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**‘A FARE BELLA’: THE VISUAL AND MATERIAL CULTURE OF
COSMETICS IN RENAISSANCE ITALY (1450-1540)**

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to the Department of History of Art

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Declaration

This is to certify that that the work contained within has been composed by me and is entirely my own work. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis maps out the roles of cosmetic use in Renaissance Italy from the period c.1450-1540, using books containing cosmetic recipes as the primary source material. Their content, dissemination, and use is explored as a means of creating a new understanding of a practice central to daily life and integral to ongoing arguments about the body. Recent scholarship has seen a rise in interest in books of recipes and secrets in the Renaissance and Early Modern periods, but there has yet to be a full-length study exploring cosmetic recipes as a significant source of information, leaving a considerable gap in the understanding of how ‘high’ cultural discussions of beauty ideals related to popular culture and everyday practice. This thesis aims to fill that gap. Focusing on the formative period of 1450-1540, when both the written and artistic interests in cosmetics were developing, this thesis draws together a large body of previously unpublished primary source material from printed and manuscript recipe books relating to the making and use of cosmetics, and is the first in-depth analysis of the material and visual culture of Italian cosmetic practice during this period.

A major component of this project was to establish what practices, materials and products constituted Renaissance cosmetic practice. The way in which recipes for beautification are identified within recipe books is carefully considered, and recipe ingredients and methods are examined, with comparisons made to the representation of cosmetics in non-recipe sources (written and visual). The goal was to describe cosmetics as they were defined in Renaissance terms, so recipe ingredients have been considered largely in context of Renaissance medicine rather than modern pharmacy, in contrast to most extant studies on the topic. A further major aim of this study was to create a detailed reconstruction of the social values attached to cosmetic use during the Renaissance period. This has been investigated both through an examination of how

cosmetics are represented in written and visual sources, and also through a critical investigation of the people involved in the making and use of cosmetics and cosmetic recipe collections. Throughout, a range of material sources have been examined in consideration with each other—recipe books, behavioural advice, moral arguments, printed and painted image, inventories, and household objects such as mirrors and combs—demonstrating that cosmetics had a wide ranging and significant presence in daily Renaissance life.

The first chapter examines the moral discourses directed at cosmetic use, establishing the place of these discourses within broader concerns about the control of women's behaviour. Chapter 2 begins to place the ideals of beauty in a social context, examining how cosmetics are represented in recipe books, and discussing what activities and practices Renaissance 'cosmetics' consisted of, with particular attention given to their relationship with medicinal recipes. Chapters 3 and 4 investigate the people who made and used cosmetic recipes, broadly addressing themes of accessibility, and the connections between a beautified appearance and social status. The authors of recipe books, the books' cost, audience literacy, markets for medicine, and cost and effectiveness of cosmetic recipes are all taken into account to illustrate a lively economy surrounding the use of makeup. Finally, Chapters 5 and 6 address cultural representations of cosmetic use in art and literature, re-examining key examples within the context of the material culture of cosmetics to demonstrate the significance of makeup use in formulations of Renaissance femininity.

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NOTES ON ABBREVIATIONS

n.p.	no publisher
n.l.	no publication location
u.p.	unpaginated
ed.	editor/ edited by
trans.	translator/ translated by v. / vol. volume
WL	Wellcome Institute, London
BL	British Library, London
BNCF	Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence
BNMV	Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice
FGCV	Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice
ASF	Archivio di Stato, Florence
Rx.	Denotes the recipe number of a recipe within Appendix E, where the table of contents of each recipe book are included. Recipes have been given numbers according to their order in the source, unless otherwise noted, this has been done for ease of reference, as a number of the sources are unpaginated.

Translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

INTRODUCTION

Mundane objects are [...] not simply the evidence of practices, but the tools by which such practices are enabled, learnt and assimilated, and also by which the value of those practices, which may seem routine and meaningless to the outside world, may be understood as complex, consciously shaped and indeed owned by the people doing them.¹

In 1563, Giovanni Marinello wrote *Gli ornamenti delle donne*, a lengthy volume that revealed hundreds of ‘secrets’ for beautification to its readers, and which was to be reprinted in the years that followed in both Italian and French.² Before Marinello’s text came into being, a variety of smaller, lesser known recipe collections were circulating around the Italian book markets, concocted in the early years of the printed book amidst a growing excitement for the revelation of ‘secrets’—as recipes, advice, and formulae were known—in print. These recipe books evidence a colourful and multifaceted material culture dedicated to the arts of beautification and located at the heart of everyday life in Renaissance Italy, bridging the gap between ideal and real beauty. It is this material culture of cosmetics which this thesis explores.

Cosmetics in Previous Scholarship

Recent years have seen increased research interest in the material culture of the everyday, the worlds of the intimate, routine or domestic that had previously been neglected—studies such as the ‘Healthy Homes, Healthy Bodies’ project by Marta Ajmar-Wollheim, Sandra Cavallo, and Tessa Storey; Patricia Fortini Brown’s *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice*; Diane Wolfthal’s *In and Out of the Marital Bed*;

¹ Pennell, ‘Mundane Materiality’, 179.

² Marinello, *Ornamenti delle donne* (1562); Marinello (trans. Jean Liébault), *Trois livres de l’embellissement et ornement du corps humain* (1582); Brunello, ‘Profumeria e cosmèsi’, 14-16; Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 361.

Jacqueline Musacchio's *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy*; Evelyn Welch's *Shopping in the Renaissance*; and the body of research behind the Victoria and Albert Museum's exhibition, *At Home in Renaissance Italy*—however, a critical monograph on the material culture of Italian Renaissance cosmetics has yet to be produced.³ A number of scholars have addressed Renaissance cosmetics in the course of broad surveys of cosmetic use throughout 'Western' history, which has been valuable in depicting broad trends over time and highlighting key areas for further exploration.⁴ Michelle Laughran's 'Oltre la pelle', covering use of makeup in Italy from the classical period to the modern era, usefully connects a variety of sources, giving examples both from recipe books and from classical authors on beauty and health.⁵ While the depth of her discussion is limited in scope, she makes a number of suggestive proposals as to the relationship between health, beauty and social status which echo questions raised in Marie-Claude Phan's earlier exploration of Italian cosmetics in the Quattrocento and Cinquecento.⁶ Both bring up the possibility for women's involvement in the making of cosmetics; both suggest that Renaissance beauty ideals are inherently indicative of good health and imply high social status.

However, these studies avoid a deeper critical examination of the primary source materials: brief examples from sources including recipe books such as Caterina Sforza's *Gli esperimenti*, moralising texts like Baldassare Castiglione's *Courtier*, and Pietro

³ Cavallo, Ajmar-Wollheim and Storey, 'Healthy Homes, Healthy Bodies'; Brown, *Private Lives*; Wolfthal, *In and Out of the Marital Bed*; Musacchio, *Art and Ritual of Childbirth*; Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*; Ajmar-Wollheim and Dennis (eds.), *At Home in Renaissance Italy*.

⁴ Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*; Ribero, *Facing Beauty*. Pointer addresses Ancient Egypt, Classical Greece and Rome, and Western Europe; Ribeiro also focuses on Western history, beginning with the Renaissance and moving to the modern day.

⁵ Laughran, 'Oltre la pelle', 43-82.

⁶ Phan, 'Pratiques cosmétiques', 109-122. There has been more interest in Italian Renaissance cosmetics within Italian scholarship, but the level of historical analysis is limited: Pancino, 'Soffrire per ben comparire', 5-42; Brunello, 'Profumeria e cosmèsi', 3-16; Grando, *Profumi e cosmesi*; Fiumi and Tempesta, 'Gli "esperimenti" di Caterina Sforza', 139-146; Corrain, 'Alcune ricette', 19-40.

Aretino's satirical dialogues are treated indiscriminately, without critical consideration of how their differences in intended meaning and audience might affect the way they represent cosmetic use. They are not concerned with the relationship between depictions of cosmetics in literature, and the material culture of cosmetic use in everyday life has not been considered. This is a problem because it is through this material culture of cosmetics that renaissance beauty and gender identity were enacted, understood, and given meaning, and to deny that is to deny their value as 'complex, consciously shaped' and significant cultural practices.⁷ Moreover, it has constricted the discussion of beauty to a primarily elite subset of society. The study of the material culture of beauty in this thesis opens up this discussion to include previously overlooked social groups.

Sandra Cavallo's account of 'health, beauty and hygiene', is perhaps the most successful integration of cosmetics into the mosaic of Renaissance society to date, which re-addresses points raised by Phan and Laughran, outlining the close interaction in Renaissance everyday life of beauty and well being.⁸ In addition, she acknowledges the presence of cosmetics and household remedies in a complex web of materials and markets that expanded beyond the bounds of the home, laying the ground for a more detailed full-length study. Indeed her material-culture based approach is the springboard from which this thesis is launched. Tessa Storey's case studies on amateur cosmetic makers in the seventeenth century are also significant in their focus on the practical evidence of cosmetic making and sale in everyday life.⁹ In particular, Storey highlights the need for greater consideration of the place of cosmetics in popular markets of the Cinquecento, a gap I attempt to fill.

⁷ Pennell, 'Mundane Materiality', 179.

⁸ Cavallo, 'Health, Beauty and Hygiene', 174-87.

⁹ Storey, 'Cosmetics, Remedies, Alchemy', 149-155; Storey, 'Face Waters', 143-63.

These works have laid important groundwork for the history of the use of makeup in the Renaissance and highlight a number of significant questions that beg further exploration. In recent years there has been expansion in interest in books of recipes and ‘secrets’, but the earliest recipe books in print (i.e. those in my study) have still been largely understood within the context of a ‘masculine’ setting of popular proto-science. In William Eamon’s authoritative work on Books of Secrets, the presence of cosmetic recipes within these texts has noticeably been ignored.¹⁰ While subsequent work on Books of Secrets and print markets has since expanded these discussions, little attempt has been made to understand why ‘popular science’ recipe texts included cosmetic recipes, even in the early development of the genre, or to discuss where the making and selling of recipes for beautification fit into everyday life in the 1450-1540 period. In addition, the large amount of scholarship dedicated to depictions of beauty in Italian Renaissance art on the whole does not engage in discussion of cosmetics. Scholars have shied away in particular from any consideration of the material culture of cosmetics, even when depictions of women applying makeup are the specific topic of study.¹¹ No prior attempt has been made to incorporate discussion of daily beauty routines into the understanding of how artistic and poetic ideals of beauty affected people’s behaviours and perceptions on a day-to-day basis.

This is the void my thesis aims to fill, returning significance to this important daily

¹⁰ Farah Karim-Cooper has also noted that Eamon consistently forgoes mention and discussion of cosmetic recipes in his studies, observing that ‘Eamon’s emphasis lies in what these texts contributed to the field of science, without making much of the recipes for cosmetics found in these texts; nor does he recognise the cosmetic to be a significant field of knowledge, a branch of science itself.’ The extent of the issue is emphasized by her observation that in the case of Eamon’s discussion of the *Secrets of Alessio Piemontese*, he essentially ignores over 200 beautification recipes, including overt face paints and hair dyes. See Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 50, 52; Eamon, *Science and Secrets*; Eamon, ‘Science and Popular Culture’, 471-485; Rudolph Bell’s work on ‘How To’ books and pamphlets also does not include mention of cosmetic recipes or other recipe books: Bell, *How to Do It*.

¹¹ Bridgeman, ‘Beauty, Dress, Gender’, 44-51; Tinagli, *Women in Italian Renaissance Art*; previous work on depictions of cosmetic routines in art (the ‘Lady at her Toilet’) includes: Goodman-Soellner, ‘Poetic Interpretations’, 426-442; McHam, ‘Reflections of Pliny’, 151-171; Pericolo, ‘Love in the Mirror’, 149-179; Santore, ‘Tools of Venus’, 179-207; Schäpers, *Junge Frau*.

practice through which people of many strata of society constructed meaning and identity.

The scarcity of full-length studies on Renaissance makeup is problematic because it suggests that the heavily gendered conceptualisations of cosmetics—the ancient *topoi* which label making-up as an unnecessary act of feminine frivolity—still hold sway over notions of scholarly ‘appropriateness’ now.¹² Sara Pennell has confronted a similar gap in the material culture scholarship with her work on kitchen materials in Early Modern England, where she addresses cookery books, among other items, and challenges the troubling fact that even historians interested in gender and/or non-elite objects continue to avoid discussions of objects and settings seen not only as ‘mundane’, but also typically feminine.¹³ The core problem, both in Pennell’s subject matter and in studies of cosmetics, is not, as might be assumed from the lack of studies, that these topics had insignificant roles in historical societies, but that assiduous gendered biases are still affecting what materials scholars choose to represent. As Pennell states, ‘these things have been forgotten because their associations—with the domestic, with practical skills rather than “arts and mysteries”, with women above all—have rendered them historically “small” and incapable of carrying explanatory value’.¹⁴ In other words, the fact that cosmetics have yet to be sufficiently incorporated into art historical scholarship suggests that the ‘romantic, elitist, individual-glorifying, and monograph-producing substructure’ that Linda Nochlin first called into question forty

¹² Colish, ‘Cosmetic Theology’, 3-14; Lichtenstein, ‘Making up Representation’, 77-87.

¹³ Pennell, ‘Mundane Materiality’, 180.

¹⁴ Pennell, ‘Mundane Materiality’, 180; This tellingly echoes Sandra Lee Bartky’s critique of the dismissal of makeup wearing in modern society: ‘A woman’s effort to master feminine body discipline will lack importance just because she does it: Her activity partakes of the general depreciation of everything female. In spite of unrelenting pressure to “make the most of what they have,” women are ridiculed and dismissed for the triviality of their interest in such “trivial” things as clothes and make-up’. Sandra Lee Bartky, ‘Foucault, Femininity’, 141.

years ago has not been adequately laid to rest.¹⁵ The need for scholarship recognising these overlooked subjects, therefore, is not only a necessary expansion of the field, but essential if Italian Renaissance studies are to truly cast off this outmoded andocentric legacy.¹⁶ This thesis challenges the fact that cosmetics have remained in the periphery of material cultural studies, examining compelling primary-source evidence that makeup—recipes, discussion, application—played prominent roles in the everyday social, economic and intellectual life of Renaissance people from a range of occupations, genders, and backgrounds. I argue, in other words, that in relegating cosmetics to the sidelines of study, previous scholarship has effectively pushed to the margins a subject that was in fact an integral part of Renaissance life.

Approach

In analysing cosmetics, this thesis addresses a category of materials and practices which were historically amorphous, as will be discussed in more detail below. My working definition of the term ‘cosmetic’ takes this ambiguity into account. Throughout this study, I use the words ‘cosmetic(s)’ and ‘makeup’ to describe a preparation whose primary purpose is to promote, preserve, or enhance beauty and/or attractiveness through alteration of the physical appearance. Likewise, when I speak about products having a ‘cosmetic effect’ I mean an effect intended to alter the physical visual appearance with the intention of improving it. ‘Cosmetic culture’, then, is the broad range of practices and materials relating to beautification, including, but not limited to: the act of applying makeup; the products and substances used to modify the appearance; the implements used to store and apply makeup (e.g. jars, combs, boxes, mirrors, sponges); the recipes and instructions for making and application; depictions of

¹⁵ Nochlin, ‘Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?’, 153.

¹⁶ Nochlin, ‘Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?’, 153; Jacobs, *Renaissance Virtuosa*.

makeup in art and literature; and the networks of people who made and used makeup. I explain how this differs from other definitions of cosmetics below.

This project emerged out of the problem of finding source material that contained information about everyday cosmetic use specifically among prostitutes. I wanted to explore whether or not this prominent topic of discussion in Renaissance dialogues and letters had any relationship to everyday practice. However, it soon became clear that the evidence of makeup use among prostitutes was too sparse to support the original scope of the project. Having previously done research on the *Gli esperimenti* recipe collection attributed to Caterina Sforza, I was aware that a number of *ricettari* containing cosmetic recipes were created and circulated in Italy during the early Cinquecento.¹⁷ I therefore expanded my inquiry to cover the evidence of cosmetics preserved in these recipe books. This search proved fruitful, as I discovered a range of manuscript and printed sources containing a total of over 500 individual recipes for a variety of beauty products. These form the documentary basis for this thesis. These sources, detailed in Appendix A, include the manuscripts *Secreti medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia* (14th-15th c.); *Ricettario galante* (ca. 1500-1520); an untitled collection falsely attributed to the physician Michele Savonarola from the fifteenth to sixteenth century (hereafter referred to as the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript); and the Sforza *Gli esperimenti*. The printed texts are an Italian translation of Petrus Hispanus' *Thesaurus pauperum, Thesoro de poveri* (1498); the pseudo-Galenic *Ricettario di Galieno* (1510); *Venusta* (1525) by Eustachio Celebrino; and two anonymous collections, *Dificio de ricette* (1525) and *Probatum est* (1529); along with several undated pamphlets: *Opera nova de ricette e secreti che insegna apparecchiare una mensa a uno convito*; *Specchio di virtu*, *Secreti secretorum* and

¹⁷ The term 'ricettario' (plural 'ricettari') simply means 'recipe book'. I use it throughout to refer to the books containing cosmetic recipes as it is a simpler term with fewer underlying implications than 'Books of Secrets'. Spicer, 'Painted Breasts and Shamefast Blushes'.

Operetta molto piacevolissima. For the majority of these texts, this is the first time they have been considered by scholarship outside of Italy, many have received no treatment beyond mention of their title, and one has not been brought to light, to my knowledge, since its original publication in the sixteenth century.¹⁸ In uniting them in a single study and analysing their cultural context as a group, this thesis fills a significant lacuna in the scholarship.

The scope of this study is limited to recipes in books created in the years from 1450-1540, parameters which deliberately focus on the earliest examples of printed recipe books. Both the bulk of visual source materials and the vast majority of printed recipe books addressing cosmetics originated in and around Venice. The development of the artistic interest in depicting women applying cosmetics rose to prominence in Venice during the early Cinquecento, typified by Titian's 1515 *Woman with a Mirror* (Figure 31).¹⁹ However, my overall contextualisation has incorporated sources from a broader geographical area, because cosmetic recipes, both in books and in personal letters, were exchanged between cities and across borders. So too were broader ideas about bodies, appearance, health and morality which affected the ways in which makeup use was perceived, so that, although fashions varied from city to city, the use of cosmetics and the broader cultural questions raised by their use were not specific to Venice.²⁰

The approach to this thesis is interdisciplinary, with a methodological basis in anthropology and cultural history influenced by my background in the social sciences.

¹⁸ Notes on individual titles, including reference to previous work on them in Appendix A.

¹⁹ Schäpers, *Junge Frau*, esp. 67-79, 295-318; Goodman-Soellner, 'Poetic Interpretations', 427; Humfrey, 'Portrait in Fifteenth-Century Venice', 63; Brown, 'Venetian Painting', 23.

²⁰ On the spread of cosmetics in letters and as gifts, see: Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 496, 503, 529-531; de Vries, *Caterina Sforza*, 210; Welch, 'Hair and Hands', 261; Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 267-70; Mary Hollingsworth, 'Coins, Cloaks, Candlesticks', 269-70; On the circulation of recipe books, see: Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 361; Ray, 'Prescriptions for Women', 140-142.

In its broadest sense, this study aims to create, in Clifford Geertz's terms, a 'thick description' of Italian Renaissance cosmetics culture; that is, to find ways of describing the use and reception of cosmetics in Renaissance Italy using 'that society's own norms and categories', tracing the ways in which meaning was ascribed to cosmetics through interpretation of the culture's extrovert forms of expression (such as recipe books, written accounts and imagery).²¹ Peter Burke's work on historical anthropology in Early Modern Italy has served as a useful model for the incorporation of Geertz's ethnological approach into a historical framework.²² Even while Geertz points out that any ethnography is a multi-layered representation—in which the final account of a culture is inherently mediated by the way in which both the informant and the anthropologist represent it—the problems of dealing with historical 'informants', who are only represented by the documents they produced and the material remains they leave behind, makes finding the norms and categories of the historical society an aim in itself.²³ As Burke states, 'we are dealing neither with pure fact nor with pure fiction, but...with stereotyped perceptions of social reality'.²⁴ These 'stereotyped perceptions' have been taken largely for granted in previous scholarship, undermining the significance of the culture of cosmetics.

Cleto Corrain's 'Alcune ricette interessanti la cosmesi in un ricettario attribuito a Michele Savonarola' (1987), highlights the problems that arise in scholarly treatment of cosmetics, in which the historical context has been largely ignored.²⁵ Corrain addresses the cosmetic recipes in the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript (a collection which is re-examined in this thesis) by reconstructing the potential effectiveness of ingredients and reason for their use from the perspective of modern pharmacology, an approach which

²¹ Geertz, 'Thick Description', 3-30; Burke, *Historical Anthropology*, 3.

²² Burke, *Historical Anthropology*, 3-4.

²³ Geertz, 'Thick Description', 9-10.

²⁴ Burke, *Historical Anthropology*, 71.

²⁵ Corrain, 'Alcune ricette', 19-40.

has been favoured by a number of scholars.²⁶ Throughout, Corrain struggles to provide the reader with answers as to why many of the ingredients appear. This is inevitable because he does not consider the Renaissance context. The ingredients were defined and chosen according to humoral medicine or *materia medica*, for example, which he ignores. As a result, Corrain is unable to provide much insight into what cosmetic recipes offer into Renaissance modes of thinking. At its most extreme, Corrain's reliance on anachronistic sources without cross-reference to historical material has resulted in misleading and inaccurate identifications.²⁷ These cosmetic recipes cannot be examined in a vacuum.

By contrast, the approach to the translation and discussion of recipes in this thesis strives to counteract the problems presented in Corrain through contextualisation with Renaissance sources whenever possible. Pietro Andrea Mattioli's commentary on Dioscorides' *Materia medica* (1554) has been used as a primary source, as it is arguably the most detailed Cinquecento account of how plants and animals were named, what humoral properties they had, and how they were understood to relate to each other in the period when the cosmetic recipes were circulating.²⁸ It is important to rely on such sources because these categories are usually not the same as we understand them today, not least because they predate Linnaen taxonomy. Even relying on Mattioli's text does not answer every question however: not all ingredients appear in his volume, and even when they do, not all ingredients can be translated simply into modern English (or

²⁶ Corrain, 'Alcune ricette', 19-40; On attribution of the manuscript, see: Menini, 'Ricettario attribuito a Michele Savonarola', 67-69; other scholars who approach ingredients with interest in their modern 'effectiveness' include: Brunello, 'Profumeria e cosmèsi', 3-16; Grando, *Profumi e cosmesi*; Fiumi and Tempesta, 'Gli "esperimenti" di Caterina Sforza', 139-146; Riddle, *Contraception and Abortion*; Helen King writes an excellent critique of the inherent problems when historical remedies are approached with the main aim of determining whether they 'work' in terms of modern medicine: King, *Hippocrates' Woman*, 132-156.

²⁷ Corrain, 'Alcune ricette', 23, 24, 31.

²⁸ Mattioli, *Materia medica*.

Italian), as plants which were understood to be related in the Renaissance are now defined under separate genera and species. For example, his discussion of ‘dragontea’ contains illustrations of five different plants including ‘Dragontea Maggiore’, which appears to be Dragon Arum (*Dracunculus vulgaris*), and tarragon (‘dragoncello’) (*Artemisia dracunculus*).²⁹ Similarly, Mattioli himself is trying to connect Dioscorides’ ingredients with substances known at the time, since some identifications had been lost: he records how misleading vernacular names have arisen from people believing that two unrelated plants look alike, for example, and proffers different sides in the debate over the true identity of various alums, explaining how their name has changed since Dioscorides’ time.³⁰

Although no one text can be expected to represent the full range and variety of knowledge held at the time, Mattioli’s commentary represents an aggregation of Renaissance ideas and understandings. In critiquing Dioscorides, Mattioli provides alternative theories on the use of the *materia medica*, which both coincide with, and challenge the original text; he includes perspectives from other key writers on *materia medica* at the time such as Galen (who is often his main source for comparisons), and Pliny, while relating his own experiences and observations. His choice of topics within each discussion incorporates ongoing dialogues and debates, everyday trade practices, common names and uses, and issues arising from production of false materials and incorrect identifications. His approach, which relies on empirical research and observation, is a sign of the times, indicative of the growing interest in testing, observation and personal experience—the same shift signalled by the growing popularity of *ricettari* in the sixteenth century and their constant insistence that a

²⁹ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 622-628. Although anachronistic, I refer at times to Linnaen taxonomy in my translations for the sake of clarity and ease of reference for future research. Information on scientific names taken from: ‘The Royal Horticultural Society Horticultural Database’.

³⁰ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 622-628, 1429-1431.

remedy 'è provato'.³¹ The text, therefore, is an invaluable resource not just for translation of ingredients, but moreover for the snapshot it offers of Renaissance ideas and understandings, the 'structures of significations' underlying the creation and use of cosmetic recipes, whose 'social ground and import' the thick description aims to explore.³²

Everyday Rituals

In investigating cosmetics, this study is also interested in the symbolic power of everyday rituals—how 'apparently trivial routines and rituals have an important role in maintaining or enforcing a certain view'.³³ In examining representations of cosmetics, I ask what hegemonies the everyday use and application of makeup reinforced, and how external sources such as visual imagery, popular literature, poems and other methods used to advertise cosmetics exerted pressure and influence on individual behaviours and perceptions of the body.

The specific social effects of cosmetic use have been discussed mainly from a feminist perspective in current scholarship. Questions have been raised as to how makeup contributes to gender hierarchies, whether as a force that enforces women's disadvantaged position, or one that can be used subversively to assert agency and power.³⁴ For the most part, such approaches have dealt with modern society.³⁵ In the context of the Renaissance, cosmetics can only really be seen as working within the larger patriarchal structure—the possibilities for choice of expression that are so central in feminist arguments supporting the creative possibilities of makeup are simply not

³¹ Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, esp. 9-12; For more on the growth of interest in observation and empirical study, see: Ogilvie, *Science of Describing*; Smith and Schmidt, *Making Knowledge*; Barrera-Osorio, *Experiencing Nature*.

³² Geertz, 'Thick Description', 9.

³³ Burke, *Historical Anthropology*, 4; Löfgren, 'Anatomy of Culture', 26-46.

³⁴ Bartky, 'Foucault, Femininity', 129-145; Wolf, *Beauty Myth*; Frost, 'Doing Looks', 117-137; Jeffreys, *Beauty & Misogyny*.

³⁵ Exceptions are: Phillippy, *Painting Women*; Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*.

available to Renaissance men and women.³⁶ Two of the few scholars who have taken a theoretical approach to Early Modern cosmetic practice, Patricia Phillippy and Farah Karim-Cooper, support this reading: Phillippy suggests that even though making-up could be an enactment of female agency, it was simultaneously an embodiment of the masculine discourse on femininity; Karim-Cooper argues that women were trapped within an impossible system which placed a high moral worth on a ‘fragmented and fictitious’ ideal of beauty, leaving women ‘no choice but to attempt to create a similar portrait upon herself’.³⁷ One of the goals of this study is to map out the bounds of convention and the possibilities for difference within this system’s limitations.

I am especially concerned with the role of cosmetics in Renaissance Italy beyond their place within a misogynistic social structure however. The latter is relatively well established, as I have said above, and moreover it represents only a limited view of the web of cultural substructures into which cosmetics culture fits. Norbert Elias, Mary Douglas and Michel Foucault are all important influences on how I have approached the functioning of social forces.³⁸ Sandra Lee Bartky’s relocation of Foucault’s theories into the context of the cosmetic routine is most relevant. Bartky proposes that the internalised Panopticon, discussed by Foucault, can be seen to function in the home as much as in an institutional setting. She proffers the makeup routine as a prime setting where women ‘self-police’ their own bodies on a daily basis.³⁹ She argues that many of the main features Foucault sees as effecting this ‘self-policing’ system, such as the systematic, timed, and itemised control of the body’s movements, are equally present in cosmetic routines.⁴⁰ Although I do not apply a rigid theoretical framework to the interpretation of cosmetic routines, these ideas discussed by Foucault and Bartky have

³⁶ Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 4.

³⁷ Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 4; Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 10.

³⁸ Elias, *Civilizing Process*; Douglas, *Purity and Danger*; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

³⁹ Bartky, ‘Foucault, Femininity’, 129-145.

⁴⁰ Bartky, ‘Foucault, Femininity’, 129-132, 139-142; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 149-156.

resonance not only with aspects of the Renaissance cosmetic routine, but, more broadly, with the rise of texts for self-improvement during the early Cinquecento, among them Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* is a prime example. Such texts encouraged the careful monitoring and itemised control of the self.⁴¹ In then thinking about how the emphasis on restraint of the public and exterior body interacted with notions of the private body and its interior functioning, Norbert Elias and Mary Douglas have served as key links to draw these worlds together.⁴²

Ambiguity in Historical Definitions of Cosmetics

The point is stressed at a number of points in this thesis that cosmetics in Renaissance Italy must be understood in terms of their flexibility and fluid meanings. Examples throughout this study demonstrate Renaissance attempts to grapple with the ambiguity of both the physical materials of cosmetics, which fluctuate between medicinal, decorative, and harmful; and the intent of the people that used them, whether to cure, preserve, disguise or seduce. As I discuss in the first chapter, moralists debated the material qualities of cosmetics, albeit indirectly, making repeated attempts to separate moral use from amoral use, excessive from acceptable, precisely because no clear definition existed in the everyday material of cosmetics. Instead, makeup products in recipe books are shown to represent a wide range, from plain washes, to tinted waters, to curative face paints, to cleansing powders, and so on—overlapping effects that cure, disguise, cleanse, perfume, entice and/or disgust, depending on the context of their application. The understanding of health and appearance as a continuous act of maintaining balance between the four humours—sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric and melancholic—further contributed to cosmetics' problematic

⁴¹ Castiglione (ed. Quondam), *Il Cortegiano*; Castiglione (trans. Bull), *Courtier*; Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 141; Vigarello, 'Upward Training': 144-99, esp. 151; Bell, *How To Do It*.

⁴² Elias, *Civilizing Process*; Douglas, *Purity and Danger*.

boundaries. According to this system, traits of external appearance including hair growth, complexion of the skin, and face shape were all seen as ‘symptoms’, or expressions, of balances or imbalances of the humours within, and the bounds between the body’s external ‘surface’ and interior substance were fluid.⁴³ Chapter 2 in particular places cosmetic recipes within the humoral system.

Historically, the terms ‘cosmetics’ and ‘makeup’ are themselves anachronistic to the period of research, both in Italian and English. In Italian, the adjective *cosmetico* first appears in use around 1555, and the noun *cosmesi* in 1676 while the use of *truccarsi* and *trucco* for makeup did not appear until the nineteenth century.⁴⁴ In a similar manner, the English term ‘cosmetic’ only first appears in Francis Bacon’s 1605 *Advancement of Learning*.⁴⁵ During the late Quattrocento and early Cinquecento, a variety of terms were used to describe recipes for beautification. The most recurrent title for cosmetic recipes that refers to their generic effect is ‘*per far bella*’, literally ‘to make beautiful’. This phrase occurs at least fifty times in Caterina Sforza’s *Gli sperimenti* alone, and appears numerous additional times throughout the other recipe texts.⁴⁶ The term *belletto* is used in *Gli sperimenti*, the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript *ricettario* and in the proem of *Opera Nova Piacevole* to describe both rouge and skin whiteners.⁴⁷ *Rossetto* is used on occasion for solutions which give the skin a rosy

⁴³ Laughran, ‘Oltre la pelle’, 50-51, 54, 61; Rogers, ‘Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal’, 128-130; Cavallo, *Artisans of the Body*, 21, 39-42; Cavallo, ‘Health, Beauty, Hygiene’, 180-182; Benedetti, *Anatomice*; Manfredi, *Perché*, ff. 41-48, 81-89.

⁴⁴ The 1555 use of ‘cosmetico’ was as an adjective, according to Battaglia, it was first used as a noun around 1690, and as the feminine noun ‘*cosmetica*’ (cosmetics) in 1754. See ‘cosmesi’, ‘cosmetico’, in Battaglia (ed.), *Grande dizionario* (v. 3), 886; ‘truccare’, ‘trucco’. In *ibid.* (v. 21), 421-422; ‘cosmesi’, ‘trucco’, in *Il Nuovo Etimologico*.

⁴⁵ Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 4.

⁴⁶ An example from Sforza: ‘A Far Bella: Piglia Sale comune L. 1. Biaccha L. ½ argento solimato on. 1. canfora on. 1. argento vivo on. 1. ogni cosa fa bollire in uno bocale de aqua che si consumi el terzo dappoi adopera et lavate le mano et el viso quando volj.’ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 634; See also *ibid.*, 631-633; 635-638, 642-645, 648, 650-651, 688. For frequency in all texts, see Appendix B, Table 2.

⁴⁷ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 650: ‘A far belletto’ and ‘A far belletto Nobbilissimo’; Celebrino, *Opera nova piacevole*, 1v: ‘Quiui beletti son bianchi e vermigli...’, ‘Pur che lei

colour.⁴⁸ Cosmetics were also called *ornamento*, *ornamenti* or *adornezza*, which translates as ‘ornament’, or more commonly ‘adornment’. In Sforza’s text, a long section on recipes for the hair is introduced as ‘for the adornment of women’ (*per la adornezza delle donne*) and she also records a ‘most marvelous water to adorn the face and other parts’ (*Acqua de adornare il volto o altra parte mirabilissima*), for example.⁴⁹

Current categorisations of cosmetic products tend to incorporate a broad range of substances and include soaps, cleaning products and perfumes. For example according to the European Union Cosmetic Directive:

[A] ‘cosmetic product’ shall mean any substance or preparation intended to be placed in contact with the various external parts of the human body (epidermis, hair system, nails, lips and external genital organs) or with the teeth and the mucous membranes of the oral cavity with a view exclusively or mainly to cleaning them, perfuming them, changing their appearance and/or correcting body odours and/or protecting them or keeping them in good condition.⁵⁰

The directive includes a list of products that may be considered cosmetic, including ‘toilet soaps, deodorant soaps, etc.’.⁵¹ Alternatively, the United States Food and Drug Administration states that the purpose of cosmetics as defined by the Federal Food,

sappia fare chalche beletto...’; MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 183r: ‘Belletto Grande per Candidare la carne’, ‘Belletto da far Bella una donna e Biancha’, ‘A far una donna Biancha usando questo beletto’.

⁴⁸ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 186v-187r: ‘A far rossetto da dona’ and ‘Rosetto in altro modo’, 189r: ‘Rossetto polito’; Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 264: ‘A fare la roxeta’.

⁴⁹ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 652, 647.

⁵⁰ Directive 76/768/EEC, *Rules governing cosmetic products in the European Union*, 6.

⁵¹ The list in full is as follows: ‘Creams, emulsions, lotions, gels and oils for the skin (hands, face, feet, etc.); Face masks (with the exception of chemical peeling products); Tinted bases (liquids, pastes, powders); Make-up powders, after-bath powders, hygienic powders, etc.; Toilet soaps, deodorant soaps, etc.; Perfumes, toilet waters and eau de Cologne; Bath and shower preparations (salts, foams, oils, gels, etc.); Depilatories; Deodorants and anti-perspirants; Hair care products: hair tints and bleaches, products for waving, straightening and fixing, setting products, cleansing products (lotions, powders, shampoos), conditioning products (lotions, creams, oils), hairdressing products (lotions, lacquers, brilliantines); Shaving products (creams, foams, lotions, etc.); Products for making-up and removing make-up from the face and the eyes; Products intended for application to the lips.; Products for care of the teeth and the mouth; Products for nail care and make-up; Products for external intimate hygiene; Sunbathing products; Products for tanning without sun; Skin-whitening products; Anti-wrinkle products.’ In Directive 76/768/EEC, 16 (‘Annex 1: Illustrative list by category of cosmetic products’).

