitted as an *accademico d’onore*.<sup>57</sup> Not even the death in 1756 of the Academy’s powerful advocate Cardinal Valenti Gonzaga altered the classicizing current that was seen to triumph in the successive *concorso clementino* in 1758, this time significantly in the first class of architecture on the theme of “a large square magnificently ornamented.”

The winning project (Figure 18.4) was submitted by the young Scottish architect, Robert Mylne, later celebrated for his deeply rationalizing urban design for the new town in Edinburgh, and second place was awarded to his friend Venanzio Marvuglia of Palermo (Figure 18.5). Although with different gradations, both designs demonstrate a successful integration of the traditions of the monumental architecture of the Roman Renaissance, revered by the academic world, and the most evocative models of ancient architecture. Such a synthesis was fully in keeping with the most advanced ideas of the *pensionnaires* at the French Academy and of other young foreign students working in the papal capital.<sup>58</sup> Four months later, after Benedict XIV’s death, this first victory



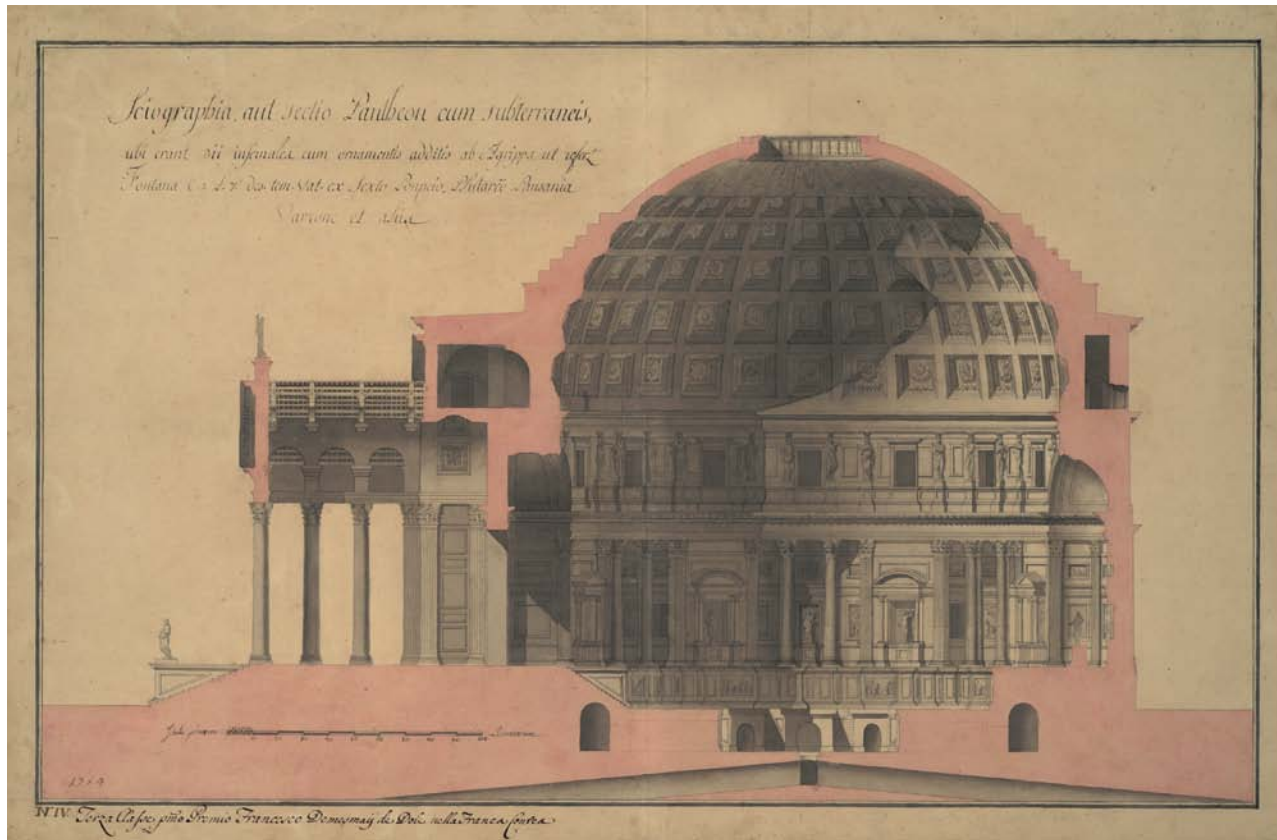


Figure 18.3 François Demesmay, *pianta, prospetto e profilo* [...] del Pantheon detto la Rotonda, first prize in the third class of the Concorso Clementino of 1754, cross-section, ASASL 526.