Drug, and Cosmetic Act [sec. 201(i)] is ‘for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance’, and lists products to include ‘skin moisturizers, perfumes, lipsticks, fingernail polishes, eye and facial makeup preparations, shampoos, permanent waves, hair colors [sic], toothpastes, and deodorants, as well as any material intended for use as a component of a cosmetic product’.⁵² Unlike the definitions aimed at product regulation above, the Oxford English Dictionary excludes soap, yet still considers cosmetics to be ‘cleansing’, defining cosmetic as ‘any of several preparations (excluding soap) that are applied to the human body for beautifying, preserving, or altering the appearance or for cleansing, colouring, conditioning, or protecting the skin, hair, nails, lips, eyes, or teeth. See also makeup; perfume’.⁵³ Instead, I have chosen to analyse a range of products and practices that is broad enough to reflect the diversity present in the historical record, but which also focuses the investigative aims of this research on the visual aspects of cosmetic culture. While there is clearly variation in the definition of cosmetics’ function, a key point in common between all definitions is that cosmetics beautify and/or alter the appearance. This is the main trait which I have chosen to focus on in my study, and in keeping with my research interest in the modification and beautification of the visual appearance, I exclude soap, perfume, or skin medications.

I chose to focus on beauty practice aimed specifically at visually modifying the appearance primarily to necessarily limit the scope of material considered, but also because this topic has been relatively untouched by previous research. The material culture of soaps and perfumes have attracted more scholarly attention in the past, and have been the recent subject of study in particular by Douglas Biow and Evelyn

⁵² US Food and Drug Administration, ‘Is It a Cosmetic’.

⁵³ ‘cosmetic’, in *Oxford Dictionaries Online*.

Welch.⁵⁴ In limiting the discussion of soaps and perfumes in this study, however, I do not mean to imply that these products played no role in the culture of beautification, or that we cannot find visual traces of them in the artistic record. Indeed, the point is made repeatedly throughout this thesis that dialogues of hygiene, cleanliness and scent were closely related, and that the appearance of beauty, in other words, was more than skin deep.

The Texts

In order to develop a comprehensive idea of the themes and patterns present in the cosmetic recipe books studied, including the variety of instructions available, and the common ingredients and methods used, I organised the cosmetic recipes from each book into a database. While the database cannot be replicated directly in the text of this study, it was the basis for large portions of the discussion and is also the source of the statistical figures concerning recipe and ingredient frequency. The database contains the following: transcription of the full text of each cosmetic recipe in original Italian, full text translated into English, order in which the recipe appears in the source book, source books and years in which they were published, recipe ingredients with translation, and the recipes' aim. My survey includes twenty-one texts, with four manuscripts and nine individual printed titles, as well as a number of repeat printings. Chapter 2 introduces each book in detail, and an annotated list of the titles can be found in Appendix A. For titles that underwent multiple printings, I have, where available, consulted at least one text from every year it was printed, and have noted any

⁵⁴ Perfume is one of the major topics addressed as part of Welch's ongoing HERA funded project, 'Fashioning the Early Modern: Creativity and Innovation in Europe, 1500-1800' which launched in 2010 in conjunction with Queen Mary, University of London, and the Victoria and Albert Museum; see project web page, retrieved 20 Oct. 2013 from <<http://www.fashioningtheearlymodern.ac.uk/>>; also Welch, 'Art on the Edge', 241-268. On soaps and cleanliness, see Biow, *Culture of Cleanliness*.

differences, anomalies, and marginal notations that appear in these volumes. However, I have not included recipes from repeat editions as separate entries in the database (unless they represent a new addition to the original printing), therefore they do not figure into computed proportions of recipes, ingredients, or other statistical figures that appear throughout my discussion. Because I previously carried out work on the Sforza *Gli experimenti* its use here was limited to avoid repeat material, and it has not been included in the database and overall statistical figures.⁵⁵ The database is organized to sort by the recipes' source, ingredients and 'aim'—that is, what the recipe claims to achieve, for example 'to make hair blonde'. Its primary aim is organisational—enabling me to trace patterns in the recipe components and ingredients and connections between texts and to closely examine developing trends and relationships.

During the compilation of the database, there were times where a recipe fell on the borderlines of cosmetic practice, and the decision had to be made as to whether to include it or not. Cosmetics share a considerable overlap with recipes for health and hygiene, especially when it comes to curing skin conditions. There are a number of recipes whose effect would have likely improved the overall appearance which I do not include in the database because their primary 'given' purpose is not to beautify, but to counteract a parasite, allergic reaction, or specific skin problem; these include recipes to eliminate scabies, ringworm, rashes, lice, fleas, nits, dandruff, warts, and recipes to remove scars. In cases where multiple effects were given, for example, a recipe which both beautifies the skin and prevents dandruff, I have included the recipe as long as one of the given purposes is more generally cosmetic (as per my definition above).⁵⁶ While solely curative recipes have not been included in the statistical analysis or appendices translations, they have been taken into consideration of the broader discussions of where

⁵⁵ Spicer, 'Painted Breasts'.

⁵⁶ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 183r.

cosmetics fit in to Renaissance ideas of health and beauty, themes which are discussed extensively in Chapters 2 and 4.

The same is the case for soaps and perfumes. Again, there are numerous instances of overlap in items such as solutions to clean hair and make it black, washes to whiten and clean the skin, and soaps that whiten the hands.⁵⁷ At the same time, it should be made clear that not every item with a cosmetic effect is in fact a face paint or hair dye—while many items include pigments which would tint the hair or complexion, there are also numerous ‘waters’ for the face and skin, for example, whose purpose are to whiten, beautify, and/or bring a rosy colour to the skin, but which do not actually include any dyeing or bleaching elements. Equally, while perfumes as a category are not included in the database, a large number of the cosmetics for hair, skin and teeth include elements such as rosewater, myrrh, camphor, cloves or incense to give them a pleasant odour along with whatever other effects they aim to achieve. With all of these, the same criteria is followed as above: if one of the given purposes of the recipe is to make the wearer beautiful through modifying the visual appearance, it has been included in the database. If however, a recipe’s sole trait is a soap or a scent, with no stated visual effects, it has not been included.

The categorisation imposed on the database was a necessary organisational tool, but, it must be stressed, reflects only one option from which cosmetics can be approached—there are cases where it fits well with how the recipe book was originally organised, and other cases where the fit is not so effective and the exclusion of recipes seemed abrupt. The table of contents of a selection of the recipe books have therefore

⁵⁷ For clean, black hair, see: *Secreti secretorum*, Rx.38; *Dificio de ricette*, 8^f (Rx.46); Celebrino, *Opera nova piacevole*, Rx.53; for a recipe to clean and whiten the skin, see: MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 183v.

been included in Appendix F to give the reader a clearer perspective of how these recipes fit within their books and a sense of their often organic organisation.

Thesis Structure

This study's investigation of the role of cosmetics in everyday life in mid-Quattrocento to mid-Cinquecento Italy begins with an examination of the dominant moralising discourses directed at cosmetic practice. Far from being a subsidiary topic, concerns over cosmetic use were a prominent recurrent feature in Renaissance discourses. A critical reading of the proscriptive literature addressing cosmetics in Chapter 1 uncovers the long rhetorical tradition behind the major arguments made against cosmetics, and its relationship to social concerns. The ambiguity of the role of cosmetics was in fact a recurrent theme in the unease expressed in these passages, linked with an unhealthy preoccupation with controlling female sexuality.

The sources brought together in Chapter 1 establish broad themes and ideas from a range of locations in Italy, laying a necessary framework for further discussion in subsequent chapters. The following three chapters take on a material-cultural approach, illustrating alternate roles and interpretations of cosmetics in Renaissance society through close analysis of recipe texts and related objects.

Chapter 2 explores the cosmetic recipes as source material. Through a descriptive analysis of the variety of recipes that appear in *ricettari*, along with a discussion of the way in which these recipes are labelled and described within the text, it presents a refined definition of the products and practices of which Renaissance beautification consisted. The source books in which the recipes are found, the ways in which authors grouped cosmetic recipes within the texts, the other recipes they are associated with, and the range of recipes present, with specific interest in what recipes

were seen as cosmetic, help establish where, how, and why limits were created. Here the theme of cosmetic ambiguity, introduced in the first chapters, is further explored through a discussion of the interaction between beauty and good health visible within cosmetic recipes, which often suggest a fluid boundary between medicine and cosmetics. The discussion of authors and audiences in Chapter 3 expands the discussion of the role of recipes and recipe books by investigating the context in which they were created, bought and used. A series of case studies of the creation and promotion of *ricettari* by specific authors demonstrates that recipe books were appropriated into a range of social contexts, and played significant roles in the building of social interaction, identity, and reputation. The intended audience is also investigated, and in particular, the likelihood of a dominant female readership is questioned, demonstrating overall that, in contrast to the literary view of cosmetics as a primarily feminine sphere of knowledge, cosmetic recipes played a significant role in the day to day lives, both public and private, of men and women alike. Chapter 4 addresses audience and accessibility of cosmetics from a different perspective—that of value—examining the cost of cosmetic recipes in relationship to their effectiveness. By combining examination of specific methods and ingredients prescribed in individual recipes with evidence from inventorial price lists, it confirms that cosmetics would have been available at a variety of prices, suggesting accessibility to a wider range, but not the full spectrum, of Renaissance society. Cosmetics were not solely an elite material culture, and this is why its study is so useful—as a view into less visible strata.

The final chapters turn to cultural representations of makeup in art and literature, re-assessing cosmetics' metaphoric value through a reconsideration of these depictions in the context of the larger material culture of cosmetics established in Chapters 1-4. Visual representations of cosmetic routines, and in particular the ambiguity of makeup-table scenes, which have been subject to conflicting scholarly discussions, highlight the

generally amorphous role of cosmetics as discussed in the preceding chapters. Focusing on the close examination of key representative images in relationship with other objects of material culture related to the cosmetic routine such as mirrors, combs, sponges and the *restello*, this chapter also demonstrates the important role cosmetics had in conceptualisations of femininity, not just in artwork, but in women's daily lives. Chapter 6 approaches the question of cosmetics and female identity from the opposite side investigating negative associations between cosmetics, witchcraft and disease. The linking of cosmetics with witchcraft, and the made-up body with the diseased body further situates these discussions within discourses on the control of female sexuality, making cosmetics a powerful metaphor through which women's roles were debated and defined. In all, I argue that cosmetics are not a minor subject. As the very 'tools' by which dialogues of gender and difference were 'enabled, learnt and assimilated', they offer new and important insights into the complexity of Renaissance social relationships and the systems by which meaning and identity were created on a day to day basis.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Pennell, 'Mundane Materiality', 179.

CHAPTER 1

MORALISING COSMETICS

In 1487, Laura Cereta, described as a ‘Renaissance feminist’, wrote a tirade against women’s dress in a letter addressed to her friend Agostino Emilio: ‘wives are bewitched by rich display’, she lamented, ‘more witless still are those [husbands] who, to satisfy the appetite of their wives, destroy their patrimonies...’¹. Drawing inspiration from Juvenal’s sixth satire, Cereta takes issue with women’s public displays of fashion and ornamentation, and describes in detail the various manners in which they deck themselves while attending church, criticising ostentatious hair, jewellery and clothing, before moving on to cosmetics:

Many women press bread on their faces to soften it, and many erroneously polish skin that is full of wrinkles. Truly, there are few women who do not paint their bloodshot faces with a snow-white powder made from white lead. Some strive to seem more beautiful in their exquisite and exotic dress than the creator of beauty intended them to be. One is ashamed of the irreverence of certain women who redden their milk-white cheeks with purple dye, and who use their furtive little eyes and laughing mouths to pierce the hearts, already poisoned, of those who gaze on them.

Ah, how careworn one’s brow grows at such a greedy consuming of honour. Alas, how crooked is the weakness of our sex in its delights. For what else have we that would enable us to imitate nobility other than earrings shimmering with rubies and emeralds dangling from our ears? For we weren’t born to dote with corrupt devotion on the images of our own faces in the mirror, were we? Or have we Christian women refused ostentatiousness at our baptismal ceremonies so that we could make ourselves up like Jewish or pagan women? Our misguided ambition for this kind of superiority should make us blush. The lascivious nature of our

¹ King and Rabil (eds.), *Her Immaculate Hand*, 79. Alternate translation in Cereta (ed. Robin), *Collected Letters*, 84-86; The letter was not published until the seventeenth-century. See also Bell, *How to Do It*, 207.

madness should make us shrink back in fear from such arrogance; and mindful of the ashes from which we have come, let us put an end to sins reborn from our desires.²

The themes Cereta discusses are typical of key anti-cosmetic arguments in this period. While Cereta's active involvement in humanist pursuits, including other letters in which she defends women, have led her to be labelled by Diana Robin as a 'feminist', the above letter exhibits hostility rather than pride towards women's behaviour, demonstrating what Robin describes in Cereta as an 'extreme ambivalence towards women as a group'.³ In part due to her inspiration from classical texts, the arguments Cereta employs to make her case against cosmetics reflect a long-standing tradition of misogynistic rhetoric surrounding the topic of women's adornment, with roots in both classical and early Christian writing.⁴ Her suggestions that cosmetics are wasteful and excessive; that makeup is variously offensive to God; that makeup use is both a result and a demonstration of women's 'natural' weakness; and the association she makes between cosmetics, seduction, poisoning and bodily corruption are all prominent and recurrent points in Renaissance discussions of the morality of cosmetics.

This chapter explores the moralising discourse surrounding cosmetic practice, considering major themes dominating Renaissance characterisations of cosmetics in textual sources, and investigates the social significance of these themes. I introduce a number of key texts that incorporate discussion of cosmetics into a larger narrative, with

² Letter from 12 February, 1487. Translation in Cereta (ed. Robin), *Collected Letters*, 85. For alternate translation see Bell, *How to Do It*, 207.

³ Cereta (ed. Robin), *Collected Letters*, 85.

⁴ Patricia Simons suggests women may have adopted 'standards convenient to a patriarch, using "male language in order to be heard"' resulting in harsh observations like Cereta's. Simons, 'Women in Frames', 4–30. Other examples of harsh critiques of female appearance and behaviour initiated by women include Lucrezia Tornabuoni's scrutinising description of her son Lorenzo de' Medici's future wife, Clarice Orsini (in Simons, 'Women in Frames', 18), and Veronica Franco's letter discouraging women from a life of prostitution, which according to Margaret Rosenthal, 'literalizes the ancient misogynist trope that had equated rhetorical excess and epistolary flattery with a dressed-up whore' in: Rosenthal, *Honest Courtesan*, 127-134.

the aim of showing that the characterisation and moral criticism of cosmetics tended to be both highly formulaic and pervasive in serious and satirical discussions of womanhood. I am not proposing that these accounts necessarily represent an accurate depiction of cosmetic practices, but that the prevalence of these ideas in a range of sources suggests that the moral criticisms of cosmetics would have likely been familiar to a large section of the makeup-wearing population.

Cosmetics as a Female Vice

A broad theme that unites discussions of cosmetics during the Renaissance is the fact that they are consistently represented as a problem specific to women: the problems and questions raised about the nature of cosmetics are effectively identical to key problems and questions that were being raised about female nature. The use of cosmetics and over-ornamentation was portrayed as a predominantly female sin throughout the Middle Ages. Marcia Colish has traced the development of anti-cosmetic arguments in the Christian tradition, illustrating how early Christian interpretations of the 'ethical significance' of self-presentation drew on Stoic principles that defined virtue as that which was 'in accordance with nature'.⁵ According to these principles, attempts to improve on nature, including use of cosmetics, were seen to deviate from the moral path. In the original Stoic philosophies moral criticism of personal adornment was applied to both genders, with specific attention paid to the tonsure and hair removal habits of men.⁶ A gendered invective specifically targeting women's cosmetic use was not present, but was an invention of Christian theologians, originating in Tertullian's *De ornatu mulierum*. Tertullian combined misogynistic themes from Juvenal's satire, and antifeminist episodes from Jewish apocryphal scriptures to argue that women should not only avoid vain enhancement of beauty, but

⁵ Colish, 'Cosmetic Theology', 3, 7-9.

⁶ Colish, 'Cosmetic Theology', 3-9.

should hide their naturally occurring charms as well, lest they provoke male lust.⁷ He refers to an apocryphal episode in which angels, attracted to earth by women's natural charms, sleep with them and teach them the art of seduction.⁸ In his interpretation of this story, Tertullian finds blame in the women, pointing out how 'that very excellence of women, natural beauty' proved to be 'a cause of evil', and associating the episode with Eve's guilt in the biblical original sin.⁹ In this passage, not only does Tertullian define makeup mainly as a tool in a sexual act—seduction—but moreover, by suggesting that beauty can seduce and lead men to sin whether or not it is with the woman's deliberate intent, he implies that both applying makeup and 'appearing' at all are inherently sexual.¹⁰ 'Not merely must the pageantry of fictitious and elaborate beauty be rejected by you', he orders, 'but that of even natural grace must be obliterated by concealment and negligence, as equally dangerous to the glances of [the beholder's] eyes'.¹¹ In addition, he condemned making up as a 'sin against God' asserting that the act of modifying one's appearance implicitly questions God's creation.¹² The ideas that Tertullian introduced were passed down in Christian tradition, and are still visible in Renaissance invectives, including that of Laura Cereta. St Cyprian (249-258), Novatian (200-258), and St Ambrose (229-397) repeat the argument that cosmetics are an offense

⁷ Colish, 'Cosmetic Theology', 8; Tertullian (ed. Roberts and Donaldson), 'On Women's Dress', 305-332, for condemnation of cosmetics see pp. 305-307, 316, 318-19.

⁸ Tertullian (ed. Tassinato), *Ornamenti delle donne*, 20-25 (1.1-1.3).

⁹ Tertullian (ed. Tassinato), *Ornamenti delle donne*, 18-25 (1.2-1.3); Tertullian (ed. Roberts and Donaldson), comparison to Eve 304-305; on guilt of women with angels: 306-307, 309.

¹⁰ Colish, 'Cosmetic Theology', 8; Tertullian 'On Women's Dress', 305-307, 316, 318-20. (1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4).

¹¹ 'Cum igitur et nostra et aliorum causa uersetur in studio periculosissimi decoris, iam non tantum confictae et elaboratae pulchritudinis suggestum recusandum a uobis sciatis, sed etiam naturalis speciositatis obliterandum dissimulatione et incuria ut proinde oculorum incuribus molestum'. Tertullian (ed. Tassinato), *Ornamenti delle donne*, 40; Tertullian (ed. Roberts and Donaldson), 'Women's Dress', 318.

¹² Tertullian (ed. Tassinato), *Ornamenti delle donne*, 44, 46-51; Tertullian (ed. Roberts and Donaldson), 'On Women's Dress' 316, 318-19, 322-324.

against God, an ‘impious criticism’ of his work, and an insult to him.¹³ Moreover they continue the condemnation of makeup as a specifically female sin.

The depiction of cosmetics as a female vice in Christian theology was compounded by discussions of ornamentation in rhetoric. Jacqueline Lichtenstein has shown that traditions of rhetoric further figure cosmetics and bodily adornment as a specifically female pursuit, and over-adornment as a vice particular to women.¹⁴ Lichtenstein explores the relationship between makeup, colour theory, and rhetorical tradition, showing how metaphors used in discussions of rhetoric came to influence perceptions of cosmetic use.¹⁵ In these, excessive ornamentation was discouraged. For example, Cicero, suggested that while simple adornment is necessary for beauty, excessive use of ornament ‘conceals rather than elucidates the truth’.¹⁶ Female bodily ornamentation was consistently used as a metaphor to represent overly ornamental speech, so that the two ideas were united, joining ‘the dissipation of an ever deceitful sex and the excess of overly made-up representation in the same aesthetic-moral condemnation’.¹⁷ Because over-ornamentation was consistently represented through metaphors of the female body, these accounts inherently define over-ornamentation as a problem specific to female character, as Lichtenstein argues, framing the problematic of ornament and of femininity as one and the same thing.¹⁸

¹³ Colish, ‘Cosmetic Theology’, 9-10.

¹⁴ Lichtenstein, ‘Making up Representation’, 77-87.

¹⁵ Although Lichtenstein discusses cosmetic culture in seventeenth-century France, her argument is nonetheless applicable in many respects to Renaissance Italy since the main source material she discusses are in fact the writings of Latin authors. These writers, especially Cicero, were equally influential in the formulation of Renaissance bodily ideals, and the use of a woman making-up as a metaphor for various painting styles was prevalent in late Quattrocento and Cinquecento Italy. Lichtenstein, ‘Making Up’, 77; see also: Cropper, ‘Beauty and Displacement’, 181; Rogers, ‘Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal’, 127.

¹⁶ Lichtenstein, ‘Making Up’, 78.

¹⁷ Lichtenstein, ‘Making Up’, 77.

¹⁸ Lichtenstein, ‘Making Up’, 77.

A large body of scholarship has since further developed the ideas proposed in Lichtenstein's argument, exploring in particular the value of women's beauty as a metaphor in the artistic context.¹⁹ Elizabeth Cropper's work has been particularly influential in the reassessment of Renaissance perceptions of beauty. In her look at 'The Place of Beauty in the High Renaissance' Cropper drew directly on Lichtenstein's arguments, asserting that 'the emergence of the affective beholder and the corresponding discursive gendering of the work of art, are deeply bound up with the Petrarchan culture of desire'.²⁰ She thus argues that the purpose of women portrayed in art and discussed in Renaissance visual theory is primarily metaphorical, tied into Petrarchan poetics. Of particular relevance to the exploration of beauty and cosmetics is her discussion of Ludovico Dolce's association between an artist's paint and women's makeup.²¹ Dolce, who she identifies as 'one of the most important early critics of the excesses of ornamental style', refers to one of Propertius's *Elegies*, in which the author's mistress is encouraged to use the same pure and earthy tones in her cosmetics as the iconic painter Apelles used in his artwork.²² Through this, as Cropper observes, Dolce links the celebration of unadorned nature with his 'criticism of overworked affectation in painting', making a case for simple ornament and natural colour in art through the example of a woman's body and cosmetic use.²³ In Dolce's passage, it is not just the use of makeup that is portrayed as a female fashion, but equally, the weakness for over-adornment is presented as an inherently female problem.

¹⁹ I address specific arguments in greater detail in the discussion of cosmetics in visual imagery in chapter 6. Key works include Elizabeth Cropper, 'Problems in Rhetoric', 175-90; Cropper, 'Parmigianino, *Petrarchismo*, 374-94; Cropper, 'Beauty and Displacement'; Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal'; Goodman-Soellner, 'Poetic Interpretations', 426-442; Pericolo, 'Love in the Mirror', 149-179; Cranston, *Poetics of Portraiture*.

²⁰ Cropper, 'Beauty and Displacement', 175.

²¹ Cropper, 'Beauty and Displacement', 180-81.

²² Cropper, 'Beauty and Displacement', 181; Sextus Propertius, *Elegies I-IV*, 36-37 (I.ii); On reception of Dolce in the Renaissance: Roskill, *Dolce's 'Aretino'*; Gavinelli, 'Reception of Propertius', 399-415.

²³ Cropper, 'Beauty and Displacement', 181.

Women's Inherent Weakness

The framing of over adornment as a female problem incorporated an understanding that women were naturally prone to moral failure. Laura Cereta's statement that women's inherent weakness led them to be easily susceptible to the temptation of adornment articulated one of the most ubiquitous assumptions about femininity in the Renaissance—that of feminine inferiority.²⁴ Cereta mourns 'the weakness of our sex', in her condemnation of cosmetics, which she sees as having led women to 'crooked' delight in ornamentation.²⁵ Reminding Agostino, to whom she writes, of women's more base origin in Adam's rib, she reasserts women's inherent weakness at the end of her letter, and interestingly changes the tone of the argument to suggest that they can thus only have so much responsibility for their temptation by cosmetics.²⁶ Men, she asserts, should take responsibility for women's behaviour and 'see that we women, being constituted as we are, are not taken in by the birdlime of this sort of elegance'.²⁷

Women's susceptibility to temptation was a familiar theme in Christian doctrine, which found women to be the primary cause of the Fall from Grace, thanks to Eve's (and from her, all women's) inability to resist the temptation of the forbidden fruit.²⁸ Tertullian, for example, accuses women of being the 'devil's gateway' and the 'first deserter of the divine law', saying 'on account of *your* desert – that is, death – even the Son of God had to die'.²⁹ Medical and artistic understandings of female nature reiterated assertions of women's inferiority, arguing that their physical imperfections

²⁴ Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism*, 29-30.

²⁵ Cereta (ed. Robin), *Collected Letter*, 86.

²⁶ Cereta (ed. Robin), *Collected Letters*, 86.

²⁷ Cereta (ed. Robin), *Collected Letters*, 86.

²⁸ Maclean, *Renaissance Notion of Woman*, 15-19; Brown, 'Introduction', 13.

²⁹ Tertullian (ed. Roberts and Donaldson), 'On Women's Dress', 304-305; Tertullian (ed. Tasinato), *Ornamenti delle donne*, 18-19 (1.1).

indicated corresponding moral weakness.³⁰ There is a large body of existing scholarship on how gender and sex were defined through the body during this period, which has identified these misogynistic tendencies. Thomas Laqueur's writing on the 'One Sex Body' famously suggests that understandings of sex and gender revolved around the model of the sexually mature adult male, from which women, youths and children were understood as deviations.³¹ While subsequent responses to Laqueur's work have questioned the totality of his proposed model, overall, it is accepted that the humoral understanding of the body together with physiognomics and writing on ideal bodily proportions perpetuated the belief that women were physically flawed.³²

Writing on physiognomy and bodily proportion at times produced incredibly misogynistic texts in which the female body was conceptualized as both a vessel for, and an expression of moral imperfection.³³ The Cinquecento saw an increased interest in physiognomic readings of the body, with theories that combined the Aristotelian tradition of physiognomy with the architecturally-based proportional ideals set out by Vitruvius in the first century.³⁴ Features and proportions of the body and face were read

³⁰ Constance Jordan traces this rationale back to Aristotle's discussions of animal biology; especially *Generation of the Animals*, I, 20, 728aI, 729aI, in Barnes, ed., *Complete Works of Aristotle*, 1130, 1132; Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism*, 30; see also Rogers and Tinagli, *Women in Italy*, 18-24.

³¹ Laqueur, *Making Sex*, especially Chapter 3, 'New Science, One Flesh', 63-148. For reconsiderations of his ideas see: Simons, *Sex of Men*, esp. 16, 141-158, 191-219; Park and Nye, 'Destiny is Anatomy', 53-57; Park, 'Cadden, Laqueur, One-Sex Body', 96-100; Michael Stolberg's response to Laqueur was printed together with a response from Laqueur, and Londa Schiebinger in the following: Stolberg, 'Woman Down to Her Bones', 274-299; followed by Laqueur, 'Sex in the Flesh', 300-306; and Schiebinger, 'Skeletttestreit', 307-313; For further summary of critique on Laqueur's work, see Green, 'Bodies, Gender', 6-9; also King, *Midwifery, Obstetrics*; Crawford, *European Sexualities*, 105-110; Cadden, *Sex Difference*.

³² Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism*, 30; Rogers and Tinagli, *Women in Italy*, 18-24; Cadden, *Sex difference*; Schiesari, 'Face of Domestication', 55-70; Filipczak, *Hot Dry Men, Cold Wet Women*.

³³ Rogers and Tinagli, *Women in Italy*, 20-21; Garrard, 'Leonardo da Vinci', 59-85.

³⁴ Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 128; Bettella, 'Marked Body', 162-164; Maclean, 'Notion of Woman', 127-55; on the development of Renaissance physiognomy see: Carioli, *Storia della fisiognomica*, esp. 116; Ziegler, 'Text and Context, 159-182; Porter, *Windows of the Soul*, 13, 90-92, 97, 120-122; For discussion of the impact of

as distinct indicators of character quality. Hair colour and texture and brow shape were read along with other facial features to translate into whichever of the four humours and corresponding personality types dominated the body—an overbalance of blood, phlegm, yellow bile ('choler') or black bile (*melancholia*) led to characteristics of sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric or melancholic personalities.³⁵ The epitome of humoral balance was seen to be a honey skinned male, well proportioned with gently wavy hair—whose 'phenotype' was seen to indicate an equally ideal temperament that was modest, thoughtful, agreeable, and ingenious.³⁶ Pomponius Gauricus in his treatise *De sculptura* (1504) maintained that the appearance of Greek and Italian men, with moderate height, honey coloured skin and hair that was 'neither too curly or too straight', demonstrated their superior, well-balanced character: 'they have a pleasant appearance, [are] apt at studies, clever, benevolent, modest, and thoughtful'.³⁷ They are, he explains, the perfect medium between the choleric Gauls and Germans from the north, whose tall stature, fleshy bodies, pale complexion, and straight hair indicate that they are 'simple, very thoughtless, rash, stupid and inept at every discipline'; and the short, swarthy, and frizzy-haired Southerners, whose appearance suggested the dryness of their bodily composition, as well as a general lack of ability, and a tendency to be 'fickle, cunning, lying, covetous [and] thieving'.³⁸

humoral theory on Renaissance and Early Modern art, see: Britton, '(Hu)moral Exemplars', 177-204; Filipczak, *Hot Dry Men, Cold Wet Women*; Klibansky et al., *Saturn and Melancholy*.

³⁵ Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 128-130; Britton, '(Hu)moral Exemplars', 177-204; Laughran, 'Oltre la pelle', 43-82.50-51.

³⁶ Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 128; Gauricus, *De sculptura*, 132-133 ('De physiognomia').

³⁷ 'Horum uero medii mediam quoque habent et qualitatem Corpore sunt Mediocres, Capilli eis nec criski nimis nec nimis porrecti, Colore millino, aspectus iucundiore, apti studiis, ingeniosi, misericordes, modesti, ac graues, Itali uidelicet Graecique...'. Gauricus, *De sculptura*, 133.

³⁸ 'Arcto quicunque subiacent, corpore sunt quam caeteri prolixiores, colore albi, comas flauis, capillis mollioribus, Glauci, Simi Crassiores, Carnosiores, Ventrosi, ac Corpulentiores, Iracundi, Simplicis, Leuissim consilii, animo praecipites, Stolidi atque omnino disciplinis inhabiles, Galli uidelicet Germanique, Contra qui sub meridie, nigris capillis crispisque,

These approaches defined the female body largely through doctrines of difference and inequality. Cennino Cennini's *Libro dell'arte* (ca. 1437), for example, dismissed women's bodies as having wholly imperfect proportions, not worth consideration as a model ('I will give you the exact proportions of a man. Those of a woman I will disregard, because not one has perfect proportions').³⁹ Pomponius Gauricus aligns women's perceived physical defects with corresponding psychological failings. His intensely misogynistic representation declares women to be greatly inferior to men in both physical strength and spiritual fortitude:

The differences are many between the two sexes. One is noble, just, intrepid, daring, fair, magnanimous/noble, benevolent/kind, steadfast, courageous, honest, tolerant, magnificent, while the other is vile, unjust, timid, rash, intemperate/licentious, lazy, cruel, obstinate, 'always changeable and inconstant', dishonest, greedy, worthless/depraved, WOMEN compared to men, always have a smaller head, more compact body, with hair more soft and darker, a face more narrow, eyes more sparkling and shining, slender neck, chest more feeble, sides more pliant (weaker), the pelvis and hips plump, fleshy calves, the knees, for this same reason, more retracted, the extremities of the feet and hands swollen, every aspect of the body more delicate and more abandoned/neglected. Their touch is humid, voice feeble, step slow and slight/mincing, limbs more plump, their movements slower.⁴⁰

nigris et oculis, corpore humiliores, cruribus grandiores, Fusci atque Arridiores, disciplinis et ipsi parum apti, plurimae tamen cogitationis, Leues, dolosi, Mendaces, Lucrabundi, furaces, At magis minusque alii aliis, Quo distant acceduntque ad arcton borealem, australemque magis minusque alteri alteris, Sardi Siculi Mauritanii, Arabes...' Gauricus, *De sculptura*, 133.

³⁹ '... ti voglio dare a littera li misure dell'huomo. Quelle della femmina lascio stare, perche non a nessuna perfetta misura.' In: Cennini, *Craftsman's Handbook* (v. 1), 46. Translation with my own modifications, from *ibid.* vol. 2, 48.

⁴⁰ 'Ex genere autem inspiciuntur homines... Plurima est horum dissimilitudo, Illud Nobile, Iustum, Intrepidum, Audax, Aequabile, Magnanimum, Benignum, Constans, Animosum, Probum, Liberale, Magnificum, Hoc uile, Iniurium, Timidum, Temerarium, Intemperans, Remissum, Atrox, Difficile, « uarium, ac Mutabile semper, » Improbum, Auarum, Nequam, FOEMINA omnis quam Mas, est Caput minor, Corpore pressior, Capillos habet molliores, nigrioresque, Vultum Angustiozem, oculos uibrantiores Splendioresque, Collum gracilius, Pectora imbecilliora, latera molliora, Ilii, Coxasque habitores. suras carnosiores, Genuaque ob eam ipsam rationem collabantia, Extrema pedum manuumque tumidiora, Omnem corporis aspectum delicatorum negligentiorumque, Tactus est ei humidior, vox tenuior, Gressus tardior, ac densior, Membra succipleniora, Mots Lentior...' The quote within Gauricus' text is from the *Aeneid*, Book IV, line 569. See Gauricus, *De sculptura*, 132-135. For more discussion see Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 128

His typification of women's nature highlights the same traits that were associated with women's use of cosmetics, in particular, not only their moral weakness but also their deceptiveness, greed and licentiousness, all of which will make recurrent appearances in the examples I discuss throughout this chapter and in Chapter 6.⁴¹

However, it should be noted that the profoundly negative interpretation of women's nature perpetuated by Cennini and Pomponius Gauricus was not shared by all, and there were in fact many ongoing debates surrounding women's character.⁴² Castiglione, for example, stages a long debate between characters Gaspare Pallavicino and Giuliano de' Medici in *Il Cortegiano*, presenting counterpoints to the Aristotelian take on gender.⁴³ Giuliano contends that the genders play complementary roles within family and society, and women are 'every bit as necessary' as men; nevertheless, he still believes women to be 'less spirited', physically weak, and 'more cautious' on the whole.⁴⁴ Even when defended, women are often assumed to be more frail, moreover, regardless of the writers' approach to women, whether they interpret them as profoundly inferior, as roughly equal or (as in the writings of Lucrezia Marinella) as superior, they are inevitably assumed to be innately different to men.⁴⁵ More significantly, the insistence that the appearance is an indicator of personality introduced a moral pressure to conform to a very specific beauty ideal, since physical flaws suggest character flaws. Yet at the same time, because it is only the 'natural' appearance which

⁴¹ Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 128; Bettella, 'Marked Body', 164; Schiesari, 'Face of Domestication', 55-70; Gauricus, *De sculptura*, 132-135.

⁴² For a good selection of major arguments on the topic, see Rogers and Tinagli, *Women in Italy*, 12-24; see also: Stampino, 'Piccolomini's *Raffaella*', esp. 94-95; Piccolomini, *Della istituzione di tutta la vita*, ff. 152v-153r.

⁴³ Rogers and Tinagli, *Women in Italy*, 22; Castiglione (ed. Maier), *Il Cortegiano*, 359-62.

⁴⁴ Rogers and Tinagli, *Women in Italy*, 22; Castiglione (ed. Maier), *Il Cortegiano* 359-62.

⁴⁵ For more examples, see Marinella (ed. Dunhill), *Nobility and Excellence of Women*; da Bisticci, *Lodi delle donne*; Labalme, 'Venetian Women', 81-109; Rogers and Tinagli, *Women in Italy*, 15. For a discussion of the increase in proto-feminist arguments in the late Cinquecento as a response to shifts in the marriage market, see: Cox, 'The Single Self', 513-81; For insight into how perceptions of sex difference are evident in corporeal punishments, see, Chojnacki, 'Patrician Women', 185-187.

is meant to indicate a certain trait, these accounts inherently suggest that attempts made to improve upon the appearance are deceptions, potentially aimed at hiding tell-tale flaws. In other words, the system of reading appearances as an indication of character, evidenced in these descriptions of the body, relegated cosmetics to a problematic place in Renaissance society.

Truth, Beauty, and Cosmetic Deception

The problems with cosmetics as a notion were further compounded by the common poetic elision of beauty, truth and goodness. There is a vast body of scholarship addressing the poetics of beauty, which have been discussed as having a pervasive presence not just in literature, but also in art and popular culture.⁴⁶ Here I present an overview of concepts essential to the discussion of cosmetics, followed by detailed examination of examples pertaining specifically to cosmetic practice.