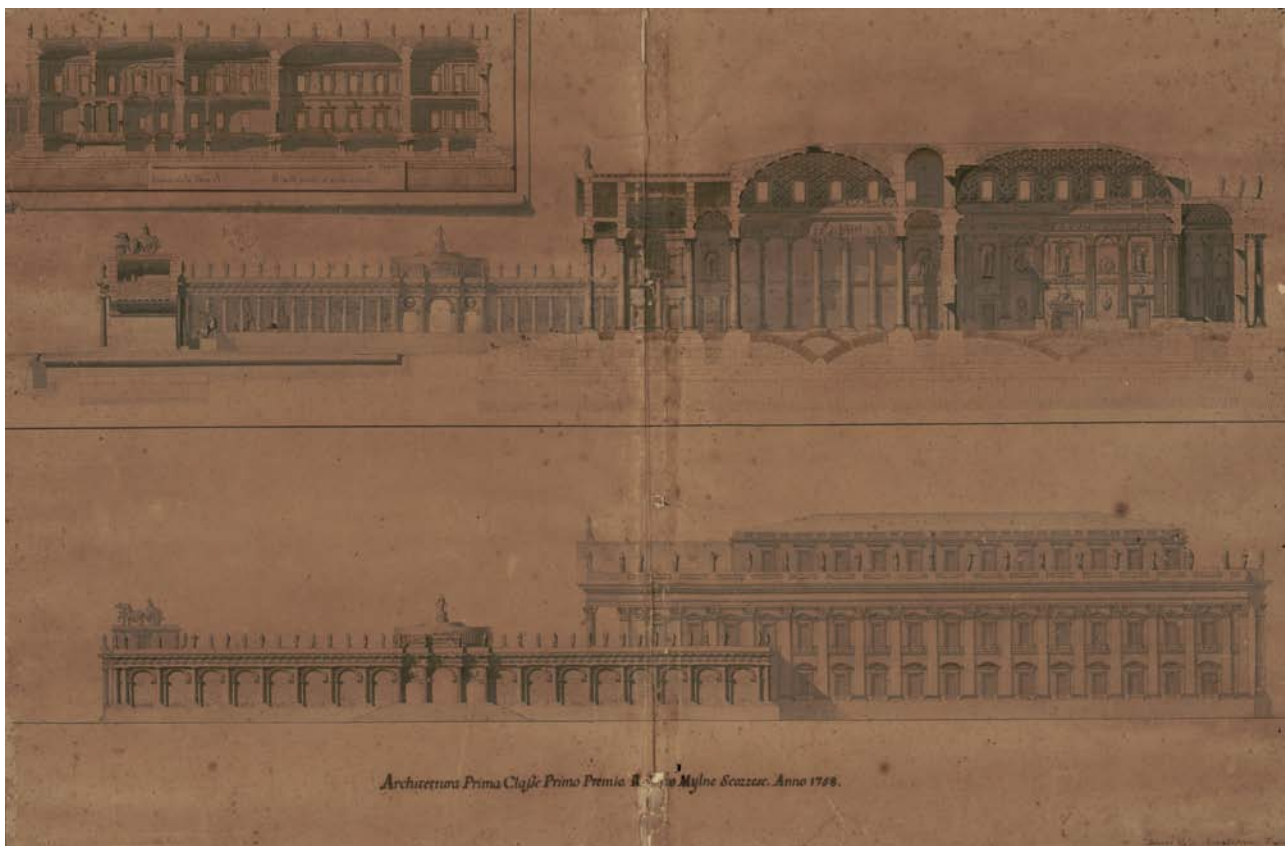


Figure 18.4 Robert Mylne, *progetto di una gran piazza magnificamente ornata di portici e cose simili destinate a collocarvi le memorie d'uomini illustri con portico per monumenti commemorativi e sala per pubbliche riunioni*, first prize in the first class of architecture of the Concorso Clementino of 1758, elevation and cross-sections, ASASL 536.

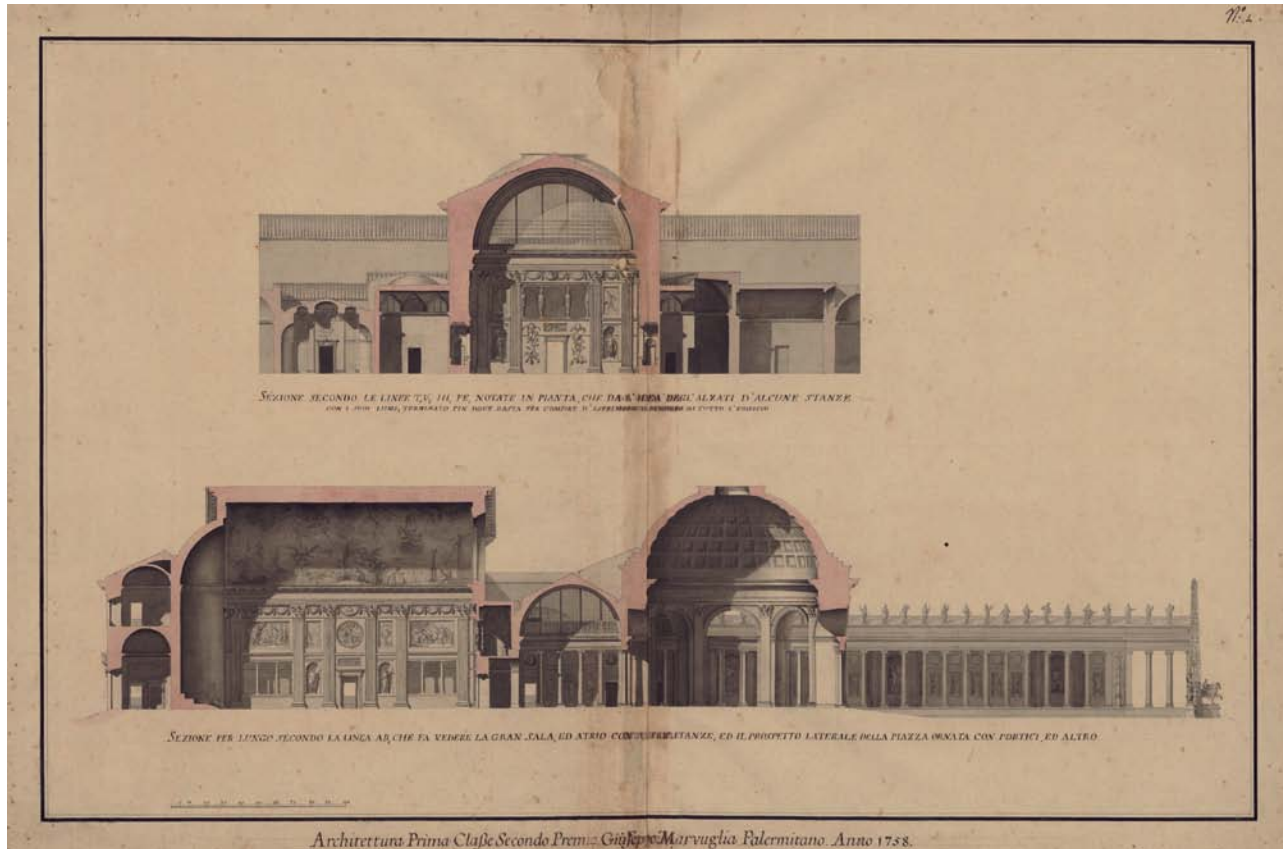


Figure 18.5 Giuseppe Venanzio Marvuglia, *progetto di una gran piazza magnificamente ornata di portici e cose simili destinate a collocarvi le memorie d'uomini illustri con portico per monumenti commemorativi e sala per pubbliche riunioni*, second prize in the first class of architecture of the Concorso Clementino of 1758, cross-section, ASASL 540.

by a British architect, who was a complete outsider in relation to the powerful and long-established Roman architectural profession, arguably constituted the most evident sign of change that was not to be either delayed or altered. It was an indication of progress and cosmopolitanism Lambertini would doubtless have approved.