The idea that beauty of the soul expressed itself in external physical beauty was a primarily Neoplatonic conception, explored particularly in the writings of Marsilio Ficino.⁴⁷ True beauty was celebrated as being divine in nature, equated with goodness, virtue and truth.⁴⁸ Baldassare Castiglione, for example, asserted in *The Book of the Courtier* that ‘the good and the beautiful are identical’, describing how this is because beauty comes from a divine source:

⁴⁶ Yavneh, ‘Ambiguity of Beauty’, 133-157; Cropper, ‘Parmigianino, *Petrarchismo*’, 374-94; Cropper, ‘Problems in Rhetoric, 175-90; Cropper, ‘Beauty and Displacement’, 159-205; Rogers, ‘Decorum of Beauty’, 47-88; Cranston, *Poetics of Portraiture*; Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 12; Steele, ‘Flower of Their Youth’, 481-502; Synnott, ‘Truth and Goodness’, 607-636.

⁴⁷ Ficino (ed. Jayne), *Commentary on Love*, esp. Speech V, pp. 83-106; Ficino (ed. Niccoli), *Dell’amore*, 75-108; Rogers, ‘Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal’, 133, 143-144; Brown, ‘Introduction’, 13; For the impact of Ficino’s ideas on art, see the sources cited in the preceding footnote, as well as: Dempsey, *Portrayal of Love*; Chastel, *Art et humanisme*, 187, 308; Hemsoll, ‘Beauty as an Ideal’, 66-79.

⁴⁸ Ficino (ed. Jayne), *Commentary on Love*, 83-106; Ficino (ed. Niccoli), *Dell’amore*, 75-108.

Beauty is a sacred thing...[it] springs from God and is like a circle, the centre of which is goodness. And so just as one cannot have a circle without a centre, so one cannot have beauty without goodness. In consequence, only rarely does an evil soul dwell in a beautiful body, and so outward beauty is a true sign of inner goodness. This loveliness, indeed, is impressed upon the body in varying degrees as a token by which the soul can be recognized for what it is, just as with trees the beauty of the blossom testifies to the goodness of the fruit ...

Therefore for the most part the ugly are also evil, and the beautiful good. And it can be said that beauty is the pleasant, gay, charming and desirable face of the good, and that ugliness is the dark, disagreeable, unpleasant and sorry face of evil...it can be said that in some manner the good and the beautiful are identical, especially in the human body. And the proximate cause of physical beauty is, in my opinion, the beauty of the soul.⁴⁹

Agnolo Firenzuola's *Delle bellezze delle donne* (1541), is an exacting description of female beauty ideals, describing both the physical traits and personal qualities that an ideal woman should possess. *Delle bellezze delle donne* has been described as one of the first and most comprehensive books on women's beauty of the period, preceded only by Giangiorgio Trissino's *I ritratti* (1524).⁵⁰ While Firenzuola praised men who demonstrated a bold and active *virtù*, the women's virtues he describes are passive, demonstrating chastity through modesty and restraint, following on Ficino's definition of courage as masculine, and temperance as feminine.⁵¹ Desirable feminine qualities

⁴⁹ “... io non vorrei che col dir mal della bellezza, che è cosa sacra ... dico che da Dio nasce la bellezza ed è come circolo, di cui la bontà è il centro; e però come non po essere circolo senza centro, non po esser bellezza senza bontà; onde rare volte mala anima abita bel corpo e perciò la bellezza estrinseca è vero segno della bontà intrinseca e nei corpi è impressa quella grazia più e meno quasi per un carattere dell'anima, per lo quale essa estrinsecamente è conosciuta, come negli alberi, ne' quali la bellezza de' fiori fa testimonio della bontà dei frutti ... I brutti adunque per lo più sono ancor mali e li belli boni; e dir si po che la bellezza sia la faccia piacevole, allegra, grata e desiderabile del bene; e la bruttezza la faccia oscura, molesta, dispiacevole e trista del male ... dir si po che 'l buono e 'l bello a qualche modo siano una medesima cosa, e massimamente nei corpi umani; della bellezza de' quali la più propinqua causa estimo io che sia la bellezza dell'anima...” Castiglione (ed. Maier), *Il cortegiano*, 521-525; Castiglione (trans. Bull), *Courtier*, 330-32.

⁵⁰ Firenzuola (trans. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 13; Rogers, 'Decorum of Beauty', 47-88.

⁵¹ Firenzuola (trans. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 21, 37; Firenzuola, *Bellezze*, 229-238; Ficino (ed. Jayne), *Commentary on Love*, 77-78; Ficino (ed. Niccoli), 68-70; see also Castiglione (ed. Maier), *Il cortegiano*, 340-349 (Book 3, IV-IX); This was further defined at the end of the Cinquecento in: Tasso, *Virtù femminile*, fols. 3^v-5^r. For further discussion, see: Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 140; Rossi, 'Controlling Courtesans', 230-31.

include *leggiadria*, *vaghezza*, *venustas*, *maestà*, *aria*, and *grazia*.⁵² It was through *aria*, that is, the expression and demeanour, that outward features especially revealed the inner state of being.⁵³ His conception of *aria* in particular corresponded with humoural theory and physiognomics, maintaining that, ‘if the good habits of the body are evident in the firmness and thickness of the flesh, the bad habits must then be evident in its flabbiness and thinness’.⁵⁴ So just as true beauty indicated goodness, bad character also manifested itself in one’s facial features:

...all those women who have stained their conscience with that foulness that defaces and sullies the purity and cleanness of the will, a foulness caused by the misuse of reason, for they are pierced all day long by the recollection of their fault and shaken by the evidence of the thousand witnesses of their wounded conscience, these women fall into a certain disease of the soul that continually worries and upsets them. This upset and worry produces such an arrangement of the humours that with their vapours they soil and stain the purity of the face and especially of the eyes which, as was said before, are the ministers and messengers of the heart. These vapours produce such an expression in the eyes, or, as is generally said, a certain bad air that indicates and reveals the infirmity of the soul not any differently than the paleness of the cheeks and of other features indicates diseases and imbalances of the body and the upsets and agitations of its humours. Nor should it seem strange to you that a disease of the soul should upset the organs of the body, for experience illustrates every day how the pangs of the soul can cause a fever in the body and sometimes death.⁵⁵

⁵² Rogers, ‘Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal’, 141, 143; Firenzuola (trans. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 13-43; Firenzuola, *Bellezze*, 210.

⁵³ Rogers, ‘Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal’, 141; Firenzuola (trans. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 37-40; Firenzuola, *Bellezze*, 235.

⁵⁴ ‘... se la buon habitudine del corpo si dimostra ne la sodeza e densità della carne, forza è, che la mala habitudine si dimostri con la fiacchezza & rarità.’ Firenzuola quotes this line from the fifth book of Aristotle’s ethics. See: Firenzuola (ed. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 40; Firenzuola, *Bellezze*, 235; Rogers, ‘Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal’, 141.

⁵⁵ ‘... tutte quelle donne che hanno macchiata la conscientia di quella fecci, che deturpa e’ mbratta la purità, & nettezza della volontà, causata dal mal uso della ragione per essere tutto il giorno trafitte dalla memoria della lor colpa, & esagitate dalla prova di mille testimoni della lor lesa conscientia, incorrono in una certa malattia di animo, la quale continuamente le inquieta, & le perturba: la qual perturbatione, & inquietudine, genera una cotale dispositione di humori, i quali co [sic] fumi loro guastano & macchiano la purità della faccia e de gli occhi massimamente, i quali come si disse di sopra, sono i ministri, & i messaggeri del core,

Just as in humoural readings of the body, for those who took Castiglione and Firenzuola's words to heart, women come under moral pressure to match their appearance to the ideal, lest their looks be interpreted to insinuate moral deficiencies. In Leon Battista Alberti's *Della famiglia*, Giannozzo describes to his young wife how beauty is nothing without chastity, since impurity will make itself apparent in a woman's complexion: 'a beautiful face is praised, but unchaste eyes soil it with people's contempt, and it is too often flushed with shame or pale with melancholy or sadness of spirit'.⁵⁶ Thus rosy cheeks were praised not solely for their aesthetic effect or for their indication of a healthy constitution, but because the presence of a rosy blush upon a woman's cheek was associated with the modesty and shame seen to be appropriate for females.⁵⁷ Pomponius Gauricus stated in his advice on colouration of the painted figure that a flushed face indicated modesty.⁵⁸ Castiglione praised the woman whose face was 'neither too pallid nor too red...whose own colouring is natural and somewhat pale, but who occasionally blushes openly from embarrassment or some other reason...'.⁵⁹ By layering a moral reading on top of a naturally occurring trait, these

& cianvi dentro un certo piglio, & come volgarmente si dice, una certa mal'aria, indice & dimpostratrice della infirmità dello animo, non altrimenti, che si faccia il pallore delle guancie, & delle altre membra, le malattie, e le male dispositioni del corpo, e la perturbatione, & esagitazione de gli humori di quello. Ne vi paia strano che la malattia dell'animo, perturbi le membra del corpo, perciocche la esperienza vel'mostra tutto il di nel dolore di esso animo, che bene spesso procaccia al corpo la febbre, & talhor la morte.' Firenzuola, 387-88; translation in Firenzuola (ed. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 40.

⁵⁶ 'Lodasi il bello viso, ma e dionesti occhi lo fanno lordo di biasimo, et spesso troppo acceso di vergogna, o pallido di dolore et tristezza d'animo.' Alberti, *Della famiglia*, 354; Alberti (trans. Watkins), *Family*, 82.

⁵⁷ Gauricus, *De sculptura*, 160, 161. See also Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 12-14; Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 6, 14-15.

⁵⁸ 'Vultus ipse per se rubicundus uerecundiam ostendit.' Gauricus, *De sculptura*, 161.

⁵⁹ '... non sia così bianca né così rossa, ma col suo color nativo e talor per vergogna o per altro accidente tinta d'un ingenuo rossore ...' Castiglione (ed. Maier), *Il Cortegiano*, 155; Castiglione (trans. Bull), *The Courtier*, 86-87.

ideals created a problem for women who did not immediately fit the ideal, compounded by the insistence that the only acceptable beauty was that which was true or natural.⁶⁰

Because natural beauty is truth, unnatural or affected beauty, namely cosmetics, became equated with deception. Castiglione expresses unease at cosmetics functioning as tools of deception, even as he tentatively approves their use, when he states that people are ‘always afraid of being tricked by art’.⁶¹ A similar idea is expressed in Piccolomini’s *Raffaella*, where it is suggested that a blush might be feigned to maintain an impression of false modesty.⁶² In a reversal of the pairing of natural beauty with truth and goodness, the dishonesty and deception of excessive cosmetics go hand and hand with extreme ugliness. For example, Aretino reversed the Petrarchan beauty standard to critique artistic over-ornamentation in portraiture, satirising Titian’s overly complimentary painting of Isabella d’Este, which depicts her forty years younger than her age at the time (Figure 1). To make his point, Aretino portrays the Marchioness as a personification of her own dishonesty, describing her as: ‘the monstrous Marchioness of Mantua, who has teeth of ebony and eyelashes of ivory, dishonestly ugly and embellished to an astonishingly dishonest degree’.⁶³ Aretino criticises the painting for its over-embellishment and disregard for natural appearances, however, the critique is directed at the Marchioness, executed through a verbal attack on her physical appearance, framing the artistic embellishment much in the same way as if she were being critiqued for excessive use of cosmetics.⁶⁴ He reverses the Petrarchan beauty standard to physically represent Isabella’s dishonesty through ugliness—rather than

⁶⁰ Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 6, 15; Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 12-14.

⁶¹ Castiglione (trans. Bull), *The Courtier*, 87.

⁶² Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 19^f. This passage is looked at in more detail in Chapter 6.

⁶³ ‘La mostruosa Marchesana di Mantova la quale ha i denti de habano e le ciglia di avorio, dishonestamente brutta e arcidishonestamente imbellata’. Aretino, *Pronostico satirico*, 9; Brown, ‘Portraiture at the Courts’, 47.

⁶⁴ For this and further discussion of Isabella’s self presentation, see Cockram, ‘Self-Presentation’, 70, 37-84; Regan, ‘Court Lady’ 70.

having ivory teeth and eyelashes of ebony, Aretino describes the Marchioness's teeth to be black and her eyelashes white.⁶⁵ Aretino's description of her ugliness is used to emphasise that her apparent beauty is false—excessive ornament disguises the truth and is, at its core, the opposite of beauty.

In addition, Aretino's use of the words 'onesto' and 'disonesto' conflate the Marchioness's stylistic choices (notwithstanding Titian's role in this image's creation) with an implication of her moral errors. Bette Talvacchia has convincingly demonstrated that during the Cinquecento the terms 'onesto' and 'disonesto' were used to distinguish moral and amoral, acceptable and unacceptable.⁶⁶ The significance of 'disonesto' was as much about indecency as dishonesty or deception, and was thus associated with, among other things, indecent sexual works including Aretino's own *I Modi* collaboration with Marcantonio Raimondi; and the lower orders of prostitutes who did not rank amongst the wealthy and cultured 'honest courtesans'.⁶⁷ Aretino's emphasis on *disonesto* in this context was not so much an accusation of sexual wrongdoing, but a way of emphasising and satirising the excessive and unacceptable degree of Isabella's ornamentation. In addition, Sarah Cockram has pointed out that Aretino's choice to judge Isabella solely on the 'feminine criteria' of appearance may have been a deliberate challenge to her considerable political power, and unusual role as female leader.⁶⁸ By redirecting the focus from her political skills to her appearance and ornamentation instead, Aretino frames Isabella 'as a commodity of dynasty and not as dynastic ruler'.⁶⁹ Here the critique of ornamentation is shown to be a tool not just to

⁶⁵ I discuss the use of cosmetics in descriptions of grotesque ugliness in Chapter 6. The 'anti-Petrarchan mock encomia' is discussed in: Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 81-127; Bettella, 'Marked Body', 151-156.

⁶⁶ Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 101-124.

⁶⁷ Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*: 101-124; on honest courtesans 106-8.

⁶⁸ Cockram, 'Self-Presentation and Power Sharing', 70.

⁶⁹ Cockram, 'Self-Presentation and Power Sharing', 70.

comment on women's behaviour in general, but to critique and demean specific women whose behaviour exceeds the limitations of traditional female roles.

Makeup in Moderation

The sources above celebrate 'true' beauty and the unadorned appearance, however Renaissance condemnations of makeup tend to focus mainly on cases where cosmetics are applied in excess, allowing for some cosmetic use as long as the appearance of natural beauty is maintained. Alberti, Firenzuola and others transmute a classical interest in variation and ornamentation in rhetoric into a Renaissance interest in the visual renditions of 'beauty completed with ornament'.⁷⁰ As Jacqueline Lichtenstein observed, in both discussions of speech rhetoric and bodily adornment, ornamentation and variety were generally seen to enhance enjoyment when applied moderately.⁷¹ However, when used in excess, ornament was thought to become ostentatious, confusing and perverting the truth.⁷² Applying this to visual practice, Alberti wrote that 'richness in detail' made paintings more pleasing, suggesting use of diverse poses, colours and costumes.⁷³ He famously defines beauty as 'that reasoned harmony of all the parts within a body, so that nothing may be added, taken away or altered, but for the worse,' a property inherent throughout the body.⁷⁴ For him ornament is not inherent, but additional—'a form of auxiliary light and complement to beauty'.⁷⁵ He discusses how one of Cicero's characters expressed disappointment at the paucity of beautiful Athenian youth, reasoning that ornament would have been beneficial in this situation.⁷⁶ Though writing about architecture, Alberti implies

⁷⁰ Rogers 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 132-133, 141.

⁷¹ Lichtenstein, 'Making Up', 78.

⁷² Lichtenstein, 'Making Up', 78; Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 133.

⁷³ Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 132; Alberti, *Art of Building*, 156-57 (Book VI, 2, 93-94).

⁷⁴ Alberti, *Art of Building*, 156 (VI, 2, 93-94).

⁷⁵ Alberti, *Art of Building*, 156 (VI, 2, 93-94).

⁷⁶ Alberti, *Art of Building*, 156 (VI, 2, 93-94).

cosmetic practice: ‘had ornament been applied by painting and masking anything ugly, or by grooming and polishing the attractive, it would have had the effect of making the displeasing less offensive and the pleasing more delightful’.⁷⁷ In a similar vein, Firenzuola’s 1541 *Delle bellezze delle donne* recommends the use of clothing and jewellery as ornaments that enhance the body’s innate beauty without going so far as to obscure the overall form.⁷⁸ Yet ‘beauty completed by ornament’ was not interpreted by everyone to suggest the application of physical ornamentation. Ortensio Lando, for example, argued that the only ornaments that should be applied were metaphysical, asserting that ‘silence is the ornament of women’.⁷⁹

Although Tertullian, as seen above, drew on stoicism to condemn cosmetics, other classical and early Christian sources circulating in the Renaissance were less extreme in their judgement and approved makeup when used in moderation. In Book Three of *Ars Amoris*, which was widely available, though recommended for male readership only, Ovid advised that since true beauty rarely occurs naturally, hard work must be used to improve it: ‘True beauty’s a gift of/ the gods, few can boast they possess it—and most/ of you, my dears, don’t. Hard work will improve the picture/ Neglect your looks, and they’ll go to pot, even though/ you’re a second Venus.’⁸⁰ Novatian, based on his definition of modesty as ‘avoidance of any form of extravagance,’ also conceded that a reasonable amount of adornment is acceptable.⁸¹ Indeed, recommendations to use cosmetics were frequently coupled with an impulse to make a distinction between positive and detrimental forms of bodily ornamentation.

⁷⁷ Alberti, *Art of Building*, 156 (VI, 2, 93-94).

⁷⁸ Rogers, ‘Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal’, 141; Firenzuola (trans. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 13, 55, 65.

⁷⁹ Lando, *Lettere di molte valorose done*, A8v, translated in: Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism*, 139.

⁸⁰ *Ars Amoris*, Book 3, lines 101-107, translated in Ovid (ed. Green), *Erotic Poems*, 217; see also Bell, *How to Do It*, 206, 342 n. 57.

⁸¹ Colish, ‘Cosmetic Theology’, 9-10.

Writers in antiquity delineated the distinction between *ars ornatric*, the beneficial act of preserving pre-existent beauty, considered by Galen to be medicinal, and the detrimental *ars fucatrix*, which was considered to be non-medicinal, unhealthy, and false.⁸² Alternately, Tertullian distinguished *cultum* (dress) from *ornatum* (ornament or adornment); the former he describes as ‘womanly gracing,’ the latter, in which he includes all makeup, he defines as ‘womanly disgracing’ which he contends is effectively prostitution.⁸³ Michelle Laughran has mentioned a linguistic distinction similar to the antique *ars ornatric* vs. *ars fucatrix* developing in the Italian terms *cosmetici* and *trucco*, but this distinction is not applicable to the 1450-1540 period, since, as discussed above, neither term was yet in use.⁸⁴

Various sources throughout the Renaissance echo Ovid’s sentiments, suggesting that beautification could be acceptable if it served to embellish pre-existing beauty, but overt fabrication negated any positive physical and moral effects beautification could have.⁸⁵ Novellas and dialogues which include direct discussions and recipes for cosmetics emphasise moderation, suggesting upkeep and gentle tweaking of extant traits, while criticising heavier makeup that might amount to overt masking. Alessandro Piccolomini offers similar advice as Ovid in his *Raffaella*, in which the middle-aged Mistress Raffaella doles out practical counsel to young wife Margarita.⁸⁶ Like Ovid, Mistress Raffaella (or rather, Piccolomini) declares that most women are not born looking perfect, and that some modification is therefore advisable:

⁸² Laughran, ‘Oltre la pelle’, 45-46, 61; Rinaldi, *Bellezza romana*, 1.

⁸³ Tertullian (ed. Tasinato), *Ornamenti delle donne*, 26-27 (I.4.2); Tertullian (ed. Roberts and Donaldson), ‘On Women’s Dress’, 309.

⁸⁴ Laughran, ‘Oltre la pelle’, 61; *truccare*, ‘trucco’ *Grande dizionario della lingua Italiana* (vol. 21), ed. Battaglia, 421-422; ‘cosmesi’, ‘trucco’, *Dizionario etimologico*, ed. Cortelazzo and Zolli.

⁸⁵ Lichtenstein, ‘Making Up’, 77.

⁸⁶ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*; Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*.

You should know Margarita, that a young lady could not have a complexion so clear, white and delicate if she did not aid it to some degree with art, or else it might show at times by mischance as might often happen, that it is not so fair. And they do not reason well who say that a lady, if she has a fair complexion by nature, may therefore pay no mind to it and neglect it.⁸⁷

However, Raffaella recommends only high-quality cosmetic waters ‘without solid matter in them’, discouraging Margarita from using thick and heavy cosmetics such as sublimes, white lead and lye.⁸⁸ Notwithstanding Mistress Raffaella’s hesitance towards heavy makeup, the book continues to inform readers about the methods of using even those preparations, alongside recommendations for more acceptable forms of light makeup.

The *Raffaella* has been considered by some scholars to be a deliberate demonstration of a misogynistic mindset, which parodies the tone of Baldassare Castiglione’s *Courtier*, and serves as a foil to Piccolomini’s proto-feminist *Oratione in lode delle donne*.⁸⁹ In fact, both the *Raffaella* and Castiglione’s *Courtier* convey a similar distaste for overt use of cosmetics. Castiglione suggests that sparing makeup is better than heavy application, and seems reluctant on the whole to condone the practice of making up:

Surely you realize how much more graceful a woman is who, if indeed she wishes to do so, paints herself so sparingly and so little that whoever looks at her is unsure whether she is made-up or not, in comparison with one whose face is so encrusted that she seems to be wearing a mask and who dares not laugh for fear of causing it to crack, and who changes colour only when she dresses in the morning... How much more attractive than all the

⁸⁷ ‘Ha da saper Margarita che non potrebbe haver una giovine le carni cosi chiare, bianche e delicate, se non le aiutasse alquanto con l’arte, che non mostrassero alcuna volta per qualche caso, come spesso puo accadere, di esser non cosi belle, e non e buona la ragion di coloro che dicono, che pur che una Donna habbia le carni belle naturalmente non importa poi lo sprezzarle e trascurarle...’ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 12^rv; translation with slight modifications from Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*, 32.

⁸⁸ ‘...io concederei che una gentil Donna usasse continuamente acque preziose & eccellentissima senza corpo o puochissimo, de le quali io li saperei dar ricette perfettissime, e rare’. Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 12^v; Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*, 32.

⁸⁹ Stampino, ‘Piccolomini’s *Raffaella*’, 92-95; Giannetti, *Lelia’s Kiss*, 194; Baldi, *Tradizione e parodia*, 87.

others is a pretty woman who is quite clearly wearing no make-up on her face, which is neither too pallid nor too red, and whose own colouring is natural and somewhat pale (but who occasionally blushes openly from embarrassment or some other reason)... betraying no effort or anxiety to be beautiful. Such is the uncontrived simplicity which is most attractive to human eyes and minds, which are always afraid of being tricked by art.⁹⁰

He suggests a similar subtlety in cosmetics as Ovid and Piccolomini, incorporating the commendation of women 'betraying no effort or anxiety to be beautiful', and praise of 'uncontrived simplicity' into the nonchalance of *sprezzatura* which was so integral to his vision of the ideal courtier. Thus while both these authors express admiration for the natural appearance celebrated in doctrines in praise of beauty, they allow for cosmetic use if it is subtle enough that it too appears natural. It is only when makeup is applied in excess, as in Castiglione's account of 'encrusted' makeup, that it is specifically condemned.

In the context of marriage, subtle use of cosmetics was also acceptable, if the intent was for the husband's benefit only. In Giovanni Boccaccio's *Il Corbaccio*, for example, a crafty wife justifies her use of cosmetics by saying that she did it to appear more attractive to her husband, claiming she nonetheless cannot prevent him from 'leaving her and chasing after the servant girls, scullery maids, and low, evil women'.⁹¹ Although in this passage, the wronged husband reveals that the opposite is in fact true, the circulation of the idea that cosmetic use could help in a marriage is evidenced in the fact that it is repeated, centuries later, in Cosmo Agnelli's otherwise harsh

⁹⁰ 'Non vi accorgete voi, quanto più di grazia tenga una donna, la qual, se pur si acconcia, lo fa così parcamente e così poco, che chi la vede sta in dubbio s'ella è concia o no, che un'altra, empiatrata tanto, che paia aversi posto alla faccia una maschera, e non osi ridere per non farsela crepare, né si muti mai di colore se non quando la mattina si veste ... Quanto più poi di tutte piace una, dico, non brutta, che si conosca chiaramente non aver cosa alcuna in su la faccia, benché non sia così bianca né così rossa, ma col suo color nativo pallidetta e talor per vergogna o per altro accidente tinta d'un ingenuo rossore ... Questa è quella sprezzata purità gratissima agli occhi ed agli animi umani, i quali sempre temono essere dall'arte ingannati.' Castiglione (ed. Maier), 154-155; translation with modification from Castiglione (trans. Bull), *The Courtier*, 86-87.

⁹¹ Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 45; Boccaccio (ed. Ermani), *Corbaccio*, 259.

condemnation of cosmetics.⁹² Agnelli on the whole seeks to admonish cosmetic use, but concedes that makeup could be acceptable if worn to please one's husband, when it could have the positive effect of preventing men from adultery, saying that for married women, 'who are particularly obliged to please their husbands', making up is not just advised, but even necessary 'to preserve marital love and to keep [the husband] away from every other illicit love'.⁹³ Yet he emphasises that moderation and pure intentions are essential, warning that far too many women take their adornment to excess.⁹⁴

Cosmetic Excess: Material Waste

Characterisations of immoderate use of makeup continually link cosmetic excess to other condemnable excesses of female character which, it is implied, need regulation. For example, while cosmetics were encouraged if they preserved the flame of marital affection, wives' excessive use of cosmetics was portrayed as a threat to the maintenance of a structured and well-run household. Laura Cereta's lament that women's fixation on spending money on ornamentation will ruin husbands' patrimonies is one example of this motif, depicting cosmetics as a threat to the household's financial sustainability. Piccolomini's *Raffaella* also mocks the squandering of cosmetic materials, berating women who 'each morning will waste almost two pill-boxes of sublimate, laying it on madly to the merriment of the beholders', declaring that the only thing worse than someone who puts on too much face powder is someone who is also

⁹² Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 45; Agnelli, *Amorevole aviso*, 23. See also my further discussion of cosmetics and marriage in Chapter 5, and Syson, 'Belle', 253.

⁹³ '... la donna maritata (perche di queste propriamente si parla, come di quelle, che han particular obligo di piacere à i lor mariti) la qual senz'altra vana intentione, si polisse, & adorna modestamente secondo il suo stato, e la lodevole usanza della patria, per piacere al suo marito, giudicando probabilmente, che ciò le convenga, ò sia necessario, per conservarlo nell'amore maritale, e tenerlo lontano da ogni altro illecito amore ...' Agnelli, *Amorevole aviso*, 23.

⁹⁴ Agnelli, *Amorevole aviso*, 23.

unskilled and wasteful in her methods.⁹⁵ Another lament against cosmetic waste from Ludovico Ariosto's *La Cassaria* (ca. 1508) suggests that it is not just the material excess but also the misuse of time that is troublesome:

These women spend so much time preening; they never finish: they shape every hair into ten guises before they slop on whatever keeps it there. And what to do first with makeup? Oh what long patience! Now with white, now with red, they put it on, take it off, style, spoil it, begin again, turn a thousand times to look at themselves, to contemplate in the mirror; to pluck their eyebrows, to adjust their breasts, to survey their sides, to wash themselves, to lotion their hands, to cut their nails, to scrub and pick their teeth, oh how much study, how much time is consumed! How many boxes, how many ampoules, how many vials, oh how many [worthless] trifles do they implement! In a smaller time, one could arm a galley from all points...⁹⁶

Complaints about the waste of time and money on cosmetics were tied into the popular argument that female inactivity and excessive spending resulted in the ruination of her household.⁹⁷ Sarah Matthews Grieco has studied representations of the negative consequences of female idleness as they appear in popular texts and didactic prints made for women's use, observing that they 'tend to implicitly identify the prosperity of

⁹⁵ '...che potiam veder peggio che una giovine che si habbia incalcinato e coperto il viso di si grossa mascara, che a pena e conosciuta perchi la sia, & tanto piu quando ella e ignorante di tal esser citio, & s'impiastra a caso senza sapere quello che ella si faccia, come ne conosco molte in questa terra che si consumaranno la mattina pocho mancho che due sciacciatelle di solimato, ponendoselo a pazzie, da far rider chi la vede.' Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 12^v; translation with slight modifications from Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*, 32.

⁹⁶ 'Spendono queste femine pur assai tempo in adornarse; mai non ne vengono al fine: mutano ogni capello in dieci guise, inanzi che si contentino che così resti. E che fan prima col liscio? Oh che longa pazienza! Or col bianco, or col rosso, mettono, levano, acconciano, guastano, cominciano di novo, tornano mille volte a vederse, a contemplarse nel specchio; in pelarse poi le ciglia, in rassettarsi le poppe, in relevarse ne' fianchi, in lavarsi, in ungersi le mani, in tagliarsi l'ugne, in fregarse, stuzicarsi li denti, oh quanto studio, quanto tempo si consuma! Quanti bossoli, ampolle, vasetti, oh quante zachere si mettono in opera! In minor tempo si dovea di tutto punto armare una galea...' Ariosto, *Commedie* (v. 1), 139-140 (Act V, Scene 3).

⁹⁷ Matthews-Grieco, 'Persuasive Pictures', 302; Brown, 'Introduction', 13; Maclean, *Renaissance Notion of Woman*, 65; For further examples of the depiction of cosmetics as wasteful, see: Bell, *How to Do It*, 207; McGough, 'Quarantining Beauty', 222, 223; Pancino, 'Soffrire per ben comparire', 32-34.

the household with the diligence of its mistress'.⁹⁸ In prints aimed at the poor, idleness was shown to lead swiftly to poverty, but for the upper echelons of society where finances were not as pressing, women's inactivity, including spending too much time on preening, was discouraged, because it was believed to leave the mind open to idle thoughts and amorous affairs.⁹⁹ Indeed, beauty and cosmetics could be ascribed a potentially ruinous power visible, for example, in the image of Helen of Troy in the Sola Busca tarot deck (Figure 28), where 'Elena' is shown as the Queen of Coins. Here her legendary beauty, which leads to the chaos and destruction of the Trojan war as a result of the marital infidelity it inspires, is represented through a depiction of Helen making herself up.¹⁰⁰ The concern that cosmetic excesses could disrupt the household order were even more emphatically expressed in Counter-Reformation invectives. For example, Agnelli contends that that excessive ornamentation brings 'ruin to houses' and 'infinite other disorders' into the world'.¹⁰¹

Immoderate Makeup: Sexual Excess

The suggestion that cosmetic use could lead to adultery is also a frequently recurrent motif, which equates immoderate cosmetic use and sexual excess. The problem, as relayed by Agnelli, is that very few wives actually have honest intentions when putting on makeup, compared to the 'infinite' number who 'without so much pure intention, necessity, or occasion dedicate themselves to cleaning and rubbing themselves with excess'.¹⁰² While vanity could be one impure motivation, and was

⁹⁸ Matthews Grieco, 'Persuasive Pictures', 302.

⁹⁹ Matthews-Grieco, 'Persuasive Pictures', 302-303.

¹⁰⁰ D'Elia, 'Wedding Orations', 402; D'Elia quotes Leonardo Giustiniani's *Oration in Disgust of Women*.

¹⁰¹ '...l'uso dell'oro, delle gioie, e vesti preziose; intorno alle quali cose, se ben vi è universale dannosissimo, & intolerabile abuso, con la ruina delle case, e con introdurre, e mantenere nel mondo infiniti altri disordini...' Agnelli, *Amorevole aviso*, 21.

¹⁰² 'Ma tali peravventura sono molto poche, rispetto al gran numer di quelle, che senza questa si pura intentione, necessità, ovvero occasione attendono à polirsi, e strisciasi con eccesso, di cui quasi infinito è il numero.' Agnelli, *Amorevole aviso*, 23.

certainly that which Laura Cereta seemed most interested in condemning, lust was just as frequently seen to be the impetus behind makeup use. In the *Corbaccio*, the wife's protestation is presented as a complete deception—her excessive use of potion-like cosmetics are enumerated in detail, and she herself is revealed to be affecting an unnaturally youthful appearance to attract other men into adulterous liaisons.¹⁰³ Her cosmetic excess parallels her sexual excess. Immoderate making up is likewise portrayed as contiguous with adultery in Pietro Aretino's *Sei giornate*. Aretino heralds the second day of conversations between the prostitutes Nanna and Antonia with a description of the morning makeup routine of the mythological Aurora, mocking a similar description made by Dante.¹⁰⁴ In Dante's original passage, makeup is portrayed positively, and the concubine Aurora is described to be applying whitening makeup as a metaphor for the glow of dawn.¹⁰⁵ The rendition of Aurora who greets Aretino's ladies, on the other hand, applies heavy cosmetics as a deliberate act to mock and defy her husband Titonus, before she goes to her lover 'determined to be screwed twelve times' to spite Titonus.¹⁰⁶ The character Day is described as the pimp who hands Aurora over.¹⁰⁷ In this passage, Aurora's heavy-handed application of makeup is an act of defiance, which she uses to emphasise her adultery and further mock her cuckolded husband. The thickness of the makeup seems to parallel the 'twelve times' she intends to be screwed, so that cosmetic and sexual excesses again are synonymous.

While Aretino writes satirically, the figuring of cosmetics as a threat to marriage, and to the order of the male-dominated household reflects the same overall anxieties as Matthews-Grieco observed in didactic prints. The recurrent elision between

¹⁰³ Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 41-55.

¹⁰⁴ Aquilecchia, 'Aretino's *Sei giornate*', 458; Aretino, *Ragionamenti*, 66; Aretino (trans. Rosenthal), 59.

¹⁰⁵ Dante, *Commedia: Purgatorio*, 155 (canto IX, 1-4).

¹⁰⁶ Aquilecchia, 'Aretino's *Sei giornate*', 458; Aretino, *Ragionamenti*: 66; Aretino (trans. Rosenthal), *Dialogues*, 59.

¹⁰⁷ Aretino, *Ragionamenti*, 66; Aretino (trans. Rosenthal), *Dialogues*, 59.

cosmetic use and adultery in these depictions suggests that here the concern for control of cosmetics in fact expresses a concern over control of women's sexuality. Constraining women's sexual behaviour seems to have dominated many of the characteristic arguments that defined the roles of Renaissance women; and indeed ensuring a household's respectability was synonymous with containing the sexuality of the women who lived there.¹⁰⁸ A woman's honour, defined largely by her chastity, was also the honour of her family.¹⁰⁹ Since making up was seen as a form of idleness, it could potentially lead to the ruination of a family's honour by encouraging a woman to neglect her financial and organisational duties to her husband's household. Like all idleness, it might also inspire a woman's mind to turn to ruinous extramarital affairs—and since makeup was also a means of seduction, it was particularly suspect. In this interpretation, cosmetics are an idle waste of time and money with potentially severe consequences to honour, and the 'gateway' into other activities which threaten both the woman's reputation and the greater social order. This association furthermore inherently relies on the precept of women's congenital tendency towards temptation and excess, tying back into the misogynistic readings of female nature as inherently flawed. Here, as elsewhere, the discussion of cosmetics is transformed into a commentary on female behaviour, and cosmetics become a representation of the trait or tendency that is seen to be problematic.

Cosmetics were further connected with transgressive female sexuality by association with prostitution. Ties between cosmetic use and prostitution feature heavily in Christian tradition. As I mentioned above, Tertullian directly associated bodily adornment at prostitution in *De cultu feminarum*, stating that:

¹⁰⁸ King, *Women of the Renaissance*, 29.

¹⁰⁹ Alberti (trans. Watkins), *Della famiglia*, 82; Brown, 'Introduction', 13; Kelso, *Doctrine for the Lady*, 23-30, 97-100; Rocke, 'Gender and Sexual Culture', 152-53; Strocchia, 'Gender and Rites of Honour', 55.

Female habit carries with it a twofold idea—dress and ornament. By ‘dress’ we mean what they call ‘womanly gracing’: by ‘ornament’, what is suitable should be called ‘womanly disgracing’. The former is accounted (to consist) in gold, and silver, and gems, and garments; the latter in care of the hair, and of the skin, and of those parts of the body which attract the eye. Against the one we lay the charge of ambition, against the other, prostitution...¹¹⁰

The Bible frequently discourages outer adornment, and in particular, the story of Jezebel (2 Kings 9:22-30) directly links makeup, prostitution, and heresy. The Phoenician princess Jezebel refuses to abandon her native gods for the Christian deity when she marries King Ahab of the Israelites (1 Kings 16:31). Jezebel is clearly not a prostitute, yet is accused of ‘whorings and sorceries’ by Jehu, a rebel, and she is later described to be ‘vainly’ greeting her death by making up her eyes and hair before peering out of the window (Kings 9:30).¹¹¹ This passage was appropriated in Renaissance sources in a manner that reframed Jezebel’s use of makeup as actively sexual. For example, Niccolò Gozze suggested that ‘putting beautiful ornaments on an ugly woman just accentuates how hideous she really is. She will end up like the biblical Jezebel, who painted her eyes and adorned her head before looking out her window to entice the warrior Jehu’.¹¹² In Gozze’s adaptation, Jezebel applies makeup before her death not just out of vanity, but in order to seduce, once again portraying cosmetic application as an overtly sexual act.

¹¹⁰ ‘Cultum dicimus quem mundum muliebrem uocant, ornatum quem immundum muliebrem conuenit dici. Ille in auro et argento et gemmis et uestibus deputatur, iste in cura capilli et cutis et earum partium corporis quae oculos trahunt. Alteri ambitionis crimen intendimus, alteri prostitutionis’. Tertullian (ed. Tasinato), *Ornamenti delle donne*, 26-27 (I, 4, 2); Tertullian (ed. Roberts and Donaldson), ‘Women’s Dress’, 309.

¹¹¹ ESV, 2 Kings 9:22, ‘What peace can there be, so long as the whorings and the sorceries of your mother Jezebel are so many?’ The term harlotry/whoring could have been metaphorical for her worship of non-Judeo-Christian deities, as in Hosea 1:3. For more on interpretations of Jezebel, see: Gaines, *Jezebel Through the Ages*; Gaines, ‘How Bad Was Jezebel?’.

¹¹² ‘e quanto questo falso ornamento renda la brutta donna più brutta, perche bruttissima la dimostra .. e quanto questo fucato ornamento sia ripreso, come vi dissi, nelle Sacre lettere, udite; si legge di Iezabel moglie di Acab, laquale ornamendosi di questo finto ornamento, fu precipitata per commandamento di Iehu, e le carni sue furono mangiate da’ cani, e da gli uccelli.’ di Gozze, *Governo della famiglia*, 35-36; translation in Bell, *How to Do It*, 181.

In addition, Renaissance sources frequently ascribe cosmetic use to prostitutes. For example, the titular character in Francisco Delicado's *Retrato dela Loçana Andaluza* (Venice, 1528) is a prostitute and distributor of cosmetic recipes which are described in detail throughout the text.¹¹³ Delicado complements his description of Loçana as the most skilled prostitute of them all, by making her equally adept at cosmetics, suggesting she is 'like Avicenna among physicians', equating her cosmetic and sexual skills.¹¹⁴ Similarly, in the final day of Aretino's dialogues, the prostitutes who are the main characters confer with a midwife about makeup, and the midwife relates how she also specialises in cosmetics, love spells, physiognomy, and medicinal recipes.¹¹⁵ The 'Lament of a Ferrarese Courtesan' recounts the 'perfumes and lovely odours ... civets, musks and liqueurs / scented waters so precious', the title character used to wear saying, 'I used to be young and beautiful / lovely, respectable and rosy-cheeked ... well dressed and well served'.¹¹⁶ This poem is an early example of the popular motif recounting the downfall of courtesans and other men and women of pleasure from a life of luxury to an unfortunate end in disease and death.¹¹⁷ In the Boccaccio passage mentioned above, women who travel around applying cosmetic remedies are described as suspected procuresses.¹¹⁸ In fact, Tessa Storey has shown through a number of case studies that making and selling cosmetic recipes and other secrets was one of several trades that women might piece together to help make ends

¹¹³ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*.

¹¹⁴ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 18. I explore this theme further in my examination of the illustrations of *Lozana* in Chapter 6.

¹¹⁵ Aretino (trans. Rosenthal), *Dialogues*, 324.

¹¹⁶ 'Gia profumi, e vaghi odori / tenne addosso in quantitate / zibettin, muschi, & liquori / acque lanfe assai preghiate'; 'Gia io fui giovan'e bella / vaga, degna, & colorita / gia mona piu d'una sella, / benn'acconcia, & ben seruita ...'. [Veneziano] *Lamento della ferrarese cortigiana*, 'Canzona'. Copy consulted is held at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, collocazione RARI 0805. 022. Two other copies of the book are dated 1520 (held at Yale University Library, New Haven, CT) and 1546 (held at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana in Vatican City), according to records in Edit 16.

¹¹⁷ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 13; Shemek, 'Disease, Deixis, Disfiguration', 49-64; Chriscinda Henry, 'Whorish Civility', 109, 113-114, 121.

¹¹⁸ Boccaccio (ed. Erban), *Corbaccio*, 256; Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 42.

meet, and was often combined with washing laundry and occasional prostitution.¹¹⁹

However, she notes that women who occasionally took money for sex in such a manner rarely considered themselves to be professional prostitutes.¹²⁰

Like women engaging in adultery, but to a much greater degree, prostitutes' behaviour deviated from the proscribed female norm. On one hand, prostitutes' activities were tolerated, and even encouraged by many local governments as a mitigating force against male sodomy and sexual attacks against 'decent' women.¹²¹ However, even when allowed, they were nonetheless treated largely as one of the many marginalised groups to be regulated and controlled. While the early Cinquecento has been noted to have ushered in a more restrictive attitude towards prostitution in many places, studies such as Tessa Storey's work on prostitutes in Counter-Reformation Rome demonstrate that these measures did little to limit prostitution in the long run.¹²² However, as Chriscinda Henry and others have suggested, degrading accounts like the *Lamento della ferrarese cortigiana*, cited above, or the *Trentuno della Zaffetta*, which celebrates a courtesan's brutal rape by eighty men, including descriptions of her screams of pain, suggest the extent to which prostitutes' social power, and sexual and financial freedom sparked male insecurity.¹²³

This unease was also apparent in government policy. In Venice, for example, as Guido Ruggiero and others have found, while prostitution was tolerated, the state viewed it as a threat to the institution of marriage, with the potential to disrupt the

¹¹⁹ Storey, 'Face Waters', 143-63; Storey, 'Cosmetics, Remedies, Alchemy', 149-155.

¹²⁰ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 115-125.

¹²¹ Shemek, *Ladies Errant*, 27-30.

¹²² Storey, *Carnal Commerce*; See also: Shemek, *Ladies Errant*, 27-28, 30; Ruggiero, *Boundaries of Eros*.

¹²³ Henry, 'Whorish Civility', 121; Rossi, 'Controlling Courtesans', 225-226; While courtesans had perhaps more freedoms than an average woman, as Deanna Shemek points out, these have too often been romanticized. For recent re-evaluations see: Shemek, *Ladies Errant*, 25-31, 200; Rosenthal, *Honest Courtesan*.

overall order of the Republic by destabilising this central social institution.¹²⁴ In Ferrara, prostitutes, together with Jews, were forbidden from touching the food in public markets, and both were required to wear distinctive clothing.¹²⁵ In Rome and Venice as well, prostitutes were required to wear yellow scarves to mark them out as errant members of society, and a number of sumptuary laws restricted prostitutes' wardrobes to differentiate them from 'decent' women.¹²⁶ Both Jewish women and prostitutes were frequently associated with cosmetic use and knowledge.¹²⁷ Laura Cereta, for example states that women's excessive use of cosmetics makes them barely distinguishable from 'Jews and Barbarians'. In the *Retrato de la Loçana*, Francisco Delicado makes numerous references to Jewish women being particularly knowledgeable about cosmetics.¹²⁸ The main character, Loçana's, position as a prostitute and a woman of sin is reinforced by her status as a foreigner in Italy, and by her frequent associations with inhabitants of the foreign and Jewish quarters, with whom she not only shares cosmetic secrets, but also takes on as lovers, violating taboos against interfaith sexual relations.¹²⁹

Regardless of whether these women did have a heightened involvement in cosmetics trade in real life (an investigation which I revisit at various points throughout

¹²⁴ Ruggiero, *Binding Passions*, 48-56; Ruggiero, *Boundaries of Eros*; Jones, 'Prostitution', 43-56.

¹²⁵ Shemek, *Ladies Errant*, 25.

¹²⁶ Shemek, *Ladies Errant*, 25, 27, 198; See Richard Sennet for discussion of the ways in which Venetian State's treatment of courtesans as 'foreign bodies' was very similar to their treatment of Jews and foreign peoples: Sennett, *Flesh and Stone*, 212-251, esp. 237-241.

¹²⁷ Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*, 46, 73.

¹²⁸ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 18, 26, 34, 58, 206. Sandra Cavallo notes that Jewish women in particular made remedies at home, but her source, Marie Claude Phan's 'Pratiques cosmétiques' unfortunately gives no evidence or sources to support this assertion. See Cavallo, 'Health, Beauty, Hygiene', 176; Phan, 'Pratiques', 189.

¹²⁹ On sexual relations between Jews and Christians see: Davis and Ravid, *Jews of Early Modern Venice*, 5-6, 21, 59. The frequency with which Spanish and Jewish converts to Christianity ended up as prostitutes is indicated by the existence of separate names referring specially to women in that situation, '*camiciare*' and '*marrane*'. See Romano, *Lettere di cortigiane*, 9. References to Loçana's interactions appear throughout the whole of Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*; For more on historical perceptions of Jews, see also: Bettella, 'Marked Body', 176; Trachtenberg, *Devil and the Jews*; Wisch, 'Vested Interest', 143-72; Bonfil, *Ebrei in Italia*.

this dissertation), in these formulaic depictions, cosmetics can again be seen to represent women's behavioural transgressions, standing for not only the sexual and moral looseness, but also the financial independence and even physical freedom to move about in public city spaces that typified prostitutes' lives, but contradicted traditional female behavioural strictures. To use the example of Delicado's *Retrato della Loçana*, mentioned above, cosmetics are connected to the main character's sexuality through their effectiveness to help her seduce men, and in the remedies she uses to help cure sexual diseases and hide other's sexual misdeeds. For instance, she imparts medication to cure a Canon's sore member, and treat his courtesan's pains (I discuss this theme further in Chapter 6).¹³⁰ Not only does she help men and women hide secret sexual liaisons through cures, but Delicado emphasises the extent to which her secrets often come from foreign or Jewish sources, and their reliance on magic, drawing attention to her moral otherness.¹³¹ For example, Rampin, her young Jewish assistant and lover, recounts the following 'prayer' that he claims cures syphilis if recited three times: 'Once there were three courtesans who had three friends, pages of Franquilano one and all; the first lady told the whole world of what she did; the second made a secret of it; and the third plied back and forth with the changes of the moon'.¹³² Moreover, while Loçana warns clients against financial swindling, she herself concedes to using the same tricks: she cheats food and money off a woman from Lombardy by pretending to do divination, and Rampin admits that 'by mistake we burned off all the hair from the private parts of a lady from Bologna, but we put butter on it and made her believe she was right in style'.¹³³ Together with prostitution, selling cosmetics form Loçana's living, allowing her financial freedom. In addition, her physical freedom to wander

¹³⁰ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 102-103.

¹³¹ For Delicado's disclaimer on use of magic: Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 187.

¹³² Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 76.

¹³³ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 72-74, for warnings against wasting money on treatments: 206; for scepticism towards incantations: 226.

throughout the city is highlighted by her movements between homes, quarters and even from city to city as she administers cosmetic remedies, leading her from Spain, to the Levant, to Rome and finally Venice, and allowing her knowledge of the intimate health problems and cosmetic woes of the cities' occupants. Cosmetic use as a 'handmaiden' to her other activities becomes a way to highlight and critique these behaviours, creating an entertaining narrative that nonetheless clearly establishes the main character's place as a transgressive woman.

To conclude, the pairing of overuse of cosmetics with the sexual dissolution of adultery and the sex trade picks up on a recurrent tendency to frame cosmetic use in terms of female sexuality, relating back to Tertullian's argument that adornment was, in essence, a form of seduction and prostitution. This focus ultimately defines female beauty and beautification in terms of its effect on the male beholder. Moreover, it ties the critique of cosmetics to a larger impulse to police women's behaviour.

CHAPTER 2

(RE)DEFINING RENAISSANCE COSMETICS AS REPRESENTED IN

RICETTARI

The literary representations of cosmetics in Chapter 1 suggested that, from a moral perspective, two of the major characteristics defining cosmetics were their qualities of falsification and deception. Rather than approaching makeup with outright condemnation, Renaissance writers, I suggested, demonstrated a preference for subtlety and encouraged use of makeup that emulated a natural appearance, with outright condemnation reserved mainly for excessive cosmetics. At the same time, their accounts acknowledged an inherent ambiguity in the art of making up—both the presence of makeup (whether or not the woman in question is wearing any) and the intention behind it was repeatedly brought to question. This ‘definition’ of cosmetics—deceptive, ambiguous—is based on one set of texts, mainly literary or proscriptive.

This chapter examines how cosmetics are presented in a different set of texts, namely the recipe books surviving from the 1450-1540 period which form the backbone of this thesis. It explores what sorts of cosmetics are presented, and whether or not they suggest that the ideas in the moralising literature transferred into daily practice. In the introduction to this thesis, I noted that several key terms for makeup or cosmetics in use today were not a part of the early Cinquecento vocabulary. However, as was clear in the discussion in Chapter 1, the ‘idea’ of cosmetics as a type of bodily care somehow unique in its focus on modifying beauty and appeal nonetheless existed. Although, the terms ‘trucco’ or ‘cosmetici’ were not in use, the phrase ‘*farsi bella*’, which still means

‘to put on makeup’ today, appears relatively frequently in sources in the 1450-1540 period, used in the introduction of two recipe texts which I look at in detail below, in addition to numerous recipes whose purpose is simply stated as ‘a fare bella’. This chapter asks what ‘farsi bella’ meant during the Renaissance, examining what types of bodily care Renaissance people considered to be ‘making up’, and what methods and products people used to beautify themselves.

The Sources

Before discussing the trends visible in cosmetic recipes as a group, I first want to introduce the individual source books in which the recipes appear. My aim throughout is not to write a history of individual texts, but to give them and, more specifically, the cosmetics they contain, value within the wider material cultural context. As such, my explanation of the texts focuses on describing the place of the cosmetic recipes within—dating, authorship, and edition history is discussed only to the extent that it informs the understanding of how cosmetics fit into a larger material culture.

During the 1450-1540 period, cosmetics were often presented to readers not as an isolated subject, but as one of many ‘secrets’ to be revealed. None of the recipe books I have looked at contain cosmetic recipes alone, rather, recipes for beautification are interspersed with other ‘secrets’ for maintaining bodily health and for running a well-kept and entertaining household, among other topics. These types of books by definition are part of the larger genre known as Books of Secrets, a type first recognised as a distinct group by John Ferguson in his 1896 bibliographical study.¹ William Eamon has more recently produced an extensive body of scholarship on the genre; in *Science and the Secrets of Nature* he outlines the evolution of Books of Secrets in the Medieval and Early Modern period, and in this and several other works, he takes

¹ Ferguson, *Bibliographical Notes*, 6-7; Eamon, *Science and the Secrets*, 5.

specific interest in the books' role in the development of 'modern' and popular science, placing the books largely in context of the elite male world of the 'professors of secrets' who authored them.² Books of Secrets, as defined by Eamon and Ferguson, are characterised by their diverse instructional content of recipes and formulae which traditionally cover a wide range of topics, with a general tendency towards a popularising tone—'do it yourself' manuals of a sort.³ Described by Eamon, these recipe books contain 'everything from medical prescriptions and technical formulae to magical procedures, cooking recipes, parlour tricks and practical jokes', but are unified by their 'promise of providing access to the "secrets of nature and art"'.⁴

The earliest dated print recipe book in Italian vernacular that I examined is the 1498 translation, printed in Venice, of Petrus Hispanus' thirteenth-century *Thesaurus pauperum*, originally designed as a handbook for doctors treating rural populations.⁵ This book consists of sixty-two chapters, each of which addresses a different ailment or treatment. Each chapter heading is followed by a list of different remedies for the stated problem, and chapters one and two directly address the physical appearance, giving recipes for 'hair that falls out' (to stimulate hair growth) and 'so that hair never grows' (hair removal). The former also includes a single recipe for blonde hair dye. As I discuss further in Chapter 4, the recipes in this text tend to be simple, with natural ingredients that would have been available in the rural setting it was intended for, and it had an ongoing popularity, evidenced in its numerous reprints, including a 1518 edition which I also consulted (the content is identical). The next earliest printed *ricettari* is the *Ricettario di Galieno*, which first appeared in 1508 in Venice, although I consulted the

² Eamon, *Science and Secrets*; Eamon, 'Professors of Secrets', 471-485; Eamon, *The Professor of Secrets*.

³ Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 16.

⁴ Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 16.

⁵ See Turrini, 'Bellezza di ieri', 13; Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 235; McVaugh, 'Medicine in the Latin Middle Ages', 59; Siraisi, *Medieval & Early Renaissance Medicine*, 131-2; Guaraldi et al., 'Codice Palatino', 42-3.

1510 edition made in Pesaro.⁶ Despite the title, this work is not by Galen, nor even directly derived from one of his texts, but all of its 300-odd recipes nonetheless address conditions of the human body.⁷ I have included seven cosmetic recipes from this text in my database: one to remove hair, three to help hair growth, one to make the face beautiful, one to make it fair, and one to remove freckles. These texts have a relatively low proportion of cosmetics; in the *Thesoro de poveri*, two out of sixty chapters cover appearance, and in the *Ricettario di Galieno*, only seven out of 309 recipes address beauty. However, recipes from both texts reappear in later sources, discussed below.

The earliest manuscript recipe book with cosmetic recipes post-1450 that I included in my database is the *Secreti medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia*. This manuscript was compiled by several different people throughout the course of the fourteenth- and fifteenth- centuries, and the majority of the cosmetic recipes appear in the section written in the second half of the fifteenth century.⁸ Like the *Thesoro de poveri* and *Ricettario di Galieno*, it is largely devoted to health, contrasting to many of the later books, which compiled a more eclectic mix of recipes. The *Secreti medicinali* contains a more diverse range of cosmetic treatments than the two aforementioned printed texts, covering hair growth, loss, hair dye, rouge, face whitener and blemish removal, however, cosmetics are still a small proportion of the recipes—19 out of 354. In all three of these sources, treatments for beauty are integrated into treatments for bodily health.

The next printed books with dates are *Venusta*, by Eustachio Celebrino, a prolific producer of short advice books and popular texts, and the anonymously authored *Dificio de ricette*, both first printed in Venice in 1525. *Venusta* is the printed

⁶ Pseudo-Galen, *Ricettario di galieno*; Durling, 'Chronological Census', 280.

⁷ Durling, 'Chronological Census', 280.

⁸ Castellani (ed), *Secreti medicinali*, xix.

book with the highest proportion of cosmetic recipes from this period (59 out of 118) and moreover, the first printed book specifically dedicated to cosmetics (for a full breakdown of its contents, see Appendix E). It boasts a rhyming introduction, discussed in detail below, which highlights its recipes ‘a fare bella’, and its title is Latin for ‘pretty’ or ‘charming’, and the command form of the verb ‘venustare’ - to beautify - so it is presented first and foremost as a makeup instructional. Overall, its contents are primarily dedicated to body care. The first 59 recipes are for beautification, followed by sixteen recipes for soaps and various perfumes. It continues with 19 recipes on women’s reproductive health and the rest of the recipes might be summarised to be preparations of a ‘domestic’ sort that would be useful in a home, such as ridding the house of fleas and other vermin, preserving wines, and making oils and vinegar. Unlike the two earlier printed *ricettari*, cosmetic treatments in this text cover a full range of hair and skin care, including skin whiteners and blushers, black and blonde hair dyes, formulae to make the hair curly, and, unusually, an oil for eyelashes. *Dificio de ricette* covers a similar range of cosmetics to *Venusta*, but in half as many recipes – 24 out of 186 address beauty. A number of recipes are identical in these two texts, including all the black hair dyes and treatments. However, *Dificio de ricette*’s contents meet Eamon and Ferguson’s description of Books of Secrets more closely—as the long title describes, it is divided into three ‘books’, the first discussing ‘many and diverse virtues’, the second on ‘soaps and useful scents’, and the third on ‘medicinal secrets’.⁹ The first book is by far the longest, encompassing 14 folios of the 18 folio text, and includes the majority of the cosmetics. It also contains advice for preserving food, such as how ‘to make grapes and pomegranates keep all year’; tricks like how to set fire to a handkerchief without burning it; and household tips on removing stains from cloth, and

⁹ See full title transcription in Appendix A.

making a substitute for a glass window.¹⁰ While the text is somewhat unordered, with a ‘water for white teeth’ appearing, for instance, after a trick to bring ‘many doves to your dovecot’, the majority of cosmetics are grouped together on folio 8.¹¹

Several more printed *ricettari* without publication dates, but with material clearly related to the aforementioned printed books appeared in Venice around this same period: *Specchio di Virtu*, *Secreti secretorum*, *Operetta molto piacevöllissima*, and *Opera nova de Ricette e secreti che insengna apparecchiare vna Mensa* (attributed to Eustachio Celebrino). As detailed in Appendix A, they can all be roughly dated to the first four decades of the Cinquecento, based on the years when their publishers were active or on other dated editions of the same texts. All of these texts have roughly the same small dimensions in octavo format. *Specchio di virtu* is only four leaves long, the others eight. The inclusion of cosmetics in these books could almost be considered as incidental, but they are important to consider because they demonstrate that cosmetic recipes need not necessarily appear in a book fully dedicated to beautification, or even to bodily health. *Specchio di virtu*, for example, contains only four cosmetics: one to make hair blonde and prevent greying, one to make it ‘very black’, one to remove blemishes or bruises, and a non-permanent tattoo of sorts so that a person can write the name of a saint or their sweetheart on their skin. Celebrino’s work on feasts only contains one cosmetic, for dyeing the beard black—clearly aimed at men—while the rest of the advice concentrates on preparing the table and ridding the house of pests. *Secreti secretorum*, which shares its title with the Medieval ‘Mirror of Princes’ by Kitāb Sirr al-

¹⁰ *Dificio de ricette*, 4^v (A far luva & li pomi granati si mantenera[n]no tutto l’anno), 5^r (A far arder uno fazzoletto & dapoi lhara fornito di arder no[n] sara brusato & non hara danno niuno); 5^v (A far ritornar ogni panno di lana in suo colore; A lauar uno scarlatto et tor uia le machie; A tornar uno panno di seta in suo colore); 6^v (A fare una fenestra che parera di uetro & rendera maggior lume che lo uetro).

¹¹ *Dificio de ricette*, 6^r.

Asrār, is otherwise unrelated to that work.¹² In fact, of the 73 recipes it contains, 37 are identical to ones in *Dificio de ricette*, making it likely that this small book was compiled primarily from material out of the larger text. Its contents again represent the typical Book of Secrets array, containing household remedies and recipes, food preparations and a number of tricks, as well as a cure for the ‘mal franzuolo’. It includes three cosmetic recipes, among which are ‘to make an arm or other member of the person hairy’, ‘general rules for black hair’, and a recipe for hair removal. The *Operetta molto piacevollissima* similarly contains a mixture of recipes for everyday concerns—including household pest extermination, headaches, and making coloured paper—but the greater portion of this book concentrates on body care. There are nine cosmetic recipes, four to remove hair, two to help hair growth, and three for the skin: to make it beautiful, fair, and to remove blemishes. Eight out of the nine appear at the start of the text, and these are identical in content and order to a group of recipes in the *Ricettario di Galieno*.

The final unique printed title that came out prior to 1540 is another four-folio Book of Secrets, titled *Probatum est*, which contains 36 recipes in total, seven of which are cosmetic. The first six are related to beauty and perfume, for a ‘*pomata finissima*’ and to keep hair from falling, to make hair grow where there is none, to prevent hair regrowth, to prevent hair from growing white, and to dye white hair black. These are followed by a number of ‘household’ recipes: to remove stains from fabric, get rid of fleas and pests, tempering iron and armor, food preparations, tricks, and one each to dye the beard black, and to remove scars from wounds or birth.¹³ These recipes likely come from *Venusta* or *Dificio de ricette*, where they also appear, however, unlike the longer books, *Probatum est* contains no blonde hair dyes or skin-whiteners.

¹² Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 45-53.

¹³ See table of contents in Appendix F.

Multiple prints of *Dificio de ricette* and *Venusta* continued to appear throughout the 1530s, but the next new titles with significant portions of text dedicated to beautification do not appear until the 1555 publication of Giovanventura Rosetti's *Notandissimi secreti del'arte profumatoria* and Girolamo Ruscelli's *Secreti del reverendo don Alessio Piemontese*, followed by Isabella Cortese's *I secreti* (1561) and *Gli ornamenti delle donne* by Giovanni Marinello (1562).¹⁴ Rosetti's book has a significant portion of makeup recipes interspersed with the perfume secrets, and the fourth of Ruscelli's six 'books' is entirely dedicated to beautification. Similarly, the fourth out of four 'books' in Cortese's *I secreti* addresses cosmetics and perfume, and all 94 Chapters of Marinello's text deal in some way with beauty.

Overall, while the undated texts make a strict chronology impossible, some overall trends can be observed. Although Medieval books of cosmetic recipes exist, most notably the third book of the *Trotula* compendium, discussed below, during the 1450-1540 period, the interest in cosmetic recipes becomes noticeably more visible around 1525.¹⁵ Prior to this date, the inclusion of cosmetic recipes in surviving *ricettari* is somewhat sparing, as in *Thesoro de poveri* and *Ricettario di Galieno*, where a handful of beautification recipes appear amidst other treatments for health conditions. The publication of Celebrino's *Venusta* (1525) marks the first time a printed book has a clear focus on cosmetic recipes – as noted above, half of the recipes are dedicated to cosmetics, with an additional number of soaps and perfumes, and the book's opening poem specifically draws attention to the cosmetic recipes. *Dificio de ricette* likewise

¹⁴ Meredith Ray notes that, while the 1584 edition of the *Secreti* of Isabella Cortese is often cited as the first, the earliest edition actually appeared in 1561. See Ray, 'Prescriptions for Women', 142, n. 17. The editions I consulted are: Rosetti, *Notandissimi secreti* (Venice: Francesco Rampazetto, 1560); Cortese, *I secreti* (Venice: Iacomo Cornetti, 1584); Ruscelli ('Alessio Piemontese'), *De' Secreti del Reverendo Donno Alessio Piemontese* (Milan: Valerio and Hieronymo fratelli da Meda, 1557). For further discussion of these books, see: Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 135; Wheeler, *Renaissance Secrets*, 4; Torresi, *Ricettario Bardi*, 11, 15; Brunello, 'Profumeria e cosmesi', 11-16; Grando, *Profumi e cosmesi*, 11-18.

¹⁵ See Green, *Trotula*.

has a fair number of cosmetic recipes, many of which are similar or identical to those in *Venusta*, although the latter has the highest proportion of cosmetics of all the printed books prior to 1540. While no comparable texts were published for another 20 years, the material's popularity is demonstrated by the fact that it is repeated in a number of the other shorter *ricettari*.

The remaining manuscripts I examined also suggest that the interest in cosmetics grew in the early Cinquecento. I already noted that the *Secreti medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia* has a relatively small number of cosmetics – 19 out of the 354 total recipes, and the majority of these were added by the fifteenth-century writer. The three later manuscripts I examined have a higher concentration of cosmetics. The Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript, which was written by several contributors from the fifteenth- and early sixteenth- century, and compiled after 1535, has a few beautification recipes mixed in with other treatments for health throughout, but contains a specific section on cosmetics added on the end by a different hand than those used in the rest of the text, suggesting a growth in interest in cosmetics at a later date. Within this final section, only five of the cosmetics are for the hair: two blond hair dyes, two for hair removal, and one to grow it back. Two recipes are to make the breasts small and firm; two to tighten the vagina and help with wrinkles; and four aim at whiter teeth. The remainder treat the skin on the face, breast, hands and the rest of the body, making it white, coloured, lustrous, clean, and removing blemishes.

The manuscript *Ricettario galante*, dated by previous scholars to the first twenty years of the Cinquecento, has all but one chapter dedicated to cosmetics, soap and perfume, and 128 out of 212 dealing directly with the appearance.¹⁶ This manuscript is unique in its format—like *Thesoro de poveri*, its recipes are neatly organised into

¹⁶ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, iv-v.

chapters by topic, although the topics and content are not otherwise related to the printed book. As mentioned before, it also features an opening poem about its makeup recipes which, together with its focus on beauty, makes it similar to *Venusta*. The chapters, in order, deal with waters aimed at beautifying skin, hair removal, white and clean teeth, ‘white and beautiful’ hands, perfumes, and medicines for common health problems.

Finally, *Gli esperimenti* is a posthumous compilation of recipes supposedly collected by Caterina Sforza during her lifetime (1463-1509), thought to have been put together around 1525.¹⁷ The manuscript is 554 pages long, with 454 recipes. Typical to the majority of recipe collections I have looked at and to Books of Secrets, the layout is haphazard, with no clear order in the recipes, and a mixture of cosmetic, medicinal, and alchemical formulae. Pier Desiderio Pasolini, who transcribed the work in 1896, identified 66 recipes as cosmetic, 38 as alchemical and 358 medicinal, but his criteria for cosmetics were apparently relatively narrow – I have identified just under 200 that deal with beautification.¹⁸ Many of the medical treatments in the text are fairly typical of print recipe collections as well, treating items such as fevers and plague, however, overall, it has a wider range of treatments than the print recipes.¹⁹ Similarly, there are a number of alchemical formulae that are not seen in the printed recipe books from the period I look at. As I discuss in Chapter 4, the cosmetic recipes are often longer and more complicated than those featured in printed books at this time. The range of treatments for beauty are similar to what is seen in other books, featuring recipes to make the skin white, rosy, shining and clear, to remove blemishes, to make hair long and dye it various colours, to make teeth white and breath fragrant. In addition, some of

¹⁷ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 609.

¹⁸ I previously examined this text, and its cosmetic recipes in Spicer, ‘Painted Breasts’, although I now include a few more recipes in my count of cosmetics than previously.

¹⁹ See for example Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza*, 680-683.

this content is overtly copied from the *Thesaurus pauperum*: a section of ‘chapters’ inserted midway through the document, ‘experimented’ by ‘Re Ruberto Napolitano’.²⁰ Here, several sections of recipes are grouped into ‘chapters’ on each topic, followed by a long list of formulae, as in the *Thesaurus pauperum*. The first chapter to make hair grow is virtually identical in content to the first chapter of *Thesaurus pauperum*, as are the majority of treatments in chapter 5, ‘so hair never grows back’.²¹

What is apparent in these texts is that there is no one place where cosmetics fit in—their location within the text and grouping with other recipes varies greatly from source to source. In addition, the range of recipes included depends greatly on the book. The most ubiquitous recipes are perhaps those for hair growth and removal, which appear in several texts in the absence of other beauty treatments, and, as seen in Appendix B, they are the most common treatments for the hair overall. However, on a whole, skin treatments are slightly more common than those for the hair, 153 recipes overall are for the hair compared to 175 for the skin. Hair dyes, rouge and skin whitener appear in fewer sources, and rouges are considerably less common on a whole than skin whiteners or blemish removal recipes. These broad trends, and the variations between texts will be discussed in detail below, and in the chapters that follow.

A Farsi Bella

In the previous chapters, I examined how the ‘falseness’ and potential for deception were amongst the key factors by which moralists defined makeup—natural beauty was the preferred, morally correct, and sanctioned antithesis to the threatening ambiguity of cosmetics. I illustrated how, while some condemned cosmetics outright,

²⁰ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 690-693.

²¹ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 690-693.

others seemed to accept the presence of cosmetics as long as they were subtle, so the impression of natural beauty was maintained. Celebrino's small printed book *Venusta* and the manuscript *Ricettario galante* open with poems describing the recipes for beauty inside each text; as descriptions of cosmetic practice, these poems serve as a useful point to begin the analysis of whether or not there was agreement between the moral dialogue surrounding cosmetics and the texts aimed specifically at practice.²² These poems appear to emulate the advertising spiels of street vendors who were often involved in the making and selling of cosmetic products and recipe pamphlets (discussed further in chapter 4), and promise to offer cosmetics which are subtle, undetectable, and 'appear natural', in a manner that loosely parallels moral dialogues. While asserting the virtuous nature of the content that follows, both poems invoke the notion of natural beauty as a foil for the artifice taught in their texts, suggesting that 'unnatural' or 'artificial' beauty was an essential part of how cosmetics were conceptualised. In Celebrino's poem, the secrets to make the happy purchasers beautiful include a wide range of products to ensure the body looks and smells appealing, effects that, we are assured, will 'seem natural':

Women who desire to make themselves beautiful,
This will fulfil your desire.
To make the skin vermillion and fair
And everyone lustrous as the sun
These things are not fresh or novel
But they make the false seem natural
And because they are secrets so unusual
I cannot tell you everything in these verses.

Here there is white and vermillion makeup
Various compositions of distilled water
To grow and lose hair and eyelashes
And on the face to lift marks from the flesh
And from this, to make the skin fine
and balls of perfumed soap

²² Celebrino, *Venusta*, 1^v; Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 1.

to seal gums and make the teeth clean
Oil for gloves, and many other secrets.

You will be able, oh my listener, without fatigue,
without great expenditure or lost time,
To gain a nymph for a friend
Who will bring you favour in everything.
Enough that without saying or telling more
She'll take you through all the ins and outs.
As long as she knows how to make a some kind of makeup
She will give you in exchange the heart in her chest.²³

The promise to make the false seem natural harkens back to a sentiment proffered by Ovid in *Ars Amoris*: it is best to be born beautiful, but if a person is not, enhancements should be subtle and performed secretly, so that they appear to be natural.²⁴ A similar description opens the manuscript recipe book *Ricettario Galante*:

Those who want, in brief, to make themselves white
and red, and make their hair gold, blonde, and fine

²³ *Donne che desiate farui belle
Quest'al vostro desir supplisse e vale
Per far vermiglia e candida la pelle
Et sia ciascuna lustra a sol equale
Queste cose non so frasche o nouvelle
Ma fan parer il finto naturale
Et perche son secreti assai diuersi
Non posso dirui il tutto in questi versi*

*'Quiui beletti son bianchi e vermigli
Varie composition dacque stillate
Da crescer e mancar capilli e cigli
E del viso leuar macchie incarnate
Et di quel far la pelle sassutigli
E ballottine di sapor muschiate
Saldar zenziue e far gli denti netti
Onto da guanti, & molti altri secreti.*

*'Potreti auditor mei senza fatica
Senza graue dispendio o tempo perso
Acquistarui vna nympa per amica
Che vi fara propitia in ogni verso
Basta che senza piu chio parli o dica
Da lei harete il dritto e lo riuerso
Pur che lei sappia fare chalche beletto
Vi dara in contra cambio il cuor del petto.
Celebrino, *Venusta*, 1^v.*

²⁴ Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 17; Bell *How to Do It*, 342; Ovid (ed. Green), *Erotic Poems*, 217-222, 264-66.

to remove marks from the face or other place,
grow hair or remove it,
perfume cloth or their body,
and make teeth clean, white and beautiful,
Those who, in the end, want to make themselves beautiful
this little book will teach you how.