## NOTES

- 1 Missirini, *Memorie per servire alla storia della Romana Accademia di S. Luca fino alla morte di Antonio Canova*, 213–19. Conca had already been *principe* from 1729 to 1732.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 213.
- 3 Missirini states that the only example of this initiative is a brief *vademecum* (handbook) for academic students of painting, attributed to Conca himself (*ibid.*, 214–19).
- 4 On the relationship between the two scholars, see Hager, “The Accademia di San Luca in Rome and the Académie Royale d’Architecture in Paris”; Smith, *Architectural Diplomacy*, 213–23.
- 5 De Montaiglon, *Correspondance des directeurs de l’Académie de France à Rome*, 9: 347n4143.
- 6 On the prince of Poland’s trip to Italy, see Vinattieri, “Sulle tracce del primo Neoclassicismo.”
- 7 De Montaiglon, *Correspondance*, 9: 348n4144.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 357n4157, 359–60n4161.
- 9 On this episode at the beginning of Pigalle’s career, see Boyer, “Les artistes français lauréats ou membres de l’Académie Romaine de Saint Luc,” 139–40; and Gaborit, *Jean Baptiste Pigalle*, 6.
- 10 De Montaiglon, *Correspondance*, 9: 358–9n4160; 362–4nn4164, 4166; 367n4171; 368n4173; 371n4178; 374n4183; 379nn4193–4.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 368n4173.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 381–2n4200; 386n4206.
- 13 In the second class of architecture, on the theme of a “domed chapel,” the Frenchman Charles-Axel Guillaumot took first prize. He was already a student at the Académie Royale in Paris in 1745, but not a *pensionnaire* of the French Academy in Rome. See Marconi, Cipriani, and Valeriani, *I disegni di architettura*, 18, 477–80.
- 14 Archivio Storico dell’Accademia Nazionale di San Luca (ASASL), *Congregazioni*, vol. 50, ff. 56v–57r, 23 September 1742.
- 15 Montaiglon, *Correspondance*, 9: 412n4926, 12 September 1752.

- 16 In addition to the bibliography cited in n4, on the foundation and initial activity of the Accademia di San Luca, see *The Accademia Seminars*; on the academic competitions see Marconi, Cipriani and Valeriani, *I disegni di architettura*; Cipriani and Valeriani, *I disegni di figura nell' Archivio Storico dell' Accademia di San Luca*; Cipriani, *Aequa Potestas*. For the Académie royale, see De Montaiglon, *Procès-verbaux de l' Académie royale de peinture et sculpture*; Lemonnier, *Procès-verbaux de l' Académie royale d' architecture*; Pérouse, *Les Prix de Rome*, 7–32; Schöller, *Die "Académie Royale d' Architecture."*
- 17 During Benedict XIV's papacy, among the non-resident architects several distinguished *accademici di merito* were elected, including Gabriel-Pierre-Martin Dumont, *pensionnaire* (17 April 1746); Gaetano Chiaveri, architect of the king of Poland (4 September 1746); Philippe de La Guèpière (20 January 1754); Nikolaus Franz Leonhard von Pacassi, First Engineer to the Holy Roman Emperor; and François-Dominique Barreau de Chefdeville, (9 May 1756); Robert Adam (8 May 1757); Nicola Carletti (4 September 1757). The archival notices are found in ASASL, vol. 50, ff. 92v–93r, 94v, 157r, f. 169v; vol. 51, ff. 36v, 83r, 97r, 102.
- 18 Curcio, "Antoine Deriset," 354.
- 19 Iacobini, "Carlo Mondelli," and "Carlo Innocenzo Sala"; Marconi, Cipriani, and Valeriani, *I disegni di architettura*, 17, 438–48.
- 20 For information regarding the competition for the façade of San Giovanni in Laterano in 1732, see Benedetti, "Per un' architettura dell' Arcadia, Roma 1730"; Kieven, "Il ruolo del disegno"; Brunetti, "Sulla facciata di San Giovanni in Laterano"; Marshall, "Giovanni Paolo Panini as Architectural Critic."
- 21 Cerroti, *Lettere e memorie autografe*, 23.
- 22 Kieven, "Luigi Vanvitelli e Nicola Salvi a Roma."
- 23 Pasquali, "Pro e contro la continuità tra monumenti antichi e chiese"; Bevilacqua, "Roma durante il pontificato di Benedetto XIV."
- 24 Manfredi, "Ferdinando Fuga a Roma."
- 25 Wilton-Ely, *The Mind and Art of Giovanni Battista Piranesi*, 60.
- 26 Harris, *Sir William Chambers*, 21–2.
- 27 Schöller, "Jacques-François Blondel."
- 28 Pignatelli and Petrucci, "Giovanni Gaetano Bottari."
- 29 Kieven, "Überlegungen zu Architektur und Ausstattung der Cappella Corsini"; Minor, *The Culture of Architecture*, 91–119.
- 30 Minor, *The Culture of Architecture*, 216–40.
- 31 See the bibliography at n20.
- 32 Bottari, *Dialoghi sopra le tre arti del disegno*, 109, 143–4.