But those who want to have more
than their natural share of beauty and grace
learn it from us: just as Spring
comes loaded with flowers, you'll be sure
to be the embodiment of virtue
as though the heavens made you the bearer of beauty.²⁵

Both poems suggest that the secrets they offer are not just about maintaining or restoring pre-existing beauty, but about fabricating a beauty that exceeds what is naturally there. Celebrino's book claims to help the reader 'make the false seem natural' (*'fan parer il finto naturale'*), while *Ricettario Galante* professes to help those who desire more beauty and grace than nature has given them (*'Ma chi di grazia o di gentil maniera /desia più aver ch'avesse da natura...'*). Each author's list of activities, which they have identified as ways to '*farsi bella*' serves in a sense as one 'definition' of Renaissance cosmetic practice, the author's version of what exactly beautification means. In both, '*farsi bella*' includes colouring the skin with rouge and whitener, removing blemishes and unwanted hair, helping other hair grow, perfuming the body

²⁵ *Chi vuol in breve bianca o rossa farsi,
E far i capei d'oro, biondi e snelli,
Macchie del volto o d'altrove levarsi,
Crescer i peli o ver levar via quelli;
I panni o la persona profumarsi,
E'denti far puliti, bianchi e belli:
Chi di farsi più bella al fin disegna,
Legga questo libretto che l'insegna*

*Ma chi di grazia o di gentil maniera
Desia più aver ch'avesse da natura,
Da noi l'apprenda, che qual Primavera
Ne vien carica di fior, così sicura
Sete voi di virtù la forma intera,
Ch'a voi sol darle il Ciel pose ogni cura.
Guerrini (ed.), Ricettario galante, 1.*

and cleaning the teeth. *Venusta* includes additional mention of products for lustrous skin, eyelash growth and removal, sealants for the gums to keep teeth from falling out, perfumed soaps, and oil for gloves. Both authors include in their ‘definition’ of beautification not just procedures that affect the visual appearance (such as hair dye, face whiteners, blush, blemish removal), but also processes that enhance the person’s aromatic appeal (perfumed soaps, scented oil). In the case of Celebrino’s poem, these also include products that are not directly worn on the skin (perfumed cloth, glove oil).²⁶

In many ways their ‘definition’ of beauty and beautification reflect the same standards that were celebrated in poetry and art, a fact which has previously been suggested in scholarship on cosmetics. In particular, Farah Karim-Cooper has suggested that the ‘fragmented and fictitious’ ideals of beauty encouraged in texts such as Agnolo Firenzuola’s *Dialogo sulla bellezza delle donne* and, most famously, in the well-circulated legend of Zeuxis’ creation of a ‘hybrid’ image of perfect beauty, would have left women ‘no choice’ but to attempt to recreate this impossible standard on her own body through use of makeup.²⁷ This beauty ‘canon’ is typified by Petrarch’s description of Laura, whose face has the colouration of ‘white roses interspersed with

²⁶ There has been research to suggest that Renaissance notions of the body extended beyond the immediate body itself, to the extent that clothes worn were almost considered part of the person as well. Jill Burke’s recent work on nudity and nakedness has discussed accounts where people were described as ‘nude’ when still wearing underclothing, and has also pointed out the infrequency of complete nakedness in a day-to-day setting. Burke, *Italian Renaissance Nude*; Burke, ‘How to See People Naked’; for gloves specifically, see Henry, ‘Whorish Civility’, 119-121; Stallybrass and Jones, ‘Fetishizing the Glove’, 114-32.

²⁷ Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 10-15. The fragmentation and fetishisation of female beauty in this period has also been discussed by: Yavneh, ‘Ambiguity of Beauty’, 137-138, 146; Rogers, ‘Decorum of Beauty’, 47-88; Firenzuola (ed. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, xxxi, 13. Claudio Da Soller has attempted to read Medieval beauty standards in terms of evolutionary psychology, however, the psychological studies he refers to are problematic in that they represent very small and culturally un-diverse samples of the human population. Da Soller, ‘Beauty, Evolution, Medieval Literature’, 95-111.

red, ever in a golden bowl'.²⁸ As expanded on in Agnolo Firenzuola's *Delle bellezze delle donne*:

... the cheeks must be fair (*candido*). Fair is a colour that, besides being white, also has a certain lustre, as ivory does; while white is that which does not glow, such as snow. If the cheeks then, in order to be called beautiful, need to be fair, and the bosom needs only to be white ... There ought not to be an abundance of different colours in one and the same part, but a different colour in different parts, according to the variety and needs of these different parts; somewhere white, as in the hands, somewhere fair and vermillion, as in the cheeks, somewhere black, as in the eyelashes, somewhere red, as in the lips, somewhere blonde, as in the hair.²⁹

That Petrarchan models were integrated into the 'vernacular' of everyday life is attested to by the fact that they were worked into social games and popular broadside pamphlets of the type that were often performed aloud, such as the 'Lament of the Ferrarese Courtesan' (1519-1530).³⁰ The presence of these ideals in recipe books is already visible in the opening poems of *Venusta* and *Ricettario galante*. The *Ricettario galante* refers to the same colour combination celebrated in poetic tradition, promising to instruct readers how to make their skin 'white and red', and their hair 'gold, blonde, and fine'. Similarly the poem in *Venusta* mentions ideal 'fair and vermillion' and 'vermillion and white' combinations that can be achieved in the skin, adding that it will help make the skin 'lustrous as the sun'. The idea here is not that the face is at once entirely red or entirely pale, but that it achieves the ideal balance of rose and cream hues such as those praised by Petrarch and Firenzuola. Celebrino's separate use of the terms

²⁸ Petrarca (trans. Jones), *Canzoniere*, 153 (no. 127).

²⁹ '... alle guancie convenga essere candida: candida è quella cosa, che insieme con la bianchezza, ha un certo splendore, come è l'avorio, & bianca è quella che non risplende, come la neve. Se alle guancie adunque à voler che si chiamin belle, conviene il candore, & al petto la bianchezza solamente ... non ha à ridondare di piu composti in un medesimo, ò in un solo, ma diverso in diversi, secondo la varietà e'l bisogno de' membri diversi, dove bianco come la mano, dove candido & vermiglio come le guancie, dove nero come le ciglia, dove rosso come le labbra, dove biondo come i capegli.' Firenzuola, *Prose*, 348-349; Firenzuola (ed. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 15

³⁰ Games incorporating Petrarchan models mentioned in Cropper, 'Parmigianino, *Petrarchismo*', 385-86; and Yavneh, 'Ambiguity of Beauty', 137. An example was published in Innocentio Ringhieri's *Cento giuochi liberali*. On broadsides, see Shemek, 'Disease, Deixis, Disfiguration', 49-64.

fair (*candido*) and white (*bianco*) together to the suggestion of lustre suggest that he is referring to the same sort of ‘glowing’ white that Firenzuola likens to ivory, an effect which in early modern English texts was translated as ‘glistening’, and which, as Firenzuola makes clear, was supposed to have a different effect from the sort of flat snowy white that was desirable on the chest.³¹

The recipes within *ricettari* also reflect these standards, often using similar vocabulary as in poetic descriptions of beauty to describe the desired effect. To achieve the ideal combination of rosy cheeks and lips surrounded by pale skin that was so praised in poetry, there are a range of recipes directed both at whitening the skin, and bringing colour to it (i.e. ‘a fare la carne colorita’) (see Appendix B). Some recipes promise both in one, supporting, as Firenzuola suggests, that the combination of these two was seen as desirable, and indicating that conforming to this ideal was indeed encouraged both in art and in practice. For instance, a recipe in *Ricettario galante* ‘To make the face beautiful’ says it will make the face ‘equally red and white’, and a ‘virgin water’ in the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript says it will not only remove blemishes, but also make the face ‘white and coloured’.³² There are also a number of recipes to make the skin ‘fair’. Two recipes in the *Ricettario di Galieno* and *Operetta molto piacevolissima* are for the face and hands (‘per fare candida la faza o voi le mane’), another in the Pseudo-Savonarola Manuscript for fair flesh (‘Belletto Grando per Candidaro la Carne’), and one in the *Secreti medicinali di Magistro Guasparino di Vienexia* ‘to make the face fair or shining’ (‘A fare la faccia candida vel splendida’).³³ A range of recipes also promise shining skin, described as ‘lustra/o’, ‘illustra’, ‘lucide’ or

³¹ Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 11.

³² Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 20 (Rx. 26); MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 189^v (‘Aqua virginia la qual remove tutte le macule della faccia et fa la faccia bianca et colorita et conservare juvenile et val molto per la dona’).

³³ Pseudo-Galen, *Ricettario di Galieno*, xxi (Rx. 137); *Operetta molto piacevolissima*, u. p. (Rx. 2); MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 183^r; Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 56 (Rx. 263).

‘lucente’, with one promising to make the face ‘shining like a mirror and white as snow’ in a few days’ time.³⁴

Farah Karim-Cooper has pointed out that metaphoric descriptions of body parts at times seem even to have influenced the ingredients used in recipes to bring about that effect, bringing up the use of lilies in recipes to bring the skin to the ‘lily white’ hue described in poetry.³⁵ In the recipes I have looked at, white lily is used almost exclusively in recipes to make the skin white or beautiful. Out of 14 recipes, the two exceptions are the use of lily roots in a recipe for the hair, and in a water to make the flesh ‘coloured’.³⁶ However, the extent to which poetic metaphors determined what was used in skin recipes seems somewhat limited. For example, another flower used in metaphoric descriptions of ideal beauty was the rose, which was likened to the cheeks. While various parts of roses are used in 33 recipes for the skin as well as 5 for the hair and three for the teeth, there is no particular correlation between use of roses and recipes to make the cheeks rosy. In fact roses are used primarily in recipes to make the skin beautiful, white, and remove blemishes, and appears in no recipes to make the skin ‘red’ or ‘colorita’.

Overall, while recipes for the skin encourage the same skin tones discussed in poetry, they tend to be less detailed in their suggestions of which body parts should be which colour. Most recipes are relatively general in the parts of the body they recommend use on. For example, Firenzuola praises not only rosy lips and cheeks, but also rosy earlobes, a trait which appears to be possessed by a young woman depicted almost a century earlier by Piero del Pollaiuolo (Figure 2), but is never specifically mentioned in cosmetic recipes. However, numerous recipes state that they can be

³⁴ ‘... in pochi giorni venira lucente come specchio et biancha come neve’. MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 183^v (‘A far lustra una faza d’una dona e biancha’).

³⁵ Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 26.

³⁶ Celebrino, *Venusta*, Rx. 23 (‘A fare la carne colorita’); Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 56 (Rx. 90, ‘Altro modo’). In *Ricettario galante*, the series of recipes to remove the hair of which this is part, are also intended to remove marks from skin.

applied to whichever part of the body suits the wearer, suggesting that fine-tuning a look was left up to the wearer's discretion, and not as directly proscribed as in beauty tracts.³⁷

Health and Beauty: Skin

While cosmetic recipes can thus be read, in part, as 'tools' to help people conform to the widely circulated beauty ideals, they were equally a part of traditions of health and hygiene. As I stated in the introduction of this thesis, the 'border' between methods to *farsi bella* and medicinal remedies was not well defined, and in a sense should not really be thought of as a border at all, but a continuation, with health effectively a prerequisite to beauty. The close interaction between beauty and wellbeing was already introduced in Chapter 1, where I discussed how the skin, complexion and external facial and bodily features were seen to reflect the internal balance of humours, and through it, key aspects of the personality, leading to a suspicion of cosmetics as potential disguises for the telltale signs of moral failings. In representations such as Delicado's *Retrato de la Loçana Andaluza*, and the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino*, which I discuss in detail in the final chapter, prostitutes were depicted as using excessive cosmetics to cover up bodies described not just as unappealing, but fundamentally unhealthy, a malaise that was in turn tied to their excessive and depraved lifestyle. This continuum between the spiritual interior and physical exterior was one of many ways in which the boundaries of the humoural body were understood to be blurred, and this blurring helped to make cosmetics ambiguous. Sandra Cavallo's recent work in particular has pointed to the importance of hygiene and preventative medicine in everyday health and beauty practices, an area which warrants further exploration.³⁸

³⁷ For example *Dificio de ricette*, 8 (Rx. 54).

³⁸ Some key works on hygiene include: Cavallo, *Artisans of the Body*, 39-42; Cavallo, 'Health, Beauty, Hygiene', 176-77; Cavallo, 'Secrets to Healthy Living', 191-212; Mikkeli, *Hygiene*; Sigerist, *Landmarks in the History of Hygiene*.

Cosmetic recipes reinforce this close relationship between internal wellbeing and external beauty, with beauty and health often presupposing each other. The two introductory poems looked at above suggest this in the fact that they include recipes which not only enhance the physical appearance, but were also discussed in health regimen relating to hygiene, namely care for the teeth and hair.³⁹ For example, the *Regimen sanitatis salernitanum*, which was circulating in print from around 1480 and in Italian vernacular from 1549, recommended cleaning the teeth and washing and combing the hair to help refresh a weary and overworked mind.⁴⁰ Mattioli's commentary on Dioscorides *Materia medica*, published in the mid-Cinquecento, demonstrates more fully the extent to which ornamentation was integrated with curing ailments and preserving health. The start of the work contains lists of different 'simples' which are useful for the treatment of various body parts and problems. The final section in this list is for the decoration of the body ('*Decoro de Corpo*'), and is divided into subcategories of various procedures.⁴¹ Like the ways to '*farsi bella*' enumerated in the poems discussed above, Mattioli's list can also effectively be read as a definition of procedures that constituted cosmetics at this time. Of course, the text is a commentary on Dioscorides, so the items included are derived from the classical text, however Mattioli made a number of amendments, including more procedures and simples listed as treatments. For example, Mattioli inserts a section on treatments for the 'French disease' which include several variations on guaiacum, the 'miracle' wood from India, and he also appends a section on the treatment of obesity.⁴² Here

³⁹ Wheeler, *Renaissance Secrets*, 41 ; For discussions of hair and health, see Manfredi, *Perche*, 80^v-89^f; Ordronaux (trans.), *Regimen Sanitatis Salernitanum*, 49.

⁴⁰ Ordronaux (trans.), *Regimen sanitatis*, 49. Latin cited in full below. A useful history of the text's dated and undated publications is available in: Nigro, 'Scuola medica salernitana'.

⁴¹ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, this section unpaginated, but including pages with signatures k, k2, and k3.

⁴² For treatments on syphilis, he lists: 'Dicottione di cortecchia di radici di tamarigio beuta (sic) lungamente; Legno guaiaco overo santo cotto nell'acqua & nel vino, & veutone la dicottione 40 giorni continui; Ridici de China [e] Zarza parilla beute nel medesimo modo; Dicottione

‘decoration’ also involves treatment of a range of conditions that negatively affect the skin and hair, keeping clean, and difficulties with overabundance or paucity of sweat:

For removing hair; Flux of body hair and hair (To retain hair on your head and so the hair on your body does not fall out); To remove body hair; To prevent the body hair you have removed from growing back; For dandruff on the head; To make hair red; To make hair curly; To make hair black; To kill lice and nits; To prevent sunburn; To clarify the face; To bring about good colour (To naturally colour the face); For red pustules on the face; For wrinkles on the face; For every corruption and mark on the skin of the face; For *quosi* on the face; For a face burned by the sun; For freckles; For moles; To beautify the entire body; To remove scars; For vitiligo [depigmentation]; For *volatica* [a patchy skin rash]; For pustules [*brozze*]; For *alphi*, and every other mark; For mange; For Greek leprosy, or scabies; For the French disease [this section is added by Mattioli]; For itch; For those who are obese and too portly [this section is added by Mattioli]; For leprosy or elephantitis; For the stink of the armpit; For warts, calluses and burrs; For hanging warts that the Greeks call *acrocordone*, *thimi* and *formiche*; For cracked lips; To provoke sweat; To staunch sweat; To clean the skin.⁴³

As visible here, the majority of treatments Mattioli lists have some sort of curative value, and a large number are directed at treating a variety of skin complaints. The remedies to provoke and staunch sweat are likely largely to do with sweating being

di legno bosso beuta nel modo medesimo; Dicottione de Asarina beuta; Acqua distillata dalle foglie tenere d’iringo montano beuto; Radici di dittamo bianco beute ogni giorno con dicottione di legno guaiaco; Dicottione d’Aspleno beuta; Dicottione di radici di pruno salvatico usata per coloro che hanno ulcerata la bocca, come si legge nel suo discorso’. Mattioli, *Materia medica*, k3. Niccolò Vito di Gozze complained about obesity in *Governo della famiglia*, calling it a plague: di Gozze, *Governo della famiglia*, 86-88. Georges Vigarello and Sarah Matthews-Grieco both note remedies for slimming or fattening with marzipan—Vigarello interprets it as a slimming formula, while Matthews-Grieco suggests it was for women aiming to be plumper. Vigarello, *Storia Della Bellezza*, 48; Matthews Grieco, ‘Body, Appearance, Sexuality’, 56.

⁴³ ‘Alla pelazione; Flusso di peli & di capelli (A ritenere i capelli, & li peli che non caschino); Cavare i peli; Prohibire, che i peli cavati non rinaschino; Alla farfarella del capo; A far i capelli rossi; A far i capelli ricci; A fare i capelli neri; A far morire i pidocchi & i lendini; A proibire l’ardore del sole; A chiarificare la faccia; A fare buon colore (Colorire naturalmente la faccia); Alle pustole rosse della faccia; Alle grinze della faccia; A ogni sordidezza & macchia della pelle della faccia; Alli quosi della faccia; Alla faccia arrostita da sole; Alle lentigini; Alli nei; A imbellire tutto’l corpo; A levar via le cicatrici; Alle vitiligini; Alle volatiche; Alle brozze; Alli alphi, & ad ogni altra macola; Alla rogna; Alla lebbra de greci, overo scabbia; La mal francese; Al prurito; Alli grassi & troppo corpolenti; Alla lebbra vero overo elephantia; Al fetore delle ditella; A i porri, calli & chiodi; Alli porri pendenti che i greci chiamano acrocordone, thimi & formiche; Alla labbra sfesse; A provocare il sudore; A ristagnare il sudore; A nettare la pelle.’ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, k-k3^v.

understood as one of the many ways in which the four humours were kept in balance—sweating, for example, was used as one of the many treatments for syphilis.⁴⁴ Unlike the two introductory poems in *Venusta* and *Ricettario galante*, Mattioli treats dental problems as separate from bodily decoration. Overall, however, his ‘definition’ of *farsi bella* is very much about treatment of specific conditions that might damage the appearance.

The Renaissance understanding of how the body functioned within the humoral system allowed for a range of ways in which cosmetics could have a medicinal effect. For instance, skin was not seen as a protective sealing organ, but as a porous netlike entity that allowed substances to enter and escape the body.⁴⁵ Alessandro Benedetti, writing just before 1500, likened it to the ‘crust on polenta’:

The skin forms with the drying of the flesh, like the crust on polenta (as Aristotle says): the viscous element of the flesh, rather, not being able to evaporate because it is dense and fatty, solidifies. The skin is thus composed of the same viscous element...In Man, it is particularly thin; it serves to counteract the air that surrounds us and is dotted with small holes [i.e. pores] which give off vapours.⁴⁶

Corresponding to this understanding of the skin as a highly permeable boundary, many cosmetic recipes effect beautifying changes not through superficial application of ‘cover-ups’, but through changing the balance of humours within the body. As observed in Chapter 1, the moral discourses strongly encouraged use of light cosmetics, and writers including Leonbattista Alberti and Alessandro Piccolomini advised that

⁴⁴ Gentilcore, ‘Charlatans, Regulated Marketplace, Venereal Disease’, 70-77.

⁴⁵ Benedetti, *Anatomice*, 113-14 (Book 1, Chapter 13); Vigarello, *Concepts of Cleanliness*, 9-16; Cavallo, *Artisans of the Body*, 21, 39,41; Cavallo, ‘Health, Beauty, Hygiene’, 180-82; Manfredi, *Perche*, ff. 41-48, 81-89.

⁴⁶ ‘La pelle si forma coll’asciugarsi della carne, come la crosta sulla polenta (così dice Aristotele): l’elemento vischioso della carne infatti, non potendo evaporare perché denso e grasso, si consolida. La pelle dunque é composta del medesimo elemento vischioso...Nell’uomo è particolarmente sottile; ha la funzione di contrapporsi all’aria che ci circonda, ed è cosparsa di forellini da cui esalano i vapori.’ Benedetti, *Anatomice*, 113-114 (Libro 1, Cap. 13).

fresh waters and light washes were the best methods for preserving good looks. There are many recipes for light solutions and distillations that correspond to this advice; numerous recipes aimed at whitening the skin or removing spots and blemishes take the form of distilled waters rather than paints, and their ingredients often suggest that they were not meant to be effective as cover-ups, but as applications that changed the nature and appearance of the skin itself. For example, *Dificio de ricette* recommends a light wash to beautify the face, advising that one should ‘take fresh fava flowers and make water out of these in the alembic and with that wash yourself and you will make yourself beautiful’.⁴⁷ The fava plant, according to Dioscorides, is of a balanced temperament between hot and cold, and he recommends, among other uses, a liniment of fava shells applied after depilation to make body hair grow back thinner.⁴⁸ He devotes more attention to the beans than the flowers, but one could hypothesise that a distillation of fava might be seen as balancing out the complexion to result in the desired combination of creamy skin marked by rosy cheeks and lips which indicated a good balance of humours within. Notably this balance was not only desirable for women—as noted by Piers Britton, it was also used in artistic depictions of Jesus to visually signal his bodily and spiritual perfection.⁴⁹

In addition, a number of recipes for improving the complexion are not applied to the skin, but ingested.⁵⁰ This is the case with several remedies in the manuscript of Guasparino da Vienexia, which cure digestive problems as well as bringing about ‘bom colore [sic]’, the first reading as follows:⁵¹

⁴⁷ ‘A far bello il uiso in altro modo: Recipe fiori di faua fresca & di quelli fanne acqua a lambico & con quella lauati & te farai bella.’ *Dificio de ricette*, 8.

⁴⁸ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 444 (Cap. XCVI, ‘Delle Fave’)

⁴⁹ Britton, ‘(Hu)moral Exemplars’, 199.

⁵⁰ Here I am referring to complexion in the colloquial sense of the term, to mean the outer appearance of the skin, not the historical significance of *compleSSIONE* which also referred to a person’s overall humoral constitution. See Laughran, ‘Oltre la pelle’, 50.

⁵¹ Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 24, 27.

Powder that makes good colour and comforts the digestion and clarifies the vision: take cinnamon, cardamom, poppy, summer savory (*Satureja hortensis*), mazorana and rue, rosemary, calaminth (*Satureja calamintha*), 5 drams of each, 1 dram each of the leaves of nutmeg and ‘apples of paradise’, 2 ounces of well-tempered ferric acid and make [this] into powder.⁵²

Although this recipe does not specify the manner in which the medication is to be taken, ingestion seems to be the likely method considering that it is listed amongst other powders with similar purpose that were meant to be eaten. This is further supported by the fact that several recipes later, another powder for ‘good colour’ is recommended to be taken before a meal:

Powder that makes good colour. Take galangal, ginger, cinnamon, zedoary (*Curcuma zedoria*), good pirathro (*Tanacetum cinerariifolium*): 10 drams of each; 4.5 ounces powder of sugar; 5 ounces washed and dried ferric oxide; 5 drams rock salt; 1 dram saffron, grind these things together and use 1 spoonful of them before your meal.⁵³

Caterina Sforza’s *Gli experimenti* also recommends ingested recipes to change the colour of the skin, including one which involves the drinking of ivory shavings: ‘To make colour come to the face: take some shavings of old ivory and drink them with wine or with water for twenty days and it is tested’.⁵⁴ Yet the question often remains as to how exactly the recipes were meant to work. For example, Guasparino’s formula may refer to ‘bom colore’ only to indicate that it would also cure the pale ‘green’ countenance that accompanies nausea. Sforza’s recipe has often been cited as a product

⁵² ‘Polvere che fa bom colore e conforta la digestion e clarifica la vista: tuoy cinamomo, cardamomi, papvero, saturegia, mazorana e ruta, anthos, calamo aromatico de zascuna dramme 5; nuxe muscate, pome de paradixo, folio de zascuno dramme j, ferugine bene temperato uncie ij e fa polvere’ Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 24.

⁵³ ‘Polvere per fare bom colore. Tuoy gallanga, zenzanro, cinamomo zeduardo, piratro bono de zascuno dramme X; polvere de zucaro uncie iiij.5; ferugine lavado e secho uncie 5; sale gemo dramme 5; sofrano dramme j: queste cosse polveriza in seme et usane uno chuchiaro avanti pasto.’ Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 27.

⁵⁴ ‘A far venir el color nel viso: piglia della rasura dello avorio vechio et bevini con vino o con aqua per vinti di et e provato.’ This recipe appears twice in almost identical form, see Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 648, 728.

of sympathetic magic, invoking a white complexion through drinking white ivory.⁵⁵ Unfortunately, whether it aimed instead to harness the medicinal properties of the ivory itself and change the skin's appearance from the inside out is unclear—Mattioli's discussion of ivory in his *Materia medica* offers no insight into how it might have been understood to affect the skin, recording only one use of ivory to treat the 'women's white flux' (*i flussi bianchi delle donne*), a problem with the menstrual cycle which commonly appears in sources on women's health.⁵⁶ Niccolò Mutoni's commentary on Serapione's *De simplicium medicamentorum* records a different use from Dioscorides, namely to treat hangnails, recording that ivory is 'of an astringent and strong nature', while the *Trotula* prescribes ivory shavings be given to a woman to help her give birth.⁵⁷ Even if the specifics of ivory's effect on the skin have been lost, the fact that these formulae for the skin could be ingested nonetheless suggests that their method of functioning was through changing the internal balance of humours, correcting whichever imbalance led to a less-than-ideal appearance.

Further indication that many Renaissance cosmetics were not intended to function solely as 'paints' is the fact that numerous recipes for the skin are not pigmented, and the majority do not appear to result in particularly heavy makeups. Of the 174 recipes in my database which treat the skin in some way, just 29 in total overtly use pigments to dye the skin red or white: kermes is used in 4 recipes, lac in 1, red sandalwood appears twice, sappanwood 8 times, and 26 recipes use a variety of white lead (ceruse). This means that only half (11 out of 22) recipes to make the skin 'red' or

⁵⁵ Suggestions that such remedies were mainly thought effective through sympathetic magic in : Breisach, *Caterina Sforza*, 136; Guccini, 'L' arte dei semplici', 134; Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 611; Turrini, 'Bellezza di ieri' 16; Phan, 'Pratiques cosmétiques', 118

⁵⁶ 'Usasi l' Avorio macinato in su'l porfido in sottilissima polvere à i flussi bianchi delle donne, beendolo [sic, bevendolo] in latte di seme di lattughe, cavato con acqua ferrata.' Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 378; Green, 'Flowers, Poisons, Men', 56; Aragata, 'Menses in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*', 17.

⁵⁷ Green, *Trotula*, 82; Serapion the Elder *De simplicium medicamentorum historia*, 160^v, 'Eboris ramenta digitorum reduuias sanant, illita. Est enim illi adstringendi natura & vis'.

‘coloured’ actually use red pigment (some of the recipes use several dye pigments together). White lead is used in 21 different recipes, in only 5 out of 40 overtly described as making the skin white, and present in only one out of 28 recipes to remove blemishes. How these pigments turned out on the skin would have depended not only on what other substances they were prepared with, but also the proportions used. For instance, a rouge using red sandalwood featured in both *Venusta* and *Gli experimenti*, despite its inclusion of red dye, still results in a relatively subtle coral red liquid that can be painted on either the cheeks or lips; it is not too heavily pigmented, and the coral shade blends in well with natural pink shades of the skin (Figure 3).⁵⁸ Other methods bring colour to the cheeks without using any dye pigment at all—Caterina Sforza recommends splashing the face with *aqua vita* liquor, which may have produced at least some temporary rosiness.⁵⁹ Ground orris root was also recommended; this aromatic powder, though off-white in colour produces a tingling effect and mild rosiness when applied to the skin.⁶⁰ Another recipe for rouge/lipstick (*rossetto*) combines sulphur, mercury and silver in pig lard, which may have made the skin a rosy shade primarily through irritation.⁶¹ While sulphur is still used to treat some skin conditions, including psoriasis, exposure to mercury can cause redness and rash.⁶² It is difficult to tell what effect silver may have had in the recipe, if any—while it is antimicrobial, if used over long periods of time it can lead to grey discolouration of the skin, but it does not appear

⁵⁸ From results during ‘Making Up in the Renaissance: Study Day’ (National Galleries of Scotland, 18 March 2011) images of effects at <http://sites.ace.ed.ac.uk/Renaissancecosmetics/cosmetics-recipes/skin/>. For recipes see Celebrino, *Venusta*, Rx. 9 (‘Unguento per fare colorito il volto in altro modo’) and Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 648 (‘Rossetto ligiadriissimo et eccellentissimo’).

⁵⁹ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 648: ‘a far la faccia bella et Colorita: Piglia lacqua de vita et ponela in una ampolla et lassala al sole et al sereno et de essa te ne lava la faccia et faralla colorita et bella usandola’.

⁶⁰ Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*, 205, 35, 38.

⁶¹ Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 57 (rx. 264, ‘A fare la roxeta’). ‘Ad faciendum roseam. Rx sulfure mixto cum argento et asungia et argentum vivum mistum cum asungia porcij et fac bullire simul postea lava faciem cum una pena vel manum et non tangas oculus’.

⁶² NHS Choices, ‘Medicine Overview: Sulphur/Salicylic Acid; University of Maryland Medical Center, Complementary and Alternative Medicine Guide, ‘Sulfur’.

in Mattioli's *Materia medica*.⁶³ Either way, the effect in this recipe is not achieved through use of pigment, but through changing the natural shade of skin, aiming to create the appearance of a natural blush.

Skin lightening recipes also show an interest in a relatively natural appearance. Ceruse (white lead), which was common in skin whiteners, could achieve a very subtle whitening effect when made into a cream with oils and waters as recommended in the *ricettari*.⁶⁴ In several research workshops, we tested a mixture of rose water, violet oil and titanium dioxide as a substitute for white lead, and the result can be relatively transparent, with a similar texture to sunscreen when worn (Figure 3).⁶⁵ Again, in some other cases, not only are there no white pigments used, but the colour of the final product is sometimes unrelated to the colour it is meant to bring about in the skin, suggesting that it was indeed the medicinal properties of the ingredients rather than their pigments that were being employed. A clear example of this, which has also been recently recreated in a research workshop, is a remedy from the Sforza *Experimenti* 'To make the hands and face white' calling for a decoction of nettle roots and leaves.⁶⁶ The resulting liquid is a dark murky green shade (Figure 4), which appears as a similar colour on the hands.⁶⁷ Rather than being a foundation or cover-up, the antiallergenic properties of dried nettle could have served to counteract any redness on the skin arising from allergic reactions such as hives or eczema.⁶⁸ From the perspective of humoral medicine, its inclusion is somewhat confusing—nettle is described by Mattioli to be hot

⁶³ Drake and Hazelwood, 'Exposure-Related Health Effects of Silver and Silver Compounds', 575-585; World Health Organisation, 'Mercury in Skin Lightening Products', 2.

⁶⁴ The best resource for the visual effects of historical cosmetics to date is Sally Pointer's *The Artifice of Beauty*. For her observations on use of white lead, see pages 38, 73-74, 92-3 95.

⁶⁵ Pointer also suggest the smooth application of white lead resulted in its continued popularity despite the dangers. Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*, 38.

⁶⁶ 'A fare la mano et il viso bianco: Piglia foglie e radice de urtica e fa bulire in acqua et cum quel acqua lavate le mano e il volto e diventeranno bianche e morbide.' Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v.3), 622.

⁶⁷ This was one of the recipes that was originally tested during the 'Making up the Renaissance' workshop at the National Galleries of Scotland in March 2011.

⁶⁸ Duke, 'Phytochemical and Ethnobotanical Databases'. Reference provided by Anna Canning.

and dry, which was normally associated with a rubicund rather than pale complexion, so it may be its curative properties that were being put to use, as it was believed to have strong medicinal effects against conditions including inflammations, gangrene and carcinoma.⁶⁹ Even toxic pigments like white lead were understood to have beneficial medicinal properties if used in the right context. For example, in the case of the face whitener calling for white lead, rosewater and violet oil that appears in two incarnations in Sforza's *Gli sperimenti*, while it is clear that its effect is to make the face white (see Figure 3), both times its effect is described as a cure, first for redness of the face ('*a guarire la roseza del volto*') and then for sunburn and wrinkles or cracks in the skin ('*contra la rosseza de viso et de omne loco per causa del sole; et crepature*').⁷⁰ White lead was known for its toxic effects at the time, however Mattioli records its potential for healing as well: according to Dioscorides, 'its virtues are to cool, tighten, soften, fill, and makes supple: it lightly breaks up the superfluities of the flesh: it is healing. Those that you make into pills, you put into bandages and poultices, and they call them *lenitivi* (soothing)'.⁷¹ However, he warns that 'taken in the mouth it is a deadly thing, for which it is evil and poisonous'.⁷² The recipes in Sforza's text appear to be based on this understanding of white lead—its cooling properties would counteract sunburn, and the effects of filling in the skin to make it soft, supple and tighter would seem to be the ideal combination to counteract pre-existing wrinkles. Violets, of a cold and moist

⁶⁹ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 1183-1186.

⁷⁰ As noted in the text above, Jill Burke, Anna Canning and I have made this recipe at a number of workshops on historical cosmetics, based in Edinburgh, albeit using a nontoxic substitute for white lead. It forms a creamy white lotion like 'foundation', that makes the skin look lighter, with varying subtlety depending on how much of each ingredient is added. Photographs of its effects can be found in Figure 3 and at the project website. See also: Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3): 629, 636.

⁷¹ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 1411: 'La virtù sua è d'infrigidire, serrare, mollificare, riempire, & assottigliare: risolve leggiermente le superfluità della carne: è cicatrizativa. Quella, che si fa in pastelli, si mette ne i ceroti, & impiastri, che chiamano lenitivi'. On discussions of lead's toxic effects, see Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*, 38, 40.

⁷² Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 1411: 'Tolta per bocca è cosa mortale, pericche è malefica, & velenosa.'

composition, were also cooling, and were understood to soothe and stop inflammations and pain induced by heat, among other virtues, perhaps reinforcing the cooling effects of the white lead.⁷³

As noted in my introduction, my focus in this study is on recipes aimed at modifying the appearance so I do not discuss perfumes in any detail, however, scents and perfumes played a significant role in treatments for the skin and hair as well which ties into this medical cosmetic culture. A pleasant smelling body was seen to suggest well balanced humours within, demonstrating good health and an even-tempered personality. Firenzuola related that ‘Plutarch writes that Alexander the Great gave off, from his limbs, a most delicate fragrance, and attributes this to nothing other than the good balance, or rather, the perfect balance of his humours and his entire complexion’.⁷⁴ In addition, perfume was seen to work as a preventative medicine, which inhibited the inhalation of noxious humours that caused disease.⁷⁵ Sandra Cavallo has observed that it was considered equally dangerous to breathe in strong scents produced by one’s own body, such as bad breath and body odour as it was to breathe in scents from external sources.⁷⁶ A large number of cosmetic recipes incorporate scents into the formula. For example, a recipe for rouge in *Dificio de ricette*, made from red sandalwood boiled in strong vinegar with the addition of a bit of rock alum, recommends adding musk, civet or the reader’s choice of perfume.⁷⁷ Camphor, a highly aromatic substance, is the most

⁷³ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 1239-41. ‘Sono le viole frigie, & humide nel primo ordine ... le Viole sonnifere, in frigidiscono, mitigano i dolori calidi, spengono le infiammazioni, leniscono, & solvono ... Conferiscono à tutte le infiammazioni, & levano il dolore del capo, che viene per calidità grande.’

⁷⁴ ‘Scrive Plutarco, che Alessandro il grane spargeva dalle sue membra una fragrantia soavissima, & non l’attribuisce ad altro, che alla buona temperanza, anzi perfetta delli humori, et di tutta la sua complessione ...’ Firenzuola, *Prose*, 348; Firenzuola (trans. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 15.

⁷⁵ Palmer, ‘In Bad Odour’, 63-4; Kemp, ‘Medieval Controversy About Odour’, 211-19; Cavallo, ‘Healthy Living’, 194-196.

⁷⁶ Cavallo, ‘Healthy Living’, 195-196.

⁷⁷ *Dificio de ricette*, 8v (Rx. 55: ‘A far rosso per lo uiso dele donne: A far uno rosso per lo uiso per donne: Recipe sandolo rosso pesto sottilmente & tole del aceto forte destilato doi uolte,

common ingredient in skin recipes, occurring in 38 out of 168 recipes for the skin.⁷⁸

Like ceruse and violets, it was also considered to have cooling properties, and according to Mattioli, its benefits are many. He records that Serapione and Avicenna identify camphor as cold and dry of the third degree, making it ideal to prevent problems caused by hot humours, including headache and inflammations.⁷⁹ He recommends it to treat numerous conditions, including gonorrhoea, nosebleeds and plague, and states that it prevents putrefaction.⁸⁰ For use on the skin, he notes that it is used to clean the face, and is useful against problems caused by hot humours such as inflamed wounds, ulcers and erysipelas (a skin infection causing red patches, now associated with the *Streptococcus* bacteria).⁸¹ He also notes that ‘powdered together with mineral borax and applied with honey it makes the face shining and clear’ and that it also cures redness and pustules on the face when mixed with sulphur, myrrh, incense and rosewater.⁸² The latter recipe appears in *Gli esperimenti* in a recipe ‘to cure redness on

poi metti del detto sandolo dentro quella quantita che ti pare & fa boire sottilmente & metti uno poco di lume di rocca pesta dentro che ti fara uno rosso perfettissimo & se tu uoi che sappia de buono metti uno poco di muschio dentro ouero Zibetto ouer altro odore che ti piace chel sara ottimo e buono.’)

⁷⁸ For a history of the trade of camphor, see Donkin, *Dragon’s Brain Perfume*. On the chemical properties of camphor see pp. 37-40.

⁷⁹ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 123: ‘Mettesi ne linimenti, che si fanno per polire la faccia, & per ispegnere le infiammazioni delle ferite, dell’ulcere, delle erisipele, & d’ogni altro caldo humore.’

⁸⁰ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 123: ‘Vale efficacemente alla gonorrhoea...Ristagna il flusso del sangue del naso, messavi dentro con seme d’ortica bruciato, & impiastrata in su la fronte con succo di semprevivo...Preserva dalle putrefattioni: & imperò utilmente si mette ne gli antidoti, che si fanno contra i veleni, contra la peste, & contra i morsi de velenosi animali.’

⁸¹ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 123: ‘Credonsi Serapione, & Avicenna, che sia la Camphora frigida, & secca nel terzo ordine....Mitiga (se tanta fede si puo prestare a gli Arabi) i dolori del capo, causati da caldi humori; spegne le infiammazioni, & massime del fegato: infrigidisce le reni, & i vasi spermatici, & ristagna il sangue. Mettesi ne linimenti, che si fanno per polire la faccia, & per ispegnere le infiammazioni delle ferite, dell’ulcere, delle erisipele, & d’ogni altro caldo humore.’; OED online, ‘erysipelas’: ‘erysipelas: An acute, sometimes recurrent disease caused by a bacterial infection, characterized by large raised red patches on the skin. This is caused by *Streptococcus pyogenes*, a Gram-positive coccus.’

⁸² Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 123-124: ‘La camphora polverizzata insieme con Borace minerale, & unta con mele fa la faccia splendida, & chiara. Trita al peso d’una oncia, & incorporata con altrettanto solfo, & quattro dramme di mirra, & altrettanto incenso, & messa poi con tutte queste cose insieme in una libra d’acqua rosa in una boccia di vetro ben serrata al sole per dieci giorni continui, vale bagnandosene spesso alla rossezza, & pustole della faccia.’

the face’, and slight variations on the ingredients appear four more times, all for curing some kind of redness or blemish on the skin.⁸³ Significantly then, even ingredients which might appear to have largely aesthetic effects, like white lead, scented oils or perfumes were also understood to have significant medicinal properties. The fact that camphor, white lead and violet oil all have cooling properties, and that camphor and violets both treated inflammations suggests that many of the skin recipes involving these items sought to cure as well as beautify.

Cosmetics also address the skin’s texture, a trait which, like skin colour, was seen to indicate both the state of a person’s health, and potentially their morality. For example Firenzuola addresses Aristotle’s assertion that good habits lead to ‘the firmness and thickness of the flesh’ while bad habits are evident in its ‘flabbiness and thinness’.⁸⁴ While the specific terms Firenzuola uses (‘sodeza e densità’) do not directly appear in recipes, recipes for the ‘flesh’ also focus on achieving smoothness and tautness of skin. Alongside remedies to ‘whiten’ or amend the skin colour, 28 recipes aim at removing freckles, blemishes, scars (including stretch marks), bruises and wrinkles; while a number of others address overall skin texture including preventing chafing and cracking.⁸⁵ A number of recipes dealing with the flesh aim to thin it (‘assottilia la carne’), while others refer to making it firm (‘a fare la carne duro’), or delicate (‘fano

⁸³ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 2), 629 (‘ad idem [a guarre la Roseza del Volto]); 621 (‘A chi havesse la faccia rossa per qualche infermita’); sulphur and rosewater are used in a recipe ‘Aguarire le Bolle et cossi della faccia’ (p. 629) and ‘a levar via le panne et li segni del viso et del petto alle donne’ (p. 635).

⁸⁴ ‘la buon habitudine del corpo si dimostra ne la sodeza e densità della carne, forza è, che la mala habitudine si dimostri con la fiacchezza & rarità.’ Here the term ‘fiacchezza’ translates roughly as ‘flabbiness’, but conveys more a sense of weak and loose skin rather than specifically fatty, corresponding, for example, to the negative depiction of loose and dangling skin in the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* looked at in chapter 6. Firenzuola, *Prose*, 388; translation in Firenzuola (ed. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 40.

⁸⁵ The two editions of *Thesoro de poveri* I looked at contain an additional chapter on healing cracks, wounds and broken bones. I have not included these because the treatments for cracked lips and hands were indistinguishable from those for broken bones, as all recipes are listed indiscriminately under the same group heading.

carne delicate).⁸⁶ One recipe in *Venusta* ‘to make flesh beautiful’ suggests that applying oil of myrrh once a month before bed will make ‘the flesh precious and always keep it soft and fresh’.⁸⁷ Part of this is clearly about maintaining an appearance of youthful skin. For example, a recipe ‘to make the flesh beautiful’ in the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript says that for women who ‘have had many children it is a noble thing for wrinkles in the stomach’, while one of the vaginal astringents in the same manuscript, looked at in the final chapter, can also be used on the skin, advising that if you ‘put some of it on the body of someone who has had children, it erases wrinkles and also makes breasts small’.⁸⁸ The aforementioned recipe in *Venusta* which promises ‘precious’ flesh, also states that it will help the user ‘always stay beautiful as [they] were before’.⁸⁹ To an extent these ideals of body shape and skin texture correspond to the ideal bodies depicted in artwork throughout the period. For example, although they are over a generation apart, the body shapes of Venus in both Sandro Botticelli’s *Birth of Venus* (ca. 1486) and Titian’s *Venus of Urbino* (1538) have very similar proportions, with the relatively small ‘apple’ like breasts so praised by the likes of Pietro Bembo.⁹⁰ Regardless of the obvious stylistic differences, both depict bodies which have soft curves, smooth skin and moderately ample flesh, but which are shown to be smooth and

⁸⁶ Recipes for ‘thinning’ the flesh include: MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 190^v (‘Aqua che illustra et sottiglia la carne’); Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 53-54 (Rx. 85, ‘Peladore che lieva il pelo, fa chiaro il viso, assottiglia la carne et si può usare senza pericolo’), and 54-55 (Rx. 86, ‘Peladore che lieva li peli, assottiglia la pelle, fa buon colore et leva ogni macchia al viso’). For firm flesh, see MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 193^r (‘A fare la carne duro’). For delicate flesh see MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 191^v (‘Per fare bianco il volto: Rx olio di tartaro olio di mandole dolze aqua rosata aqua di limonj aqua de fiche sicche an. tutte lambicate et fano carne delicate’).

⁸⁷ ‘... se volesti fare la carne preciosa & semp[re] ma[n]tenerla morbida & fresca piglia olio de mira & ongitte ogni mese vna volta quando al letto & manterirai la carne morbida & fresca’. Celebrino, *Venusta*, 3v (Rx. 13, ‘A far conseruar la carne bella’).

⁸⁸ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 183^r (‘Aqua ... fa bella carne et manda via quelle forfole’), ‘... havessero fane molti figliuoli cosa notabile alle rize de la panza’; 193^r (‘A stringere la natura della donna et cazare le falde dal corpo’), ‘... anche chi se ne mettesse sul corpo a una che havesse fatto filioli caza via le falde et anche fa le tette piccole ...’.

⁸⁹ Celebrino, *Venusta*, 3v (Rx. 13, ‘A far conseruar la carne bella’).

⁹⁰ Bembo, *Gli Asolani*, 158-59. See also Yalom, *History of the Breast*, 54; Bayer, ‘Introduction’, 5; Yavneh, ‘Ambiguity of Beauty’, 138.

firm with no extraneous folds that might constitute the ‘fiacchezza & rarità’ that belied a dissolute character. They equally combine the same characteristics of smoothness, firmness and softness that appear in cosmetic recipes.

As I previously mentioned, a number of recipes also aim at making the skin shining or lustrous, a trait that corresponds to Firenzuola’s suggestion that the face should have the sheen of ivory.⁹¹ The effects that the recipes for shining skin have on the complexion are somewhat unclear. Although there is a commonly held notion that women used egg white to create a sheen on their faces, the extent to which this was actually done in practice during the Italian Renaissance is somewhat poorly supported by evidence.⁹² During the ‘Making up the Renaissance’ study day at the National Galleries of Scotland in 2011, attempts were made to apply an egg white wash to the skin, both as a foundation and as a finishing glaze with mixed success: as a foundation it caused the makeup on top of it to crack off (this was the skin whitener of rosewater, violet oil and titanium dioxide, and a red-sandalwood liquid rouge), and as a finisher it did not crack, but made any movement uncomfortable while exaggerating wrinkling of the skin (Figure 5).⁹³ Such an uncomfortable effect would correspond to complaints made by male authors that women’s makeup was heavy enough that they could not move their faces.⁹⁴ Castiglione, while making the case for subtle cosmetics, contrasted the gracefulness of a woman who ‘if indeed she puts on makeup, does so sparingly and so little that when you see it, you wonder if she is made up or not’, to the unpleasant effect of a woman whose ‘face is so encrusted that she seems to be wearing a mask, and

⁹¹ Firenzuola, *Prose*, 348-349.

⁹² Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 11; Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*, 71-112, 95, 96 109, 110.

⁹³ A write-up on the workshop and comparative images of the effects of egg white as a foundation and finisher are available on the project website. Sally Pointer has also written about her own attempts with egg white makeup in Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*, 95.

⁹⁴ Phan, ‘Pratiques Cosmétiques’, 116; Grieco, ‘Body, Appearance, Sexuality’, 63.

who dare not laugh for fear of making it crack'.⁹⁵ 'Her colour never changes except when she gets dressed in the morning, and then for the rest of the day she stays, like an unmovable statue of wood...'.⁹⁶ Alessandro Piccolomini makes fun of a similar effect in the *Raffaella*, where the young Margarita observes that a Madonna Giachetta wears so much makeup that it is impossible to turn her head without moving her entire body, 'so that the mask does not split'.⁹⁷

However it is possible that these formulaic arguments in support of natural beauty represent more rhetoric than an actual practice. In the Piccolomini passage, for example, it is not that Madonna Giacchetta's makeup normally forms a solid mask, but that she wears too thick a coating of it—as Margarita comically explains, when she wears it outside in the winter, the cold air makes it freeze solid.⁹⁸ In fact, the 'egg white' experiment was not based on a specific recipe from the period: while a number of recipes for shining skin contain egg whites among the ingredients, I have yet to come across one that actually recommends wearing the infamous egg-white glaze that women supposedly wore to finish off their makeup. There are several masklike pastes including egg white, however they are not meant to be worn in public, but applied and then washed off. For example, one facial 'mask' to make the flesh lustrous is made of three types of flour and ground up white lily bulbs mixed into a paste with egg whites; this mixture is meant to be worn on the face overnight and washed off with running water in

⁹⁵ 'Non vi accorgete voi, quanto più di grazia tenga una donna, la qual, se pur si acconcia, lo fa così parcamente, e così poco, che chi la vede, sta in dubbio, s'ella è concia, o no, che un'altra, empiestrata tanto, che paia ha versi posto alla faccia una maschera, e non osi ridere per non farsela crepare ...' Castiglione (ed. Maier), *Il cortigiano*, 154; Translation with amendments from, Castiglione (trans. Bull), *Courtier*, 86.

⁹⁶ '... ne si muti mai di colore, se non quando la mattina si veste, e poi tutto il rimanente del giorno stia, come statua di legno immobile ...' Castiglione (ed. Maier), *Il cortigiano*, 154-55.

⁹⁷ 'Madonna Giachetta che sta nel Casato è una di quelle ; chè la mattina di San Martino, la vidi alla festa, che così sgarbatamente si aveva coperto il viso, ch'io vi prometto che gli occhi parean di un'altra persona ; e il freddo gli avea fatte livide le carni, e risecco l'empiastrò, tal che gli era forza alla poveretta stare interizzata, e non voltar la testa, se non con tutta la persona insieme, acciò che la màscara non si fendesse.' Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 25.

⁹⁸ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 25.

the morning.⁹⁹ On the other hand, the recipes with egg white that are meant to remain on the face are primarily ‘waters’ that have been distilled one or two times. These include, for example, a ‘Water to make the face white and shining’ in *Venusta*, for which you first distil bitter almond oil, egg whites and shells, and a fig branch, and then distil again with white sugar, borax, camphor and frankincense added in.¹⁰⁰

Eggs are the second most frequently used ingredient in cosmetic recipes, which incorporate all parts of the egg at various times: shells, whites, yolk, and oil derived from the egg yolk (a process described below). Again, eggs were thought to have a wide range of medical benefits. Dioscorides writes that egg whites are good for sealing the skin and for preventing burns from exacerbating, saying that ‘the raw egg white refreshes, blocks warts from the skin, and is an astringent applied to inflammation of the eyes. Put on top of fire burns, it prevents blisters from forming: and applied to the face it prevents sunburn’.¹⁰¹ Eggs were thought to have drying properties, used in medicines that ‘dry out humidity, whether [they are] boiled, fried, or roasted: but in those that exhibit humours which are slow and viscous in the chest and veins, one should have them to drink, cooked in water only until they are well heated’.¹⁰² He advises that the yolks are far better than the whites, as they are ‘temperate, pleasant tasting, nourishing and easy to digest’, whereas whites are ‘cold, phlegmatic and hard on the stomach’.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Celebrino, *Venusta*, 3^v (Rx 12., ‘A fare la carne lustra’).

¹⁰⁰ Celebrino, *Venusta*, 4^r (Rx 14, ‘Acqua da far bianco e lustro il viso’)

¹⁰¹ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 370-371: ‘La chiara dello uovo crudo rinfresca, serra i porri della pelle, & alleggerisce applicata l’infiammagioni de gli occhi. Messa presoto in su le cotture del fuoco, non vi lascia levare le vesciche: & ungendosene la faccia non la lascia arrostire dal sole...’

¹⁰² Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 371.47-371.50: ‘Debbonsi usar le Uova in quelle medicine, che diseccano l’humidità ò lesse, ò fritte, ò arrostite: ma in quelle, che incidono gli humori lenti, & viscosi del petto, & del polmone, si debbono usare da bere, cotte nell’acqua sola fino à tanto, che sieno ben calde...’

¹⁰³ Even here, eggs are referred to not just as tasty and nourishing dishes, but as types of medicine: Mattioli specifically uses the word ‘medicine’ (*quelle medicine*), even when talking about preparations which we now think of as primarily culinary (e.g. fried eggs). Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 371.18-371.20: ‘Delle uova molto migliori sono i tuorli che le chiare: per esser quelli temperati, aggradevoli al gusto, di buono nutrimento, & facili da digerire: & queste son frigide, flemmatiche, & dure allo stomaco’

The characterisation of the egg-white as phlegmatic corresponds to its use in recipes for white skin, since pale skin was a typical phlegmatic trait.¹⁰⁴ Because egg white did not sting, it was used in a range of remedies for the eyes, as well as for malignant and difficult-to-heal ulcers, including those on the backside and genitals.¹⁰⁵ Egg yolk oil, which, as Mattioli explains, ‘one extracts from the yolk of the egg which has been well roasted first in a pan’, was again recommended largely for healing the skin, both for treating rough or cracked skin and for ulcers in the ears; and it was also recommended for pain throughout the body.¹⁰⁶ Overall, then, when applied on the skin, egg whites are seen to be gentle, but powerfully healing, with undertones of nutrition, growth and fecundity.¹⁰⁷ As a substance that had both a drying and sealing effect on the skin, it makes sense that it was a popular ingredient in so many skin recipes. The use of egg whites may have been, on one hand, a reaction to aesthetic ideals celebrating complexions which were radiant, shining and lustrous. However, the medical properties of eggs suggest that cosmetics which incorporated them may have equally sought to heal skin problems: drying up ulcers and soothing cracks, roughness and rashes. Finally, the healing and sealing properties of eggs suggest desires to seal the porous skin to prevent further toxic humours from entering.¹⁰⁸

Health and Ideals: Hair

Treatment of the hair in recipe books shows a similar combination of recipes whose effects would help the user achieve a similar aesthetic to the poetic ideals, but which also clearly overlap with medicinal and hygienic effects. As was previously

¹⁰⁴ Britton, ‘(Hu)moral Exemplars’, 189-194; Laughren, ‘Oltre la Pelle’, 59.

¹⁰⁵ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 371.

¹⁰⁶ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 371.53-371.55: ‘L’olio, che per ispressione si cava da i tuorli delle uova benissimo prima arrostiti nella padella, giova ungendosene alla ruvidità della pelle, alle volatiche, & alle fisure delle labbra, delle mani, de i piedi, & del sedere: & vale à i dolori dell’ulcere, delle giunture, & di tutti i luoghi nervosi, & à i dolori, & ulcere dell’orecchie.’

¹⁰⁷ In particular, Mattioli notes that eating eggs can enhance fertility (*Materia medica*, 371).

¹⁰⁸ See my discussion of porous skin in Chapters 1 and 5.

mentioned, just over one-fifth of all skin recipes during the 1450-1540 period had obvious pigments in them. Similarly, out of 149 recipes dealing with the hair, only 32 are clearly for dyeing the hair black or blonde, so again just over one-fifth of the total number. As was discussed in Chapter 1, the colour, texture and amount of hair suggested the internal balance and character of a person. Blonde hair was phenotypic for women's cool and moist phlegmatic humour, while dark hair, associated with heat, was more suited to men's hotter, drier temperament.¹⁰⁹ Recipes suggest this association was reinforced by fashion culture to some extent: six out of sixteen recipes for black hair suggest they may also be used on the beard, while it is never suggested that blond or red dye be used anywhere other than the head.¹¹⁰ As Michelle Laughran pointed out, blonde hair was also associated with good health, and indeed, both Giambattista della Porta and Pomponius Gauricus argued that a golden reddish-blond tint suggests a particularly good balance of humours. While treatises on art by the likes of Pomponius Gauricus, looked at in Chapter 1, took a rather black-and-white approach to each body type, Giambattista della Porta proposed a more nuanced reading of bodily features, including different opinions about the significance of each trait, and discussion of variance in hair shade and texture. He suggests that blond hair of a middling shade between red and black shows the desired balance between humours, demonstrating 'promptness at learning the sciences, and an illustrious subtlety of intelligence', but hair that is 'very blonde, appearing white' demonstrates 'coarseness, malignity ... ignorance, poor judgement and rusticity'.¹¹¹ However, how much readings like della Porta's would have influenced public opinions on fashion is difficult to tell. As several scholars have pointed out, works on physiognomy seem to have had a mixed reception—they formed

¹⁰⁹ della Porta, *Fisiognomia*, 236-239; Laughran, 'Oltre la Pelle', 59;

¹¹⁰ See appendices B and F. For examples of red hair dye, see Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 657 (Rx. 155, 'a far capelli et peli negri et rossi') and 691 (Rx. 174, 'Ancora a fare li capelli rossi e biondi'). Although it is possible this is referring more to the ideal 'red-blond' shade discussed below than actual red dye.

¹¹¹ della Porta, *Fisiognomia*, 238.

only a small part of the Renaissance print market, and unlike the Petrarchan ideal, artists do not appear to have employed the proscribed rules of physiognomy in any unified way.¹¹²

Nonetheless, styling the hair and facial appearance was a significant expression of gender. A number of complaints about the behaviour of male youth from both the Quattrocento and Cinquecento indicated that they were wearing perfume, provocative clothing and displaying their hair to attract the attention of other men, a practice condemned as turning them ‘into women’—the chastisement appropriates the trope of ornamentation being women’s vice, but no doubt also sought to attack the sexual implications of the young men’s behaviour.¹¹³ Manipulating facial appearance was clearly important to mature men as well; in late 15th century Venice, for example, it was traditional for men to grow beards during mourning, keeping the beard for different lengths of time depending on the deceased’s place within the familial hierarchy: three months if the father had died, two months for the mother, one for a brother.¹¹⁴ Likewise, the rise in popularity of the beard in the early Cinquecento is now being investigated as a way to address concerns about masculinity, military strength and cultural superiority.¹¹⁵ While references to men’s use of cosmetics are still relatively

¹¹² Porter, *Windows of the Soul*, 97; Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 361-367 (Appendix A). On adoption of physiognomy in art, see: Bettella, ‘Marked Body’, 157-158; Rogers, ‘Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal’, 129-130; See also: Meller, ‘Physiognomical Theory’, 53-69; Freedman, *Titian’s Portraits through Aretino’s Lens*, 28, 64-66, 83-87, 152-56; Britton, ‘(Hu)moral Exemplars’, 177-204.

¹¹³ Priuli, *I Diarii* (v. 4), 37; Translation in Chambers and Pullan (eds.), *Venice: A Documentary History*, 124-5; Discussion in Newton, *Dress of Venetians*, 37-41; and Rogers, ‘Evaluating Textiles’, 125. A similar complaint to Priuli’s was made decades earlier by Bernardino da Siena in 1424, when he complained of parents deliberately sending their youths out gussied up as pretty bait for sodomites, flaunting their ‘long hair’ and ‘revealing hosiery’. See Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 135. For more male adornment, see McCall, ‘Brilliant Bodies’, 445-490.

¹¹⁴ Chambers and Pullan, eds., *Documentary History*, 7: ‘They also grow beards for some time: three years for the father, two years for the mother, one year for a brother, etc.’; Sanudo, *De origine*, 20-39.

¹¹⁵ Biow, ‘Beard in Sixteenth-Century Italy’, 176-194; Biow, ‘Manly Matters’, 325-346; Horowitz, ‘New World, Changing Face’, 1181-1201.

scarce, a number of recipes are for men to dye their beards black, and *Ricettario galante* also refers to a face wash used by numerous ‘noblemen and women’.¹¹⁶

The humoral understanding of the body also alters the way in which hair and hair washing and dying was understood to function and its perceived effect on the body. The head was seen to be a key site of toxin expulsion, where all the corrupted vapours generated within the body were thought to rise in the form of a vapour, to be released through the pores.¹¹⁷ Hair was one of the forms this vaporous excretion could take—Benedetti describes hair to be ‘composed of humid secretions or exhalations of vapour that come from throughout the entire body to arrive at the skin’.¹¹⁸ Girolamo Manfredi’s *Il perchè* explains that ‘because man is of an upright stature, all the fumes of the body ascend to the head, that is, the chimney of all the body’, and having found the ‘pores of the head so open’, they escape, where the cold air ‘thickens and coagulates that vapour, reducing it into the form of hair’.¹¹⁹ Growth of hair on the head was a natural way for the brain to ‘purge’ itself of impurities, and men, who were believed to be capable of processing bodily wastes more effectively than women, also processed bodily waste into hair on other parts of the body.¹²⁰ However if hair grew in too much

¹¹⁶ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 22 (‘A fare una acqua da viso perfettissima provata da molte gentildonne et signore’).

¹¹⁷ Benedetti, *Anatomice*, 241 (Libro 4, Cap. 4). See also Cavallo, *Artisans of the Body*, 39-40.

¹¹⁸ ‘i peli sono composti di secrezioni umide o di esalazioni di vapore che da tutto il corpo arrivano alla pelle.’ Benedetti, *Anatomice*, 241 (Libro 4, Cap. 4).

¹¹⁹ ‘El pelo cioe e stato ditto procede da quatro cagione cioe efficiente material formale & finale cioe ciascuno altro effetto la cagione efficiente del pelo e duplice. Una e il calore naturale del corpo che eleva il fumo da lhumido del corpo ale parti cotanee. Laltra e il freddo de laere che inspessa & coagula quel fumo riducendolo a la forma del pelo. La cagione material e duplice una remota & lhumidita del corpo, laltra e piu propinqua & il fumo terrestre che evapora da la ditta humidita [...] Perche adunque l homo e statura dritta tutti li fumi del corpo ascendeno al capo cioe al camino de tutto il corpo & lui pervendo questi fumi & ritrovando le porosita del capo assai aperte & molte commissure se ritiene ivi quei fumi & per il freddo de laere se coagula de che poi sopravvenendo unaltro fumo congiogendosi con il primo coagulato & caccia quello fora de le porosita intrandoli lui isino che e coagulato, & da poi vi sopravene unaltro fumo & fa il simile, & per questo mo[do] si gña & allonga il pelo over capello del corpo.’ Manfredi, *Perche*, 80^v.

¹²⁰ Cavallo, *Artisans of the Body*, 39-40; Stolberg, ‘Menstruation and Sexual Difference’, 91.

abundance or bushiness, it could dangerously block the pores, preventing other toxins from escaping.¹²¹

In addition, the point is frequently made clear that both disease and aberrant or excessive behaviour could leave tell-tale marks on the appearance. For example, Manfredi explains in *Il perchè* that too much sexual activity could cause the hair to fall out because it dries out nutrients that would normally be transformed into hair.¹²² Hair loss also became known as one of the myriad damages that syphilis could wreak on the appearance, first recorded in Fracastoro's account of the disease.¹²³ This has been cited as one of several potential factors contributing to the sudden popularity of beards in the Cinquecento, after nearly five hundred years of clean-shaven faces.¹²⁴

While hair-combing served the practical function of removing lice, nits and dirt, it was also considered to have a purgative effect on the brain, to stimulate it and remove corruption.¹²⁵ The *Regimen sanitatis salernitanum*, as mentioned earlier, advised combing the hair, washing the hands in cold water and brushing the teeth as a treatment to sooth the head.¹²⁶ Firenzuola suggested that more women should let their hair blow in the wind, not just because it looks appealing, but to allow for the expulsion of excess matter:

¹²¹ Cavallo, *Artisans of the Body*, 39-40.

¹²² 'Perche a luxuriosi cadeno i capelli & le palpebre & diventano tosto calvi, & imilmente cadeno i capelli & la convalescentia de un che sia stato amalato, & cosi nei tisici & epatici over consumpti: Una medesima cagione e in tutti questi nominati laquale e deseccato de nutrimento dalquale provengono i fumi de che se genera i capelli, perche adunque il coito in fredda le arti desopra lequali poi remangono depauperate de sangue & de spirito, impero non pono direrire il suo nutrimento elquale rimane indigesto, & del fumo che descende da lui non e sufficiente materia a generare ne pili ne capelli.' Manfredi, *Perche*, 59^r.

¹²³ Fracastoro (ed. Eatough), *Syphilis*, 14.

¹²⁴ Fracastoro (ed. Eatough), *Syphilis*, 14; For discussion of other factors influencing the new fashion for the beard, see: Biow, 'Manly Matters', 330; Horowitz, 'New World', 1187; Zucker, 'Raphael and the Beard', 524-533.

¹²⁵ Cavallo, *Artisans of the Body*, 39-40; Wheeler, *Renaissance Secrets*, 41.

¹²⁶ 'De confortatione Cerebri. Lumina manè, manus sugens gelida lavet aqua hac illac modicum pergat, modicum sua membra extendat, crines pectat, dentes fricet. Ista Confortant cerebrum, confortant cætera membra, Lote cale; sta, pranse, vel i fringesce minutè.' Ordranax (trans.), *Regimen sanitatis*, 48.

I have not seen many ladies who let their hair blow in the wind. This is a bad thing, for hair is a great ornament of beauty and was created by Nature for the evaporation of superfluous matter from the brain and other parts of the head. Even though each hair is very thin, it has holes in it so that it may exude the superfluous matter I have mentioned.¹²⁷

Sandra Cavallo has pointed out a remedy for making the hair ‘long, blonde and very beautiful’, which also strengthens the brain and memory.¹²⁸ Lucrezia Borgia reportedly complained of suffering from a headache brought on because she had not washed her hair in eight days.¹²⁹ In *Ricettario galante* the section on removing hair begins with an introduction, which not only recommends that any appearance-conscious woman habitually bathe her entire body, but also describes the removal of excess hair as a necessary step for preventing disease:

The woman who delights in trimming her person and ornamenting and gently cleaning her face, orders a bath where one can wash the entirety of the person, and if there is a heater, watches that it is not too hot, so as to overheat the face, and the air gives birth to grains that grow on the face from too much heat. But she must have a peel that lifts clean the hairs that cause illness in various places of the woman’s body...¹³⁰

Here it is only the overheating of a room which causes problems, not the bath itself, and the advice is followed by recipes for a number of depilatories which can remove the offending hairs. The recommendation to remove body hair from the entire body is reminiscent of the opening of the *Trotula*’s book on adornment, which advises women to cover their entire body with a depilatory after bathing

¹²⁷ ‘io non gli vidi molto spiegare a venti ad alcuna, che è una malfatta cosa, percioche e sono un grandissimo ornamento della bellezza, e d natura sono creati per una evaporatione delle cose superflue del cerebro, & delle altre parti del capo: impercioche ancor che e’ sieno sottilissimi, e son forati, accioche indi possano eshalare le dette superfluità ...’ Firenzuola, *Prose*, 379; Firenzuola (ed. Eisenbichler and Murray), *On the Beauty of Women*, 33

¹²⁸ Cavallo, ‘Health, Beauty and Hygiene’, 177, Recipe from Ruscelli, *De’ secreti*, 147.

¹²⁹ Alessandro Luzio and Rodolfo Renier, ‘Il lusso di Isabella d’Este’, 95;

¹³⁰ ‘La donna che si diletta assettare sua persona et ornare e pulire gentilmente sua faccia, ordini un bagno dove si possi lavare tutta quanta la persona, et se fosse una stufa, guardi non sia troppo calda, che incenderla assai la faccia, et l’aria nascere li ciccolini che nascono sul viso per troppo caldo. Ma bisogna un peladore che levi netti li peli che stanno male in diversi luoghi del corpo della donna.’ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 51-52.

(and indeed, some of the depilatories in *Ricettario galante* are identical to those in the *Trotula*).¹³¹

While this system saw benefits in many hair-care practices which are different from what would be expected nowadays, it was also used to support the condemnation of others. Hair dye was argued by some to bring unhealthy cooling to the brain: Cosmo Agnelli supported his own condemnation of hair dye by citing the first book of Galen's *Compositioe medicamentorum secundum locos*, in which, according to Agnelli, Galen attests to having seen numerous women die from 'offending the head with those medicaments of a deathly cold; one cannot believe otherwise than that either for excessive drying or excessive humidity and coldness, the head would be distempered, causing pain, distillation [i.e. of the vapours in the head], and other damaging effects'.¹³² The tone of Agnelli's work is more typical of Counter-Reformation tirades against adornment, however, Galen's text in which the aforementioned passage appears was also circulating in the first half of the Cinquecento, and a number of copies survive today, including a 1536 Venetian printing.¹³³ As extreme as Agnelli's protest may be,

¹³¹ Compare *Ricettario galante*, 53 (Rx. 86 and 87, 'Depilation that removes body hair, thins the skin, gives you good colour and removes every mark from the face') with Green, *Trotula*, 114 (recipe 245 and 246, 'An ointment for noblewomen which removes hairs, refines the skin and takes away blemishes').

¹³² 'Del gran danno poi della sanità del corpo, ch'è di tanta importanza per la generatione, & educatione de' figliuoli, & per lo governo della casa, credasi a Galeno, uno de' più eccellenti Medici, che sia mai stato. Egli afferma nel primo libro de' compositione medicamentorum secundum locos, d'haver visto morirsi molte donne per la soverchia, & assettata curiosità, e studio intorno à' capelli, offendendo la testa con quei medicamenti d'una mortifera frigidità; né si può credere altrimenti, che ò per soverchio disseccamento, ò soverchia humidità, e frigidità non si distemperì la testa, causando dolori, distillationi, & altri dannosi effetti.' Agnelli, *Amorevole avviso*, 7; Cfr. Galen, *De compositione medicamentorum*, 13^r (I.35): 'Quippe non modo periclitatas subinde mulieres noui, sed etiam mortuas, quòd caput ex huiusmodi medicamentis impendio esset refrigeratum. Noxa autem ipsis maxime obuēnit aliquando in apopexiam, aut morbum comitiale, aut cataphoram, aut carum, aut catalepsim dictam incidentibus. aliquando catarrhis contumacibus corripuntur, ut pulmo afficiatur, & tabes indesequatur'. See also: Wheeler, *Renaissance Secrets*, 41; Bell, *How to Do It*, 204.

¹³³ There are records of at least eight copies held in collections throughout Italy, including at the Biblioteca comunale Luciano Benincasa, Ancona; Biblioteca civica Romolo Spezioli, Fermo; Biblioteca civica A. Mai, Bergamo; Biblioteca comunale dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna; Biblioteca comunale Passerini Landi, Piacenza; Biblioteca del Seminario

personal accounts in Cinquecento letters suggest that washing the hair was a drawn out process at the least, sometimes followed by a period of recovery in which the person who had washed their hair would not go outside.¹³⁴ Antonia del Balzo, for example, in writing to Isabella d'Este, mentioned that her daughter Camilla was unable to go outside 'because she washed her head today', and Isabella notes several instances where an entire day is spent drying her hair.¹³⁵ Less clear is the extent to which these practices stemmed from medical concerns, and how much they were to do with the length of time required to air dry long hair, coupled with the lack of desire (or social propriety) for going out in public with wet and un-styled hair. While there are no cosmetic recipes that testify to having side effects quite as dangerous as Agnelli imagined, certain hair removal recipes do warn about the potential consequences of misuse. For example, a depilation in *Dificio de ricette* that uses quicklime, orpiment and lye warns the user that once it has been applied, they must 'pay attention so that when you feel the heat, wash immediately with hot water, but quickly so that the skin does not come off'.¹³⁶ However, this was also practical advice for use of a solution that includes caustic chemicals that could burn the skin, and may have warned against this potential danger more than any further effects the recipe could have on the health or internal balance.

This introduces many questions of interpretation, for example, if hair is purgative to the brain, could hair growth or removal be therapeutic relief for internal imbalances? Furthermore by trying to remedy a problem like balding, was one perceived to be curing the underlying condition? In the case of balding, caused by the

Vescovile della Facoltà Teologica del Triveneto dell'Istituto Filosofico Aloisianum, Padova; and the Biblioteca Angelica in Rome; as well as a number of others in the UK including a 1543 Venetian edition at the Wellcome Library, London.

¹³⁴ Luzio and Renier, 'Il lusso di Isabella d'Este', 95; Welch, 'Hair and Hands', 244.

¹³⁵ Luzio and Renier, 'Il lusso di Isabella d'Este', 95; Welch, 'Hair and Hands', 244.