- 33 Ibid., 5.
- 34 Ibid., 120.
- 35 Ibid., 121.
- 36 Manfredi, "La copia e l'invenzione."
- 37 Bottari, *Dialoghi*, 144.
- 38 Giusto, *Alessandro Galilei*.
- 39 Wright, *Some Observations Made in Travelling*, 393.
- 40 Pascoli, "Vita di Filippo Juvarra," 272.
- 41 ASASL, *Congregazioni*, vol. 49, f. 183v.
- 42 In contrast to Bottari's practice of neither signing nor dedicating his books, the first volume of *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura scultura ed architettura* was dedicated to Valenti Gonzaga.
- 43 Salvi and Vanvitelli were admitted to the Accademia di San Luca in 1733, Fuga in 1736 and Carlo Marchionni, future architect of the world famous Villa Albani, during the vacant seat of 1740. Pietro Hostini (1743), Clemente Orlandi (1744), Domenico Gregorini (1748) and Mauro Fontana (1758) all were made members during the reign of Benedict XIV.
- 44 See n24.
- 45 On Marchionni, see Debenedetti, "Carlo Marchionni."
- 46 Bottari, *Dialoghi*, 44–5, 82.
- 47 Ibid., 123–5, 145–6.
- 48 Franco Strazzullo, *Le lettere di Luigi Vanvitelli della Biblioteca Palatina di Caserta*, Vol. 1 (Galatina: Congedo, 1976), 378–88.
- 49 "Memoriale posteriore al 1760," cited in Francesco Fichera, *Luigi Vanvitelli* (Rome: Reale Accademia d'Italia, 1937), 72.
- 50 Strazzullo, *Le lettere*, 379–80n258, 8 October 1754.
- 51 Fichera, *Luigi Vanvitelli*, 68–9.
- 52 On this theme see De Seta, *Luigi Vanvitelli*, 159.
- 53 De Montaiglon, *Correspondance*, 58–9n5060.
- 54 Manfredi, "La generazione dell'Antico," 40–1, and "La copia e l'invenzione," 132.
- 55 Susanna Pasquali, *Il Pantheon. Architettura e antiquaria nel Settecento a Roma* (Modena: Panini, 1996), 14–18; Manfredi, "La copia e l'invenzione," 132–3.
- 56 ASASL, *Congregazioni*, vol. 52, ff. 68v–69r, 13 April 1755.
- 57 ASASL, *Congregazioni*, vol. 52, f. 70v, 15 June 1755.
- 58 Manfredi, "La generazione dell'Antico," 45–6, and "La copia e l'invenzione," 133–5.

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