¹³⁶ *Dificio de ricette*, (5^v, Rx. 20 'A far che i peli cascheranno dove tu vuoi nella persona').

cooling and drying caused by age, Michelle Laughran has suggested that this would imply that one was in fact slowing the conditions inherent to advanced age.¹³⁷

The many recipes for hair removal seem not only to be part of the quest for smooth skin, but also relate to the poetic praises for open, ‘serene’ foreheads. Of the forehead, Firenzuola states: ‘just as the clear sky that has no trace of cloud or any manner of spot is called serene, so the forehead that is clear, open, without furrows or spots, without powders, quiet and tranquil, can rightfully be called serene’, adhering to the preference for natural rather than affected beauty that I discussed in the previous chapter.¹³⁸ Despite his discouragement of makeup use, it is clear that the effect of the desirably smooth and high forehead was often achieved with cosmetics. Within the recipe books I have looked at, there were almost twice as many recipes for hair removal as hair growth: out of 154 recipes for the hair, 46 are for hair removal, while only 26 are for hair growth (see Appendix B). Of the depilatories, eleven specify that they are for body hair (*‘peli’*), while two state that they can be used either on the body or head, leaving 33 recipes from removal of head hair (*‘capelli’*). One recipe from *Gli esperimenti* specifies that it is ‘To make the very ugly hairs on the forehead go away’, describing in very close adherence to the values expressed by Firenzuola that if used correctly ‘the hair on the forehead will fall and it will restore the forehead to be beautiful and spacious without any blemishes’.¹³⁹ Other recipes also combine effects of hair removal and skin toning, for example a ‘safe’ depilation from the *Ricettario galante* that ‘removes hair, makes the face clear, thins the skin and can be used without

¹³⁷ The preoccupation with prolonging life was a common fascination of health regimen. See Laughran, ‘Oltre la pelle’, 59-60. Mikkeli, *Hygiene*, 73-80.

¹³⁸ ‘... come il Cielo sereno quando e non vi si vede nebbia, ò macchia veruno, cosi la fronte quando è chiara, aperta, senza cresphe, senza panni, senza liscio, e quieta e tranquilla, si può meritaente addomandare serena ...’ Firenzuola, *Prose*, 402; Firenzuola (ed. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 51.

¹³⁹ ‘... cusi cascaranno li capelli et peli della fronte et restaranne la fronte bella et spatiosa senza macula alcuna ...’ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 653 (‘A far andar via li Capelli et li peli che sonno nati et sonno nella fronte che e Bruttissimo’).

danger’, and another in the same volume which ‘removes body hair, thins the skin, gives you good colour and removes every mark from the face’.¹⁴⁰ In Venice, it appears that showing off the forehead was perceived as such a fundamental expression of female gender that a decree was made in the 1480s by the Council of Ten banning women from wearing the so-called ‘mushroom’ haircut, which was condemned for disguising their gender simply by ‘hiding the forehead’.¹⁴¹

Even eyelashes were subject to hair removal recipes. Firenzuola indicates that thick, dark lashes were not thought to be ideal at this time, saying ‘Eyelashes must be thin, not very long, not white, since, besides creating a deformity, they impair the sight. Nor do I like them very black, for they would make for a frightened gaze’.¹⁴² This is mirrored in the recipe books, where there are virtually no recipes for eyeliner, eye-shadow or anything else to exaggerate the eyelashes. The single recipe for eyelashes is a scented oil with no pigment in it, amber then camphor are dissolved in sweet almond oil to which civet and musk scents are added.¹⁴³ The instructions to ‘apply to the eyelashes: and where you like’ suggest that perfuming the eyelashes may not have been uncommon, perhaps not only for the scent, but also for the perceived effects of perfume as a preventative medicine.¹⁴⁴ While Caterina Sforza’s *Gli esperimenti* contain a hair growth recipe that mentions use on eyelashes, it is made clear that its use is meant to be

¹⁴⁰ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 53-55 (Rx. 85, ‘Peladore che lieva il pelo, fa chiaro il viso, assottiglia la carne et si può usare senza pericolo’; Rx. 86, ‘Peladore che lieva li peli, assottiglia la pelle, fa buon colore et leva ogni macchia al viso’).

¹⁴¹ Orford, *Leggi e memorie*, 123-124.

¹⁴² ‘i peli delle quale vogliono essere raretti, non molto lunghi, non bianchi, che oltre alfar deformità, raccortano il vedere, ne mi piacciono molto neri, che farebbon la vista spaventata’. Firenzuola, *Prose*, 404; Firenzuola (ed. Eisenbichler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 53; Sarah Matthews Grieco notes that mascara does not appear until the eighteenth century: Matthews Grieco, ‘Body, Appearance, Sexuality’, 62.

¹⁴³ Celebrino, *Venusta*, 7^r (‘Modo de redur la ambra: & la canfora in olio per vngersi li cigli: & le altre parti della persona’)

¹⁴⁴ Cavallo, ‘Healthy Living’, 194-196.

for those whose hair has fallen out due to illness.¹⁴⁵ More tellingly, she has a recipe specifically ‘To remove the hair from your eyelashes and where you like’, a combination of Greek pitch, lead, turpentine and oil.¹⁴⁶

Recipes for hair removal seem to work either as epilating ‘waxes’ which use a cloth soaked in some sort of sticky, usually resinous solution to pull the hair out, or a caustic solution to burn the hair away. The ‘danger-free’ recipe from *Ricettario galante* mentioned above appears to be the former, a mixture of colophony rosin, mastic gum and gum ammoniac boiled together, which can then be kneaded like a dough, ‘lifting off the hairs to the roots’.¹⁴⁷ On the other hand, another depilation from the same text, mentioned earlier, contains caustic quicklime and orpiment, mixed together with a number of strongly scented balsams and spices.¹⁴⁸ The fact that it is intended to burn away hair is reinforced by the method of testing it with a feather, which appears in other recipes, and involves dipping the feather into the caustic mixture to see if it falls apart, at which point the solution is ready.¹⁴⁹ The aforementioned recipe to remove forehead hairs in *Gli sperimenti* appears primarily to work like a waxing method—a piece of cloth bathed in a mixture of egg whites and mastic gum powder is tied to the forehead overnight and then removed, although the application of bat blood and fine lead powder after several doses of the egg white mixture suggests an attempt to prevent hair from growing back as well. Blood of various animals was suggested by Dioscorides to cause

¹⁴⁵ ‘... et ogne dove volj che fa venir et nascer Capelli et barba et peli in testa in Cegli in barba et omne loco se bene fossino caduti per malatia et per scottature ...’ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 654 (‘ad idem [A far nascer capelli o peli dove volij]).

¹⁴⁶ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza*, 658 (‘A far andare via li peli delli ciglia et dove voli ottimo modo’)

¹⁴⁷ ‘R. Coloffamia... oncie tre, Mastici... oncie una, Un puoco di armoniaco. Et tutte le dette cose fa bollire al fuoco in una padella, mettendo prima il coloffamia, et poi li mastici et l’armoniaco incorporando bene ogni cosa insieme. Et quando sera caldo lo getta in acqua fresca, et poi lo menerai molto bene con mani, come se fosse pasta, et quanto più si mena, tanto più è migliore et più bello, et fa l’effetto come di sopra, levando li peli sino alla radice, et è sicuro.’ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 53-55 (Rx. 85).

¹⁴⁸ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 51 (Rx. 83).

¹⁴⁹ The method is explained in *Dificio de ricette*, for use in a depilation using quicklime, orpiment and lye (5^v, Rx. 20 ‘A far che i peli cascheranno dove tu vuoi nella persona’).

hair to fall out, and by Galen to prevent further growth of hair after hair removal.¹⁵⁰ Bat blood seems associated generally with preventing growth, as it was specifically recommended by Dioscorides to prevent the excessive growth of a virgin's breasts, although this is not repeated in any recipe texts I have looked at.¹⁵¹ Mattioli, writing in the mid-sixteenth-century, argued that most of the classical recommendations for the medical use of blood were corrupted or incorrect, based on the incongruities between these two authors, however he seems to be refuting an idea that was still circulating in popular culture. Indeed, blood is used almost exclusively in hair removal recipes: apart from the aforementioned recipe in *Gli sperimenti*, bat blood appears in seven more hair removal recipes, frog blood (which Dioscorides and Galen specifically recommend) appears in two, and the blood of toads and tortoises each appear once as well.

Even the stranger ingredients then, are often tied into medical traditions. Through an analysis of the recipes' presentation in these texts, Renaissance cosmetics practice has been seen to consist of many diverse procedures, whose primary aim was to beautify to an extent perceived as going beyond the preservation of 'natural' beauty to some form of enhancement. *Ricettari* both identify cosmetics as a separate category of procedures 'a fare bella', but simultaneously include them in the arts of everyday maintenance which include elements of hygiene and curative medicine. There was an interest in the enhancements appearing 'natural' to the observer, similar to the concern with subtlety in the prescriptive literature, indicating an agreement between the two. This, in combination with the fact that the recipes aim to achieve similar effects as were most celebrated in ideal depictions of beauty, confirms the close relationship between ideal and practice, indicating, in other words, that the poetic ideals for beauty were more

¹⁵⁰ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 404.45-404.54.

¹⁵¹ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 404.45-404.54.

than abstract poetic notions, but standards which women were obliged to assess and model themselves after in everyday life.

CHAPTER 3

AUDIENCES FOR COSMETICS

In March of 1508, a Roman woman named Anna Hebraea wrote to Caterina Sforza with detailed instructions and ingredients for a face ointment to remove blemishes. In its opening phrase alone, her letter reveals a multi-person network of men and women making and exchanging cosmetic recipes across cities: ‘My most illustrious lady’, she writes, ‘Mister Antonio Melozo Cavaleri was here on account of your most illustrious ladyship and requested that I should give him some of the face washes that I make’.¹ In this chapter, I examine these networks of idea exchange surrounding *ricettari*. I ask who made and distributed cosmetic recipes, and ultimately, who their intended audience was. Recent years have seen a boom in scholarship on the people who made, sold, and read books of recipes and secrets, upon which this chapter builds.² By integrating different pieces of pre-existing work, I aim to reconstruct a context and audience specifically for cosmetic recipes. In addition, through case studies of both the contents of several cosmetic *ricettari* and their frontispiece imagery, I test the extent to which these books reflect the trends suggested in previous scholarship. As was

¹ ‘Illustrissima mia Madonna, *post debitas commendationes, salutem*. Missere Antonio Melozo Cavaleri è stato qui per parte de V. Ill.^{ma} s.^a et domandatome io debia darli di quante sorte io fo lisso per el viso.’ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 608. Quoting ASF, *Med. a. Pr.* f. 125, n. 228. – V. doc. 1324.

² Key works include: Dimeo and Pennell (eds.), *Reading and Writing Recipe Books*; Eamon, *Science and Secrets*; Eamon, ‘Professors of Secrets’, 471-485; Eamon, *Professor of Secrets*; Leong and Pennell, ‘Recipe Collection’, 133-52; Kavey, *Books of Secrets*; Cavallo, ‘Healthy Living’, 191-212; On women and recipe books in Italy: Ray, ‘Prescriptions for Women’, 135-162; Ray, ‘Experiments with Alchemy’, 139-164; Crawshaw, ‘Families, Secrets, Health’ 597-618; There is considerably more on women’s recipe collections in Northern Europe, an issue which I address later in this chapter. See: Rankin, ‘Exotic Materials’, 533-555; Leong, ‘Making Medicines’, 145-68; Leong, ‘Herbals She Peruseth’, 556-78; Pennell, ‘Perfecting Practice?’, 237-55; Field, ‘Many Hands’, 49-63; Archer, ‘Women and Chymistry’, 191-216.

mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, this is the first time the specific texts I look at have been drawn together, so the aim of this chapter is to contribute to the ongoing dialogue surrounding Books of Secrets through a specific examination of the audience for cosmetics recipes.

In his work on Books of Secrets, William Eamon observed that, in contrast to medieval collections, which were aimed at a learned, Latin-literate audience, by the Renaissance, these books of recipes and formulae had become much more popularised and accessible, due to both the transition from manuscript to print and the switch to vernacular language. Ongoing work by Tessa Storey has expanded this discussion, giving compelling evidence to suggest that Books of Secrets were also used by a range of small-scale producers, for whom the sale of recipes, remedies and cosmetics was part of a larger economic strategy of cobbling together a variety of trades to make ends meet.³ Storey's evidence is corroborated by the work of David Gentilcore and Rosa Salzberg on medical charlatans and other street sellers who peddled their wares in the popular marketplace.⁴ Building on Gentilcore, Salzberg has produced a range of interesting evidence to demonstrate that small books of recipes and secrets also played an important role in the world of itinerant street sellers, who not only sold the types of remedies these books describe, but sold and, at times, produced recipe books themselves.⁵ A major theme that has emerged from this research is that Renaissance Books of Secrets were designed to hold a wide appeal, and be accessible to an audience of diverse interests and social strata.

³ Storey, 'Face Waters', 143-63; Storey, 'Cosmetics, Remedies, Alchemy', 149-155.

⁴ Gentilcore, *Medical Charlatanism*; Gentilcore, 'Charlatans and Apothecaries', 95-107; Gentilcore, *Healers and Healing*, 96-125; Salzberg, 'Selling Stories', 737-759; Salzberg, 'Mouths of Charlatans', 638-653; Salzberg, 'Lira, penna, stampa', 1-36; Salzberg, 'Per le Piaze', 111-132; Salzberg and Rospocher, 'Street Singers', 9-26.

⁵ Salzberg, 'Lira, penna, stampa', 1-36; Salzberg, 'Mouths of Charlatans', 638-53'; Salzberg, 'Selling Stories', 739-749.

Recipes Amongst the Elite

The letter to Caterina Sforza is one example of a body of evidence showing, on one hand, that making and sharing cosmetics was an important part of the social and diplomatic activities of elite women and men. Correspondences to and from Isabella d'Este show that she also frequently gave gifts of cosmetics, perfumes and perfumed items such as gloves to acquaintances. An account of a banquet given by Ippolito d'Este in 1529 records that guests were given gifts of cosmetics, perfumes and jewelry from 'a small boat of silver', including items such as 'little necklaces, *manigli*, earrings, little rings, perfumed gloves, phials of compositions, and other nice things'.⁶ Caterina Sforza wrote to exchange cosmetic recipes with various acquaintances, as well as sending actual cosmetics.⁷ On 5 May, 1502, Luigi Ciocha wrote to Caterina, requesting that she 'sends some perfumes and cosmetic powder' to a Madama Constanza.⁸ The letter above from Anna Hebra further shows that men and women were involved in these exchanges, with Antonio Melozo apparently delivering the components from Anna to Caterina, as well as requesting or encouraging her to send them in the first place. Anna writes:

First I gave him a black ointment which is to remove every big blemish that is on the face and to soften the flesh and make it smooth. And that ointment you put on in the evening and keep it until the morning and then you wash with pure water from the river, then you bathe your face with the water on which is written 'Acqua da Canicare': then you put on a little of this white

⁶ 'Dopo cena S. S. Rev.ma fece portare una navicella d'argento carica di collaninie, manigli, abigliamenti d'orecchie, anelletti, guanti profumati, bussoli di compositioni, et altre gentilezze, le quali cose tutte appresentò ai commensali, a cui una cosa, a cui un'altra'. Luzio and Renier, 'Il lusso di Isabella d'Este', 106.

⁷ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 496, 503, 529-31, 598-614.

⁸ 'Madona Costanza prega V. Ex.^{tia} a mandargli qualche profumi et polvere di cipri...' Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 607. Quoting ASF V. doc. 1168.

ointment: then take not even a chickpea-sized grain of this sublimate and you distemper it with that water where it is written ‘Sweet water’, and put it on your face: and put on everything very lightly because it is better. The black ointment is worth 4 *carlini* per ounce, and the water of *canicare* is worth 4 Carlini per *foglietta* [approximately half a litre]: the *Ceretta*, that is, the white ointment, is worth 8 *carlini* per ounce: the sublimate is worth one Ducat of gold per ounce and the sweet water is worth one Ducat of gold per *foglietta*. If your most illustrious ladyship uses some of it I will be certain to continue to send it.⁹

Interestingly, Anna does not relay the entire recipe to Caterina, but sends the final components for her to mix together and use. While this would have saved Caterina the trouble of making the individual items herself, or having them made at a local apothecary, it also would have preserved the secrecy and uniqueness of Anna Hebra’s method. Her promise to send Caterina more of the items if she is satisfied with the result, rather than send the recipe, suggests that she wants to remain the sole supplier of this remedy, and it is easy to see in this letter how the ability to supply an exclusive formula could be used as a way to establish and maintain a social bond.

More famously, Caterina is the author attributed to *Gli esperimenti*, introduced in the previous chapter, which I will focus on briefly here as a case study of the role

⁹ ‘Primo io li ho dato uno Unguento negro el quale è per livare ogne panno grosso che fosse nel viso et assotiglia la carne et fala lissa. E quale unguento lo ponirete la sera et tenetelo fino ala matina e poi ve laverete con l’acqua pura di fiume, poi bagnerete el viso con l’acqua ne la quale è scripto Acqua da Canicare: poi ponirete un poco di questo unguento bianco: poi prenderete manco di un granello di cece de questo sulimato e lo distemperarete con quest’acqua dove è scripto Acqua dolce, e poneretila nel viso: et ogne cosa ponirete suttilissimamente perché è meglio. Lo unguento negro vale Carlini quattro l’oncia, et l’acqua da Canicare vale Carlini quatro la foglietta: la Ceretta, cioè l’unguento bianco vale Carlini octo l’oncia: lo sulimato vale un Ducato d’oro l’oncia et l’acqua dolce vale un Ducato d’oro la foglietta. Se Vostra Ill.^{ma} S.^{ria} ne adoperarà io mi rendo certa che continuo ce mandarete.’ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 608. Quoting ASF, *Med. a. Pr.* f. 125, n. 228. – V. doc. 1324.

cosmetic recipes could play in the lives of the elite. As previously stated, this manuscript of over 450 recipes was compiled after her death by Lucantonio Cuppano, an acquaintance of her son.¹⁰ How many of these recipes were actually written by Caterina is difficult to say, as there is no original surviving manuscript. A 1502 inventory notes the existence of a book written in her hand which is separate from her account book, and in addition, several boxes of papers were among the possessions that she left to her son Giovanni de' Medici, however there is no further information to indicate whether either of these items were in fact related to *Gli esperimenti*.¹¹ The book itself is similar in material content to other Books of Secrets. Cosmetic recipes are mixed together with recipes for common health problems, simple alchemy including making coins appear gold, and other secrets for things including poisoned ink. There is a tendency for slightly longer and more complex recipes, similar to those in the manuscripts *Ricettario galante* and the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript, and also comparable to the longer formulae in the larger printed Books of Secrets that became common around 1550, such as the *Secrets of Alessio Piemontese* and the *Secrets of Isabella Cortese*. The recipes themselves seem to be from mixed origins, so are not all new inventions—as I previously noted, a number come from the *Thesaurus pauperum*, and as I discuss below, several also appear in the *Trotula*.

In a sense, determining the extent to which Caterina was actually involved in creating *Gli esperimenti* is less significant than the fact that those close to her found it important that her name was attached to the text. Recent research has shown that in Early Modern England and northern Europe, it was not uncommon for women to be the primary authors of recipe collections; however, this does not appear to have been the

¹⁰ Cuppano's manuscript was transcribed in the late 19th century by Pier Desiderio Pasolini, and published in volume 3 of Pasolini's biography on Caterina Sforza. Pasolini lists the location as the private Archivio Pasolini in Ravenna (Cod. cartaceo, sec. XVI), but it is unclear whether or not it is still in this location.

¹¹ de Vries, *Caterina Sforza*, 211.

case in Italy, where Books of Secrets, including those dealing with cosmetics and women's beauty were generally the territory of male writers.¹² The only apparent exceptions throughout the Medieval and Renaissance periods are the *Trotula*, *Gli experimenti* and the *Secrets of Isabella Cortese* (1561). In all these cases, authorship is more a question of attribution, as almost no details surrounding the authors survive. While the *Trotula* was understood by contemporaries to be authored by a woman (Trota or Dame Trocta), Green has convincingly argued that multiple authors were involved, and she has further asserted that the final two sections of the text were written by men.¹³ Similarly, nothing is known about Isabella Cortese beyond the appearance of her name on a Book of Secrets, which has led some scholars to controversially suggest that it may have in fact been written by a male author using a pseudonym as an advertising tactic.¹⁴ If this was the case, the fact that female authorship of a Book of Secrets could be used as a unique selling point would only further suggest that it was a rare occurrence.

On the other hand, the motif of a male writer relaying the knowledge of a female 'expert' was a frequently occurring *topos* in popular literature, which is perhaps also employed in the presentation of *Gli experimenti*. For example, the Spanish novella *Retrato de la Loçana Andaluza*, printed in Venice in 1528 claims to be the story of a prostitute in Rome to whom the male author, Francisco Delicado, is personally acquainted.¹⁵ It is a story told in dialogue form, thus the voice of the fictional character Loçana relays numerous detailed cosmetic recipes to her readers. A similar situation is present in *La Raffaella* by Alessandro Piccolomini—also in dialogue form, the work

¹² Storey, 'Face Waters', 149; Strocchia, 'Introduction', 496-514; On women's recipe books in Northern Europe, see: Rankin, 'Exotic Materials'; Leong, 'Herbals She Peruseth'; Leong, 'Making Medicines', 145-68; Pennell, 'Perfecting Practice', 237-55; Field, 'Many Hands', 49-63; Archer, 'Women and Chymistry', 191-216.

¹³ Green, *Trotula*, 48-51.

¹⁴ Bell, *How to Do It*, 44-45; Lesage, 'La littérature des secrets', 145-178; Ray, 'Prescriptions for Women', 142.

¹⁵ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 5.

features an older woman instructing the younger on the proper way to present herself, again with a healthy inclusion of detailed cosmetic preparations.¹⁶ Likewise in the *Amiria* by Carlo Alberti, the author claims his writing on cosmetics is informed by his sister Ecatomfila.¹⁷ So while male authors perpetuate the myth that cosmetics and surface beauty are women's realm of knowledge, the vast majority of people writing about cosmetics were in fact male. Therefore, while Caterina Sforza's exchange of recipe and cosmetics, on one hand, fits into what appears to have been a relatively common part of elite gift-giving practice, the alleged creation and attribution of *Gli experimenti* seems likely to have been something that set her apart.

This is not anomalous to the approach that she and her family took to the fashioning of her political persona. While the Sforza family was well-established in Milan by Caterina's time, the manipulation of public image was extremely important both in Caterina's continued political power, and in the posthumous interests of her descendents, who were actively seeking to reinforce their connection with the Medici and further ennoble their own name, in part through aggrandizement of Caterina's life.¹⁸ In a detailed study of the fashioning of Caterina's political persona, Joyce de Vries has demonstrated how skilfully negotiating gendered codes of behaviour was an essential part of the successful presentation of Caterina's public image, particularly because her leadership role put her in a position that was traditionally defined as masculine.¹⁹ For example, de Vries has observed that, throughout her lifetime, Caterina ensured that her major political and military decisions were backed up with shows of support from male relatives. In addition, de Vries suggests that the figuring of Caterina's image both during her life and after her death echoed the 'distinct formula of aggrandizement'

¹⁶ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*; Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*.

¹⁷ Alberti, 'Amiria', 271-294, esp. 272.

¹⁸ See de Vries, *Caterina Sforza*, esp. 14-17.

¹⁹ de Vries, *Caterina Sforza*, 208-209.

employed in contemporaneous biographies of ruling women, including Jacopo Foresti's depiction of Caterina in *De claris selectisque mulieribus* (1497), which emphasised female leaders' masculine qualities, representing leadership as a concept that was virtually inseparable from masculinity.²⁰ In the years following Caterina's death, her family continued to manipulate her image as a way to promote and maintain their own importance, celebrating Caterina and her connections to Giovanni de' Medici to emphasise the family's glorious past and powerful connections.²¹

The compilation of *Gli experimenti* may have formed another part of this fashioning. During this period, as William Eamon has pointed out, the collection of secrets and curiosities was increasingly becoming an important means of self-fashioning, and a demonstration of courtly virtuosity.²² Indeed, during her life, Caterina actively sought to forge contacts with humanist writers and poets, a number of whom dedicated work to her.²³ The *Experimenti*, which features select sections in Latin, may have suggested Caterina's aptitude at these courtly pursuits: after all, as Paul Grendler pointed out in his study on Renaissance literacy, only for women whose family position put them in line to take up traditionally masculine roles as political leaders was it acceptable to learn a Latin humanist curriculum.²⁴ The posthumous collection of Caterina's recipes may have therefore served as a reminder of her involvement in learned and courtly pursuits, re-establishing her success as a ruler through her ability to pursue activities that were perhaps exceptional for a woman, but appropriate for public figure. In addition, it would have simultaneously benefitted the reputation of the

²⁰ de Vries, *Caterina Sforza*, 208-209.

²¹ de Vries, *Caterina Sforza*, 228-266

²² Eamon, 'Professors of Secrets', 480-82; Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 301-4. I discussed this in detail previously in 'Painted Breasts', 44-56. See also de Vries, *Caterina Sforza*, and Zancani, 'Writing for Women Rulers', 56-74.

²³ de Vries, *Caterina Sforza*, 204-209.

²⁴ Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 88.

transcriber, Cuppano, who was a follower of Caterina's son, by displaying in writing his close involvement with the family.²⁵

From Manuscript to Popular Print

The Sforza *Experimenti* is an example where elite practices of cosmetic exchange and collection of secrets as forms of social currency led to the creation of a manuscript *ricettario*. One point which is difficult to define is the relationship between manuscript recipe books like *Gli experimenti* and the print *ricettari* from the same period. Printed Books of Secrets were much smaller texts in an affordable medium, with relatively simple recipes written in easily accessible vernacular language.²⁶ In the early years of the Cinquecento, these popularised, printed Books of Secrets were becoming a significant genre in their own right, both benefitting from and feeding into the burgeoning interest in secret collection.²⁷ It seems likely that Cuppano's efforts to collect and present *Gli experimenti* as a complete recipe book benefitted from the growing popularity of such books within the wider public market, and their increased value and visibility as social currency. One of the problems with *Gli experimenti* is the lack of a specific date of creation—the posthumous compilation by Cuppano has a *terminus post quem* of 1509, the year of Caterina's death, and depending on how long he waited to compile the text and how many amendments he may have made, it is possible that Cuppano took inspiration from any of the Books of Secrets in print at the time. As discussed in the previous chapter, I have found very few surviving examples of *ricettari* with dates before the 1525 editions of *Venusta* and *Dificio de ricette*, and the majority of dated *ricettari* I have examined appear to have been first printed after 1525.

²⁵ A issue which must, unfortunately, remain unresolved at this time is the extent to which copying of *Gli Experimenti* was motivated by the interests of her family, and the extent to which it was motivated by the interests of Cuppano. Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 616.

²⁶ Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 93-133.

²⁷ Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 93-133, 234-266, 361-364.

However, the records of the Ripoli convent press in Florence, studied by Rosa Salzberg, indicate that street-sellers who peddled medicines, cosmetics and other items were also commissioning and selling cheap print as early as the 1470s.²⁸ Research which specifically focuses on *Gli sperimenti*'s contents in relationship to other recipe texts was outside the scope of this study, but future research could go further to inform this question.

There is another manuscript recipe book with content that has a close relationship with the presentation of the printed books. The *Ricettario galante*, as introduced in the last chapter, begins with a poem which is extremely similar to the opening of the printed book *Venusta* by Eustachio Celebrino. Both poems open in *ottava rime* form, although the second stanza of the poem in the *Ricettario galante* lacks a final couplet. As the previous chapter discussed, both poems introduce the cosmetic contents of the recipe books and use similar formulas to describe them. As a manuscript, *Ricettario galante* would presumably have had a relatively limited audience, making the poem's address a somewhat out-of-place piece of rhetoric if the work was entirely unique. This fact has led Franco Brunello to suggest that it was in fact copied by hand from another work meant for wider distribution which no longer survives.²⁹

In fact, as I suggested earlier, the *ottava rime* structure employed in the introductory poems in *Venusta* and *Ricettario galante* was also the structure favoured by street performers.³⁰ As well as publically advertising recipes, these vendor/performers frequently recited catchy poems relaying histories and current events

²⁸ Salzberg, 'Selling Stories', 741; Salzberg, 'Lira, penna, stampa', 3-36; Salzberg, 'Mouths of Charlatans', 639-653. See also Nuovo, *Il commercio librario*, 103-111.

²⁹ Brunello, 'Profumeria e cosmesi', 8.

³⁰ Salzberg and Rospocher, 'Street Singers', 13; Salzberg, 'Selling Stories', 742.

as part of their trade.³¹ A rhyming advertisement of a recipe book's contents, such like the one that begins *Venusta*, would fit into this pattern, combining rhyming form and recipe advertisement.

Indeed, there is a great deal of crossover in the types of secrets preserved in the printed *ricettari* I have looked at and the wares commonly sold by street sellers. In 1540 the first decrees in Venice were made requiring non-licensed medicine sellers, including those who peddled wares on the streets, to purchase licenses from the *Soprastanti delle Specierie*.³² While the documents of these early years of regulation do not give a clear picture of the specific remedies for which street sellers received vending licenses, in 1599 they are described as publically selling 'oils, unguents, salves, electuaries against poison, perfumed balls, musk waters, civet, musk, stories and other printed materials, [and] elk's hoof', and were overseen by the same officials who presided over those who 'put up notices to advertise treatment', and all manner of street performers.³³ Pietro Aretino wrote of housewives haggling for 'oils, soaps and musk', with 'men who make itinerant shops of themselves, with their haberdashery all on display on a tray in front, held up by a belt that goes round their necks'.³⁴ In Florence, the guild of doctors and spice dealers (*Arte dei medici e speziali*) had jurisdiction over those selling a range of products in the streets, including 'print, haberdashery, soap and perfumes'.³⁵ Salzberg has shown that the commission and sale of cheap print by itinerant sellers was common not just at the aforementioned Ripoli convent press in

³¹ Salzberg, 'Selling Stories', 738-759.

³² Gentilcore, *Medical Charlatanism*, 105.

³³ Gentilcore, *Medical Charlatanism*, 107; D'Ancona, *Origini del teatro italiano*, 2, 474, 527; Ferrone, et al., (eds.), *Comici dell'Arte*, i, 395.

³⁴ '... uno di questi, che fanno bottega di se stessi con la merceria dinanzi, sostenuta da la cenghia che portano al collo ...' Aretino, *Ragionamenti*, 113; translation Aretino (trans. Brown), *Secret Life of Wives*, 62..

³⁵ Salzberg and Rospocher, 'Street Singers', 12.

Florence, but in Venice and other cities as well.³⁶ In 1551, Latino de' Grassi, a charlatan, ran into problems for having sold and given out a remedy with 'two printed recipes', whose content was suspected to be potentially dangerous.³⁷ In fact, there are direct connections between charlatans and men who printed the *ricettari* looked at here. Salzberg notes Francesco Bindoni and Maffeo Pasini among five publishers who frequently worked with street vendors, and it was Bindoni and Pasini who published the 1530 version of *Difcico de ricette* and the 1534 version of Eustachio Celebrino's *Venusta*.³⁸ Additionally, there have been numerous suggestions that Nicolò Aristotile de' Rossi, who was called 'lo Zoppino' was not just a publisher, but also a street vendor—this is the same 'Nicholo el Zopino' whose name is on the *Operetta molto piacevöllissima*.³⁹ Likewise, it has also been proposed that Paolo Danza, who printed *Specchio di virtu*, was a mountebank, due to the fact that the many texts he printed were not only popular, but of a sort that would have been particularly conducive to public recitation.⁴⁰

Eustachio Celebrino, author of *Venusta*, is perhaps the earliest author of a printed *ricettari* about whom much specific information is known. In early scholarship on Celebrino by Friulian historian Gian-Giuseppe Liruti it was suggested that Celebrino was a physician, who may have received a degree in medicine and philosophy at the University of Padua.⁴¹ While this statement has been repeated in subsequent accounts of Celebrino's life, it is in fact highly speculative.⁴² Liruti's assumption is based wholly

³⁶ Salzberg, 'Selling Stories', 741; Salzberg, 'Lira, penna, stampa', 3-36; Salzberg, 'Mouths of Charlatans', 639-653.

³⁷ Salzberg, 'Per le piazze', 128.

³⁸ Salzberg, 'Lira, penna, stampa', 27.

³⁹ Salzberg, 'Lira, penna, stampa', 24;

⁴⁰ Salzberg, 'Lira, penna, stampa'.

⁴¹ Liruti, *Letterati del Friuli*, (v. 4) 34.

⁴² Liruti's history of Friulian writers was originally published in three volumes in 1760, 1762 and 1780, with an incomplete publication of the fourth volume reprinted in 1830. Liruti,

on the fact that Celebrino's *Reggimento mirabile, et verissimo a conservar la sanità in tempo di peste* was published as a combined work with the *Remedii verissimi et probatissimi* [sic] *contra la peste*.⁴³ Although the 'Eccellentissimo M. Antoni Cermisone' describes himself as a Padovan medic, Celebrino never claims to be a physician himself, either in the *Regimento mirabile*, or in the semi-autobiographical sections of another of his publications, *La dechiaratione perche non e venuto il diluvio* (1525).⁴⁴ There are instances where Celebrino actively promotes his own status through writing, specifically in *La dechiaratione* where he poetically describes his own trials and tribulations being torn from his homeland, and claims to have then become a courtier ('Ho scorso dell'Italia el monte, el piano,/ E fatto agli miei di fascio d'ogni erba,/ Corso alla staffa e fatto il cortegiano...').⁴⁵ Yet nowhere does he make any attempt to include mention of his education or medical qualifications, despite the fact that these would have lent a greater degree of credibility to his books of remedies and recipes. Overall, Celebrino's lack of mention of his medical degree, even in cases where it would have served a promotional purpose, and in cases where he was already self-promoting, seems to indicate that, contrary to Liruti's assertion, the qualification was unlikely to have existed.

The evidence that remains from Celebrino's life indicates that he worked as an author and engraver, and spent the greater portion of his life in the central printing hub of Venice.⁴⁶ Celebrino began work as an engraver in Perugia in 1511, moving to

Letterati del Friuli (v. 4), 1, 34. Liruti's assertion is repeated in Morison, *Eustachio Celebrino*, 7; Comelli, *Ricettario di bellezza*, 8-9.

⁴³ Liruti, *Letterati del Friuli* (v. 4), 33-34. See also Celebrino, *Reggimento mirabile*, 11-13, and Antonio Cermisone, *Remedii Verissimi*.

⁴⁴ Celebrino, *Regimento mirabile*, 11-13; Liruti, *Letterati del Friuli* (v. 4), 33.

⁴⁵ Celebrino quoted in Liruti, *Letterati del Friuli* (v. 4), 33.

⁴⁶ Morison, *Eustachio Celebrino*, 8-14; Comelli, *Ricettario di bellezza*, 8-15; Costantini, *Friulani*, 5-14; Servolino, 'Eustachio Celebrino', 179-89.

⁴⁶ Morison, *Eustachio Celebino*, 21-22.

Venice by the year 1522, where it appears he remained for the rest of his life.⁴⁷ While his surviving early work consists of frontispiece imagery, he soon began publishing the brief but varied texts of the type that Rosa Salzberg identifies to be typical of street sellers.⁴⁸ One example, *La dechiaratione*, is an explanation in rhyme of why an apocalyptic flood, which some people anticipated, did not come to pass.⁴⁹ Salzberg's work has shown that similar brief rhyming publications were one of the most common printed items commissioned and sold by street sellers, suggesting that this too may have been intended for public recitation.⁵⁰ A number of Celebrino's other works are brief Books of Secrets, again typical to street sellers, which reveal the secrets of various arts, and whose diverse topics suggests a desire to sell to as broad an audience as possible. These include *Venusta* and *Regimento mirabile*, along with *Il modo dimpararar di scriuere lettera merchantescha* which also appeared in 1525. A number of historians on Celebrino's life attribute several other Books of Secrets to him in addition to *Venusta*, including *Dificio de ricette* (1525), *Opera nova de ricette e secreti che insegna apparecchiar vna mensa a vno convito*, and *Opera nova excellentissima*, all of which I included in my database.⁵¹

It is true that all four of these books share a number of similar or identical recipes, however, aside from *Venusta*, I have not yet come across copies of the other texts that actually state Celebrino as the author, and it is unclear whether the attribution

⁴⁷ 1535 marks the end of direct indications of his activities although his books continue to be printed into the 1550s. Morison, *Eustachio Celebino*, 7-14; Comelli, *Ricettario di bellezza*, 14.

⁴⁸ Morison, *Eustachio Celebino*, 1929, 21-22; Comelli, *Ricettario di bellezza*, 10-12;

⁴⁹ Celebrino, *La dechiaratione perche non e venuto il diluuiio del MDXXIII* (Venice: Bindoni & Pasini, 1525).

⁵⁰ Salzberg and Rospocher, 'Street Singers', 13; Salzberg, 'Selling Stories', 742.

⁵¹ Attribution to Celebrino is conflictingly documented in the scholarly record. Meredith Ray, in 'Experiments with Alchemy' states the *Dificio de Ricette* is Celebrino's, citing Comelli, Morison and Eamon, none of whom confirm this. Neither Comelli nor Morison list *Dificio* amongst Celebrino's works, and Eamon discusses the text as anonymous, but does say it is 'undoubtedly a printer's compilation,' which could indicate Celebrino. See Ray, 'Experiments with Alchemy', 139-164; Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 127-129; Morison, *Eustachio Celebino*, 21-22, 23-24; Comelli, *Ricettario di bellezza*.

in previous scholarship was based only on the similarity between the texts or on other evidence of Celebrino's activity at local print shops.⁵² Even the French translations of *Dificio de ricette* (*Le bastiments de recettes*) do not list an author, which is somewhat unusual—the *Secrets of Alessio Piemontese*, for example, which was originally published in Italian, retained the authorship when it was translated into English. Compounding the difficulty in attribution, many of the volumes accredited to Celebrino are undated. The earliest publication date printed on any of them is 1525, in which the following titles were printed: *Venusta*, *Il modo d Impararar di Scriuere lettera Merchantescha*, *La dechiaratione*, and *Opera nova chiamata Pantheon*.⁵³ Whether or not Celebrino wrote all of the *ricettari* that have been associated with him, the books clearly recycle sections of the same information, not only evidencing the circulation of these recipes, but furthermore suggesting that when these books were created, the aim was not originality, but cheap and quick production and ready distribution.⁵⁴

Form and Function

The overall presentation of the printed *ricettari* I looked at further confirms that they were being marketed primarily as cheap popular books. The poem introducing *Venusta*, whose description of cosmetics I examined in Chapter 2, is likely to have served not only as a catchy advertisement of the book's contents, but also a lure to be read aloud at passersby to entice them into purchasing something. In fact, the poem is

⁵² Storey ('Face Waters', 147 n. 2), notes that *Venusta* was first printed in Latin, although I have not come across any of the Latin versions.

⁵³ Morison, *Eustachio Celebino*, 23-24. Several conflicting dates appear in the scholarship on *Venusta*, due to what seems to be a lack of awareness of two works now held in London: a copy at the British Library, published in 1526, and the other at the Wellcome Institute dated 1532. Comelli (*Ricettario di bellezza*, 14) states the first print of this text is in 1551, and his statement is then repeated by the following: Brunello, 'Profumeria e cosmesi', 9; Grando, *Profumi e cosmesi*, 9; Torresi (ed.), *Ricettario Bardi*, 15; Storey, 'Database: Study Documentation', 2.

⁵⁴ For a comparison of the content of two later *ricettari*, the *Secreti de la Signora Isabella Cortese* and the *Secreti del Reverendo Donno Alessio Piemontese*, see Lesage, 'Littérature des secrets', 163-166.

worded with a slightly suggestive overtone which further suggests the likelihood of it being an attention-grabbing advertisement. Celebrino writes:

‘You will be able to, oh my listener, without fatigue /without great expenditure or lost time/ gain a nymph for a friend/Who will bring you favour in everything. Enough that without saying or telling more/ She’ll take you through all the ins and outs./ As long as she knows how to make a some kind of cosmetic/ She will give you in exchange the heart in her chest.’⁵⁵

His use of the phrase ‘*Da lei harete il dritto e lo riuerso*’ to refer to the ‘ins and outs’ of *bellezze* can be read as evocative of sexual motion, especially when placed in close proximity to the proclamation that the ‘nymph’s’ heart will easily be won over by any little bit of knowledge about cosmetics. As the previous chapters discussed, while hygiene and the application of subtle cosmetics appear to have been accepted, if hesitantly, in the proscriptive literature, an overly eager interest in cosmetic use, as well as the particular knowledge of cosmetics was frequently associated in popular literature with prostitution, which would further enforce this double entendre. In works by Alessandro Piccolomini, Pietro Aretino and Francisco Delicado, discussion of cosmetic recipes seems to be a common if not standard element of titillating stories, and as I discuss in detail in Chapter 6, artwork from the period also visually associated cosmetics and female eroticism.⁵⁶ Since many recipes in the *ricettari* deal not only with cosmetics, but also sexual health, fertility, and marital relations, it is perhaps not surprising that this introduction would play on the suggestive potential of the book’s secrets.

⁵⁵ *Potreti auditor mei senza fatica*
Senza graue dispendio o tempo perso
Acquistarui vna nympa per amica
Che vi fara propitia in ogni verso
Basta che senza piu chio parli o dica
Da lei harete il dritto e lo riuerso
Pur che lei sappia fare chalche beletto
Vi dara in contra cambio il cuor del petto.’ Eustachio Celebrino, *Venusta* (n. 1.; n. p., 1526): 1.

⁵⁶ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*; Aretino, *Ragionamenti*; Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*.

In fact, the titles of the *ricettari* also often contained potential for double-entendres and sexual puns. None of the evidence is entirely conclusive, but certainly recurrent enough to raise for consideration, especially taking into account the Renaissance adoration for sexual puns where anything from the balls on the Medici shield to a lady's *anello* held bawdy figurative potential.⁵⁷ The reference to 'secrets' themselves, as in *Secreti secretorum*, was not without implications, as the sexually-loaded use of 'secrets' was increasingly adopted in late-medieval discussions of women's bodies.⁵⁸ Starting in the thirteenth century, texts on women's bodies began referring to female sexual organs as 'secret places' with 'secret diseases'.⁵⁹ Since the frontispiece of *Secreti secretorum* (Figure 20), is an overt reference to a women's modesty, represented by a lady and a unicorn, it is possible that a seller seeking to advertise the text could have played upon the connection between this visual reference to her modesty and the metaphoric reference to her 'modesty' or 'secrets'. The title of the popular *[E]dificio de ricette* (House of Recipes) also had potential for suggestive puns. 'Edificio' ('house') was slang for both the backside and the vagina, appearing, for example, amongst Pietro Aretino's array of colourful sexual metaphors.⁶⁰ In day two of his *Ragionamenti*, Antonia recalls her first night with her husband, describing how she 'didn't squeal until his dick slipped out of my house' ('non gridai se non quando la menchia mi uscì di casa'), and later recounts witnessing a friend's encounter with a lover, in which 'right in front of my eyes she fell on top of him, placing her

⁵⁷ Jokes about the Medici balls discussed in: Simons, *Sex of Men*, 108; Hibbert, *House of Medici*, 42; Original mention in: Giovio, *Lettere*, 128 (letter dated 9 August 1530, from Giovio to Marco Contarini); On the use of 'anello' to mean 'culo', see: Brown, *Private Lives*, 162, 279; also Boggione and Casalegno, *Lessico erotico*, 398, 536-537.

⁵⁸ Green, 'Diseases of Women', 5-39.

⁵⁹ Monica Green connects this change in rhetoric with a medical audience that was increasingly assumed to be male, as well as a somewhat chauvinistic increase in focus on fecundity over concern for the overall wellbeing. Green, 'Diseases of Women', 5-39.

⁶⁰ Boggione and Casalegno, *Lessico erotico*, 553; Monica Green has pointed out that 'house of secrets' was also a common way to refer to female genitalia in Hebrew, Green, *Women's Healthcare*, 26.

house on his chimney stack' ('ponendo la casa in sul camino').⁶¹ I do not mean to argue that the *ricettari* were deliberately designed as salacious works, but to suggest that, if they were being sold in the street, the sellers could have made the most of the potential for jokes or innuendos in their advertising spiels, in a manner suggested by the poem of *Venusta*.⁶²

Cost

The small size of the *ricettari* I looked at would have allowed them to be relatively cheap. Printed books overall were considerably more affordable than manuscript ones. In Florence, for example, an average-sized vellum manuscript cost approximately the same as a court official's monthly salary and even a manuscript on cheap paper amounted to a week's wages.⁶³ On the other hand, printed books were roughly one-fifth the cost of their 'manuscript equivalent', making a range of information suddenly accessible and marketable to a whole new readership.⁶⁴ Small printed books and pamphlets, including *ricettari*, were not full-length volumes, but brief four to eight leaf booklets, as I noted in the previous chapter, making them even more affordable (for individual details on size, see Appendix A). William Eamon notes in *Science and Secrets of Nature* that, among the 83 Books of Secrets he records as having been published between 1520 and 1643, nearly all are eight pages long quarto format, containing twenty to thirty recipes, and a few more are sixteen-page octavo, containing between thirty and a hundred recipes.⁶⁵ The recipe books I examined, a number of which appear on Eamon's list of Books of Secrets, are also primarily in small octavo

⁶¹ Aretino, *Ragionamenti*, 68, 70; Translation with modifications from Aretino (trans. Brown), *Life of Wives*, 5, 7.

⁶² For more on similarity between recipe book titles and street vending patter, see Salzberg, 'Per le piazze', 14.

⁶³ Richardson, *Printing, Writers, Readers*, 112.

⁶⁴ Richardson, *Printing, Writers Readers*, 112.

⁶⁵ Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 361.

format, and the majority are around 10 centimetres tall.⁶⁶ The smallest *ricettari*, including *Probatum est* (1529) or *Opera nova de ricette e secreti* (ca. 1510), *Specchio di Virtu* (ca. 1510), *Secreti secretorum* (ca. 1500), and the *Operetta molto piacevöllissima* (ca. 1525) contain only around 40 recipes on four or eight pages. Slightly larger works include *Venusta* which has eighteen folios and 122 recipes, and *Dificio de Ricette* which contains 186 recipes in all.

Overall, they seem to have been relatively affordable. Rosa Salzberg found that these types of pamphlets in Cinquecento Venice could be sold for as little as one-third of a *soldo*, when the daily salary of skilled labourers, such as the shipbuilders at the Arsenal, was approximately six *soldi*.⁶⁷ Similarly, Eamon found that small Books of Secrets such as *Dificio de ricette* cost approximately one-fourth to one-half a day's pay for a wage labourer in 1540 in Venice.⁶⁸ While it is not the rule that every printed recipe book is shorter than every manuscript recipe book, manuscript *ricettari* do tend to be considerably more lengthy than the printed books of the same period. The *Secreti medicinali* of Guasparino da Vienexia contains just over 350 recipes, *Gli esperimenti* contains 454 recipes, and the pseudo-Savonarola manuscript far exceeds the length of even the longer printed collections at 194 folios long.⁶⁹ It seems to be only after 1540 that printed books of cosmetic recipes grow in size to become large full-length volumes. Giovanni Marinello's *Gli ornamenti delle donne* (1562) is 319 folios long featuring 94 chapters on various topics all roughly pertaining to women's adornment.⁷⁰ The *Secrets of Alessio Piemontese* (1555), and the *Secrets of Isabella Cortese* (1561), both archetypal examples of Books of Secrets from the latter half of the Cinquecento, are

⁶⁶ On the cost of paper see Eamon, 'Professors of Secrets', 482.

⁶⁷ Rosa Salzberg, 'Selling Stories', 738.

⁶⁸ Eamon, 'Professors of Secrets', 482.

⁶⁹ Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*; Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3); MS Pseudo-Savonarola.

⁷⁰ Marinello, *Ornamenti delle donne*. Unlike Tertullian's work of the same name, Marinello is not writing an invective, but an instructional text.

both over 100 pages long as well.⁷¹ Yet even these still sold cheaply. For example, Storey found a Roman inventory documenting the sale of Alessio Piemontese's *Secreti* in 1587 at the same price as it cost to purchase a chunk of bread and a small flask of wine at an inn.⁷²

The speed of their production is apparent in the high level of repeated material between texts, meaning that most of these 'new works' were in fact largely plagiarised, if not identical to other similar works on the market. On one hand, the repetition of recipes evidences an ongoing spread of ideas from medieval manuscript tradition into the popular marketplace. For example, the Trotula and *Thesaurus pauperum* both include hair removal recipes calling for ant eggs, orpiment, and ivy gum, which is also repeated in *Gli sperimenti*.⁷³ In the *Trotula* it is recommended: 'in order permanently to remove hair, take ants' eggs, red orpiment, and gum of ivy, mix with vinegar, and rub the areas'.⁷⁴ The similar recipe in *Thesoro de poveri*, reads: 'gum of ivy and ant eggs and vinegar [and] orpiment prepared together and there where you apply it body hair will never grow'.⁷⁵ In *Gli sperimenti*, this recipe is found amongst a group of three different recipes 'To make hairs fall without harm to anyone', reading as follows: 'take ant eggs, ivy resin orpiment and put them in wine, and touch the hairs or body hairs that you want and they will fall and never be reborn'.⁷⁶ Another highly repeated recipe for the hair involves an ointment made of the ashes of burned bees ground up and mixed with oil. This appeared in the Trotula, originally for falling hair (*capillos cadentes*),

⁷¹ Cortese, *I secreti*; Ruscelli, *De' Secreti*. See also: Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 135; Wheeler, *Renaissance Secrets*, 4; Torresi, *Ricettario Bardi*, 11, 15; Brunello, 'Profumeria e cosmesi', 11-16; Grando, *Profumi e cosmesi*, 11-18.

⁷² Tessa Storey, 'Face Waters', 155.

⁷³ See Green, *Trotula*, 116; and Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 659.

⁷⁴ Green, *Trotula*, 116 (Recipe 264).

⁷⁵ 'Acio che licapelli non naschino mai', 'Item gomma dellera & uova di formiche & aceto orpimento confecta insieme & quivi dove ungerai non nascera mai peli'. Hispanus, *Thesoro de poveri*, 3^r(Rx. 24).

⁷⁶ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza*, 659.

and later erroneously transcribed as a recipe for whitening the hair (*capillos candendos*).⁷⁷ It reappears in the *Operetta molto piacevöllissima* ‘to make hair grow anywhere’; *Secreti secretorum* ‘to make an arm or other limb of a person hairy’; *Ricettario di Galieno* ‘to make hair grow anywhere’; in Eustachio Celebrino’s *Venusta* ‘To make a youth’s beard grow before its time’; and finally in *Dificio de ricette* ‘to make a beard or hair grow’.⁷⁸ Of course, this should not be taken to suggest that the authors of the Renaissance *ricettari* were referring to a *Trotula* manuscript while composing their texts, if anything, it illustrates the complex web of sources from which these recipe manuals were derived—as Monica Green points out, the *Trotula* itself incorporated information from a ‘patchwork of sources’.⁷⁹

Many of the *ricettari* also share numerous recipes in common with each other. As is apparent in Appendix F, *Dificio de ricette*, *Venusta*, and *Probatum est* all share a high number of recipes in common, which use not only matching methods and ingredients, but also identical phrasing. Half of the recipes in *Secreti secretorum* also appear in *Dificio de Ricette*, and the first eight recipes in the brief *Operetta molto piacevöllissima* appear in the same order as in the *Ricettario di Galieno* (1510). Typographical errors bear further testament to the relatively low production value. Upside down letters and misprints are common, as in the 1525 edition of *Dificio de ricette* at the Fondazione Cini, Venice, in which the lower half of one of the pages is missing the text (Figure 6). Some books were also printed with indexes that did not correspond to the actual text, including the *Operetta molto piacevöllissima*, in which the

⁷⁷ Green, *Trotula*, 116 (Rx 261), 206.

⁷⁸ *Operetta molto piacevöllissima*, unpaginated (Rx. 5, ‘Per far crescere li capilli in ogni loco’); *Secreti secretorum*, unpaginated (Rx. 54, ‘A far un braccio over altro membro dela persona peloso’); Pseudo-Galen, *Ricettario di Galieno*, 40 (Rx. 140, ‘Per fare crescere li capelli in ogni loco’); Celebrino, *Venusta*, 7 (Rx. 52, ‘A far nascer la barba a vn giouene auanti il tempo’); *Dificio de ricette*, 5 (Rx. 22, ‘A far nascer la barba ouer li capelli’).

⁷⁹ Green, *Trotula*, xiii. The scope of my study did not cover a full comparison of the Renaissance *ricettari* to medieval and classical sources. Similarities between books can be observed in the *ricettari* tables of contents in Appendix F.

first half of the table of contents printed at the back do not appear in the text at all, suggesting it is borrowed from another book (see Appendix F). These books' overall presentation, both in size and quality, is not only evidence of their relatively hasty and economical production, but also, as Paul Grendler's study on popular texts' 'form and function' suggests, would have served as sign-posts by which the Renaissance buyer could easily identify them as accessible popular texts.⁸⁰

Literacy, Gender & Oral Culture

The use and circulation of *ricettari* by street vendors is significant because their methods of verbally advertising wares have important implications for the intended audience, allowing for the possibility that the illiterate would have also had exposure to the contents within these texts.⁸¹ Rosa Salzberg, for example, has suggested that censorship targeting street book sellers, such as a Venetian legislation in 1567, was spurred on in part by the fact that they were not just disseminating the texts' contents in print, but orally, reaching anyone in hearing distance.⁸² The question of audience literacy raises some particularly interesting questions in the study of cosmetic recipe books because, although the moralising literature looked at in Chapter 1 perpetuated the notion that cosmetics were the territory of women, it has also been suggested in previous scholarship that women were not the main audience for these texts.⁸³

Tessa Storey, while highlighting individual cases of women's involvement in recipe making, noted a relatively low percentages of cosmetic recipes in a sampling of *ricettari* from 1500-1800, suggesting that 'if we take authorship, dedications and the

⁸⁰ Grendler, 'Form and Function', 451-485.

⁸¹ Rosa Salzberg, 'Per le piazze', 125.

⁸² Salzberg 'Per le piazze', 123, 125.

⁸³ Storey, 'Face Waters', 143-63; William Eamon's corpus focuses on male 'professors' of secrets, omitting all mention of cosmetics, as I previously noted, and does not discuss female readership. See especially: Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 30-35, 112-30; Eamon, 'Professors of Secrets'.

presence of recipes devoted to cosmesis as an indicator of a female public, then we might deduce that women were not seen as the primary readers or users'.⁸⁴ This assessment takes too much for granted about both cosmetic culture and Renaissance literacy practices. On one hand, I would agree with Storey's hesitance to assume a large female readership for these texts. It is true that the majority of Italian *ricettari* were not by women, a fact which differentiates the situation from Northern Europe, where, as I have already stated, women had an instrumental role in the compilation of recipe books.⁸⁵ Yet I would argue that cosmetic content was significant even in early printed *ricettari*, in which cosmetics were already highlighted as an important and easily marketable commodity. The introductory poems to *Venusta* and *Ricettario galante*, which I have already discussed in detail, are perhaps the best evidence of this—it is significant that the authors of both poems have chosen specifically to highlight the cosmetic contents of their texts. Even though *Venusta* contains other material, including a cure for kidney stones and numerous recipes dealing with women's reproductive health (see Appendix D), the introduction specifically advertises only the recipes for beautification ('*per farvi bella*').⁸⁶ It is, in other words, assumed that cosmetics will be the most appealing, attention grabbing, and enticing recipes that will draw in an audience either of readers or of potential clients, testifying to the prominent place of cosmetics in daily life and the Renaissance marketplace. Moreover, the poem of *Venusta* pointedly addresses women, as do the titles of recipes in numerous books, which specify, for example that they are for 'women's faces'. This, I would argue, indicates that women were considered a significant part of the economy of these texts. We would not assume that the only books directed at a male audience are those

⁸⁴ Tessa Storey, 'Face Waters', 149.

⁸⁵ Strocchia, 'Introduction'; Rankin, 'Exotic Materials'; Leong, 'Making Medicines', 145-68; Leong, 'Herbals She Peruseth'; Pennell, 'Perfecting Practice', 237-55; Field, 'Many Hands', 49-63; Archer, 'Women and Chymistry', 191-216.

⁸⁶ Brunello also notes that fifty or so of the recipes in the *Ricettario Galante* are also more 'medical prescriptions' than cosmetics. Brunello, 'Profumeria e cosmesi', 9.

explicitly dedicated to men, so the same should not be considered a gauge of a female audience either. If anything, the presence of cosmetic recipes, even if they are not a high percentage, indicate that the compilers hoped that women too would find the book useful.

On one hand, studies on Renaissance literacy do not reflect favourably on the possibilities of a female readership. Calculating reliable literacy rates in Renaissance Italy has proved problematic for scholars due to a lack of consistent documentation.⁸⁷ Traditionally, calculations were based on how many individuals were able to sign their name on legal documents, but as Andrew Pettegree has most recently pointed out, this system was fraught with problems.⁸⁸ Primarily, the central assumption that ‘reading and writing were taught sequentially’ is potentially misleading because it assumes that every person able to sign their name was also able to read, which may not have been the case.⁸⁹

Paul Grendler overcame this dilemma to some extent by formulating rough estimates of literacy rates based on education, using records relating to school and teaching enrolment.⁹⁰ In Venice, documentation of the 1587 order that teachers obey the papal bull *In sacrosancta beati Petri* (Pope Pius IV, 13 November 1564) and profess their faith, created a relatively comprehensive survey of education available in the city during that period, enabling Grendler to estimate that approximately 33 percent of boys and 12.2-13.2 percent of girls were literate in Venice in 1587.⁹¹ Taking into account evidence of education practices in a range of social strata, Grendler came to the

⁸⁷ Pettegree, *The Book*, 192, 196; Eisenstein, *Printing Press*, 60-61, 167, 414; Grendler, *Schooling*, 77, n. 22; Burke, *Historical Anthropology*, 110-111, 112, 129; Cipolla, *Literacy and Development*, 52, 59.

⁸⁸ Pettegree, *The Book*, 192, 196.

⁸⁹ Pettegree, *The Book*, 196.

⁹⁰ Grendler, *Schooling*.

⁹¹ Grendler, *Schooling*, 42, 46.

conclusion that a woman's level of literacy depended on what was seen appropriate to her social role, and its practical demands. Despite the fact that a substantially lower percentage of girls were recorded attending school in Venice, a number of contemporary writers on women's reading and education assume that women are literate, and encourage literacy as an indication of good upbringing and a means to virtue, suggesting that the majority of women's education, when it occurred, would have taken place at home.⁹² Because of this reliance on home education, literacy for girls was even more dependent on social standing than for boys.⁹³ Grendler finds, 'it is very likely that all daughters of nobles and a good number of wealthy commoner girls received limited vernacular schooling, in the convent or by other means,' and additionally 'limited parental tutoring may have taken place among artisans as well'.⁹⁴ Evidence of home teaching for artisanal classes includes two instructional manuals printed in Venice, the authors of which both emphasize that the books are aimed at 'the poor': Giovanni Antonio Tagliente's *Libro maistrevole* (1524), and Domenico Manzoni's *La vera et principal ricchezza de' giovani, che desiderano imparare ben legere, scrivere et abaco* (1550).⁹⁵ Grendler documents a number of examples where relatively poor working-class families manage to send one or two sons to school.⁹⁶ However, the education of boys took precedence over that of girls, as it could serve in the man's future working life, and Grendler concludes that 'poor and working-class girls had few possibilities'.⁹⁷ This would suggest that it was unlikely for women in the lower strata of society to have much use for Renaissance recipe books.

⁹² Grendler, *Schooling*, 89, 93, 99-100.

⁹³ Grendler, *Schooling*, 101-102.

⁹⁴ Grendler, *Schooling*, 100.

⁹⁵ Grendler, *Schooling*, 100.

⁹⁶ Grendler, *Schooling*, 101-108.

⁹⁷ Grendler, *Schooling*, 101, 108.

Countering this, Tessa Storey has recently proposed that women's actual literacy was not as uncommon as Grendler's figures suggest. Storey has previously discussed issues of female literacy as they apply to the readership of Books of Secrets, arguing that, while women were not the primary intended audience for these books, evidence indicates that women from a range of social strata could have had access to them.⁹⁸ She draws on trial evidence in which women from a much broader range of social milieus than just the upper class make casual reference to reading and writing, suggesting that they too were literate.⁹⁹ Meredith Ray also argues for female readership, though primarily among the elite. Contrasting to Storey's interpretation of *ricettari* contents, Ray argues that the recipe topics and easily readable format would have been accessible and familiar to women, suggesting, then, that the books are specifically directed at them.¹⁰⁰ However, although it is true that recipes are a predictable and easily read format, her connection between women and recipes was based largely on comparison with Northern European sources, where it has since been convincingly argued that women played a much different and more dominant role in recipe book creation than is evidenced in Italy, as noted above.¹⁰¹ Significantly, even recipes may not have been a medium as specific to women as Ray suggests; Raffaele Sarti has made the case that even cooking was not necessarily assumed to be women's domain in Italy during this period, pointing out how didactic literature discouraged noblewomen from the menial labour of preparing food.¹⁰² Indeed, even one of Ray's main examples features a male teacher as the primary expert, a certain 'Christophoro' who, in Ortensio Lando's *Lettere*

⁹⁸ Storey, 'Face Waters', 143-63.

⁹⁹ Storey, 'Face Waters', 149-50.

¹⁰⁰ Ray, 'Prescriptions for Women'.

¹⁰¹ Tessa Storey convincingly argues this point in 'Face Waters', 143-63.

¹⁰² Sarti, *Vita di casa*, 183-90; for discussion Storey, 'Face Waters', 151.

di molte valorose donne (1548), is supposedly teaching Isabella Sforza to make fantastical cure-all alchemical potions.¹⁰³

Ultimately, when put in context of the broader culture of Renaissance reading, literacy is not the point. Public advertisements and medical performances by street-sellers are two of many ways by which illiterate community members would have had access to texts. Reading out loud is perhaps even more significant. As Filippo De Vivo observes, ‘the salient feature of literacy is not its extent, but its incidence, or relative availability, and in urban societies there would have been at least one literate person in most communities’.¹⁰⁴ Access to texts, in other words, relied not on an individual’s ability to read, but on their involvement in a community where literate members read things aloud. De Vivo has shown that apothecaries played a particularly important role in the spread of information.¹⁰⁵ People gathered there to read news aloud, spread information from private reports, and have documents read for them.¹⁰⁶ Apothecaries were also one of the more reputable locations where women could shop without risk to their safety or reputation.¹⁰⁷ James Shaw and Evelyn Welch found that it was typical for customers to have an interactive relationship with pharmacists, bringing in their own ingredients, or following the pharmacists’ instructions in order to prepare basic medicines from the components they purchased.¹⁰⁸ Taking this into account, it is possible to imagine a scenario, for example, where someone buys a recipe pamphlet, enticed to try the ‘beletti’ they heard about while passing a street seller. They could then bring the *ricettario* into their local pharmacy and ask the pharmacist to select and make a recipe for the desired effect, even if they cannot read the book on their own.

¹⁰³ Ray, ‘Prescriptions for Women’, 150; Lando, *Lettere*, 116r.

¹⁰⁴ De Vivo, *Information & Communication*, 191-2.

¹⁰⁵ De Vivo, ‘Pharmacies as Centres of Communication’, 506-521.

¹⁰⁶ De Vivo, ‘Pharmacies as Centres of Communication’, 518-519. Rosenthal, ‘Networks, Communities, Kingdoms’ (forthcoming).

¹⁰⁷ Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 67, 219.

¹⁰⁸ Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 254-256, 258.

The bottom line which can be gleaned from both Storey and Ray's work is that the gender dynamics with regards to 'secrets' and recipes were extremely complex, and there is no clear-cut division separating men's recipes from women's. The content in the *ricettari*, which I have already discussed to some extent, is aimed at diverse audience interests. In Chapter 2, I discussed how the *ricettari* cover topics including, along with cosmetics, common illnesses, tricks to entertain guests, preparation and presentation of food, home manufacture of useful everyday products (like ink and coloured paper), and home upkeep. The individual texts often contain recipes directed at both men and women. In *Dificio de ricette*, for example, there are recipes 'to make rouge for women's faces', 'to make a white beard black', 'so that a woman gets her period if it is irregular, or lost', and 'to keep arms (i.e. armour, etc.) clean and always very shiny'.¹⁰⁹ In addition, the overall range of topics, from making your voice 'good for commanding, or singing, or disputing or reading', to helping an ailing horse with urination problems, to making 'cooked meat appear raw', suggests that the book's compiler aimed at covering as many topics to appeal to as wide an audience as possible.¹¹⁰

The annotations and writing in the sampling of printed *ricettari* I looked at suggest active user participation with the texts, including some indication that the readers have outside knowledge of these types of recipes. Many of the books have ink dashes or fingers drawn in to highlight certain recipes, while a few even include reader's additions or amendments. In the 1526 edition of *Venusta* at the Wellcome Institute, three recipes for beautifying the skin are highlighted with inked dashes: one to

¹⁰⁹ *Dificio de ricette*, Rx. 55 ('A far rosso per lo viso dele donne'), Rx. 53 ('A far di una barba bianca negra'), 12^r, ('A sapere se la donna poi haver figliuoli overo no'), 9^r (Rx. 62, 'A far produr el suo tempo a una donna che lo uariasse o perdesse')

¹¹⁰ *Dificio de ricette*, 4^v (A far bona uoce per rengare o cantar ovuer disputar o legger in carega'); 10^v (Rx. 90, 'A far che quando uno caualllo non potesse urinar che subito urinera'), 12^v (Rx. 116, 'A far parer che la carne cotta fia cruda').

keep the flesh beautiful, a water to make the face white and lustrous, and another to make the face well-coloured.¹¹¹ A 1534 edition of the same text has a more all-encompassing beauty regiment highlighted, with inked asterisks by recipes for water to make the hands and face white, to make the face beautiful and the breath perfumed, tooth powder, to make hair thick and to keep black hair clean.¹¹² While the recipes marked out in the 1534 edition are rather diverse, certain ones are apparently not of interest; for example, the person has not marked out anything having to do with hair removal. They have also tended to select recipes which are relatively simple with accessible ingredients and methods, for example, the recipe to make the hands and face white is a simple decoction of nettle leaves.¹¹³ Likewise both the recipes for fragrant face and breath and for tooth powder involve the combination of rosemary and white wine.¹¹⁴ They have also corrected a typographical error that appeared in a recipe to make a woman pregnant, modifying the erroneous word ‘corpo’ to ‘porco’ where the recipe called for ‘lo core & li testicoli del corpo’, that is, the heart and testicles of the body, rather than of a pig.¹¹⁵ Whoever this book’s owner was, it seems they were at least familiar enough with that recipe to realise this was an error (the same recipe, indeed, reads ‘porco’ in the earlier 1526 edition).¹¹⁶ In addition, this specific edition has two recipes written on the verso of the final page in a sixteenth-century hand (Figure 7). The first is an ointment for the hands, which reads: ‘Take white wax and fat of a white sheep and oil ... and mix everything together then put in a little myrtle powder and mix very well then when it is cold apply to your hands first making them

¹¹¹ Celebrino, *Venusta* (WL, 65175/A): 3^v-4^r (Rx. 13, ‘A far conseruar la carne bella’; Rx. 14, ‘Acqua da far bianco e lustro il viso’; Rx. 15, ‘Acqua per far il volto colorito’).

¹¹² Celebrino, *Venusta* (WL, 4630/B, no. 5). Marked recipes Rx. 18, ‘Acqua per far bianche le man el viso’; Rx. 33, ‘A far bella la faccia & il fiato odorifero’; Rx. 41, ‘A far poluer da denti’; Rx. 48, ‘A fare che li capilli veniranno rizzi’; Rx. 53, ‘A tenir netti li capilli negri’.

¹¹³ Celebrino, *Venusta* (WL, 4630/B), 4.

¹¹⁴ Celebrino, *Venusta* (WL, 4630/B), 5.

¹¹⁵ Celebrino, *Venusta* (WL, 4630/B), Rx. 86.

¹¹⁶ Celebrino, *Venusta* (WL, 65175/A), 11^r (Rx. 86)

good and clean then apply then when you want to use it so that your hands have their lustre put it in the sun then keep in a cloth'.¹¹⁷ On the other hand, the owner of a 1526 edition of *Dificio de ricette* in the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice (MISC. 1054) wrote down translations to a number of the recipes in Spanish, an indication of the book's early appeal to a multilingual audience, and the cosmopolitan nature of the city.

Content and Frontispiece Imagery

The frontispiece images and illustrations in the *ricettari* further suggest that these texts were directed at audiences with diverse interests, implying that, as a topic within these texts, cosmetics were also perceived to have a wide-ranging appeal. Elizabeth Eisenstein, in her discussion of book illustrations in print culture, observed that imagery on many early printed books is often not intended as a direct representation of the text, but as a signpost indicating to readers a general sense of what the work or section of work is about.¹¹⁸ More specifically, Rosa Salzberg has built on Paul Grendler's exploration of 'Form and Function' in popular print to suggest that the practice of recycling pleasant but generic imagery, visible in most recipe collections, became almost a 'trademark' feature of popular text, deliberately making the books immediately recognisable as easily accessible popular texts to potential buyers.¹¹⁹ The features she and Grendler note as typical of popular print are indeed visible in the whole range of printed *ricettari* I look at. The frontispiece imagery on *ricettari* is relatively generic, and images do not appear to have been created specifically to reflect the text in question, but rather from basic stock patterns that could easily be recycled for use on

¹¹⁷ Celebrino, *Venusta* (WL, 4630/B), annotations on 14^v. 'A onzere le mane... Rx Cera bianca e senza de montone bianco e olio ...e misti ogni cosa insieme poi metti dentro uno pocho de polvere de myrtilo e mistia molto bene poi quando sara freddo onge le mani in prima fatte ben nette tanto che le onge poi quando le voraj adoperare ... che le habiano il suo lustro mettile al sole e poi servile in una peza.'

¹¹⁸ Eisenstein, *Printing Revolution*, 59-63.

¹¹⁹ Salzberg, 'Mouths of Charlatans', 646; for more examples of recycled images see Thompson, 'Hystoria di due amanti', 98. Grendler, 'Form and Function', 451-485.

other texts.¹²⁰ An example of this is the frontispiece of *Opera nova de Ricette e secreti che insengna apparecchiare vna Mensa* (Figure 8). The frontispiece features a figured border with a central inset image of Venus; the border and inset appear to be from two separate woodcuts as the inks used are noticeably different, demonstrating the combination of interchangeable and likely pre-existing elements.¹²¹ The inset woodcut of Venus in turn is not only clumsily rendered, but seems likely to have been appropriated from another context as only half of the elements correspond to the typical attributes with which Venus was normally depicted. While the attribute of an oversized arrow is repeated in a number of other images (see figures 9 and 10), in these, Venus' left hand holds a flaming heart, when coupled with an arrow, not a circlet.¹²² In addition, Venus' characteristic animal is a cow, not a goat or ram, and while the amorphous woolly creature in the woodcut is poorly rendered, it does not bear any resemblance to a cow. In fact, the attributes of the woman pictured here are much closer to the figure of the zodiac sign Aries featured in the central panel of Francesco del Cossa's *Allegory of March* in the Salone dei Mesi at the Palazzo Schifanoia in Ferrara (Figure 11). Not only does Del Cossa's clothed woman ride a ram, but the rightmost figure holds a long arrow and a ring, similar to the objects held by the woodcut 'Venus'. The prominence and proximity of the sun and star in the woodcut figure, similar to the sun that del Cossa's *Aries* seems to ride upon, further suggests that the figure may have originally been intended as a zodiac sign. Together, these incongruities suggest that the woodcut was appropriated from another setting to represent Venus here, with the textual label added to clarify the intended identity, overall evidencing a production process that focused on speed and economy rather than originality.

¹²⁰ Salzberg, 'Mouths of Charlatans', 647.

¹²¹ *Opera nova de Ricette e secreti* (WL, 4630/B, no. 1), 1^r.

¹²² An exception is Lorenzo Lotto's *Venus and Cupid* (late 1520s), discussed below.

IMAGES OF EXPERTISE

As images that effectively advertise the contents of the text within, the frontispiece images on several *ricettari* seem to have been chosen with the aim of bolstering the books' appearance of legitimacy, featuring scenes associated with knowledge, expertise, and established texts within the learned tradition. The 1498 printing of Petrus Hispanus' *Thesoro de poveri* has an illustration specifically related to the work's medical uses, opening with a woodcut image of two patients being treated for their respective injuries, one for a leg ulcer and the other a head injury (Figure 13).¹²³ This is relatively indicative of the book's internal contents, which are focused on treating and curing, but it is the only one of the recipe books from this study with imagery directly illustrating the act of healing. The woodcut is noted as being unique, suggesting that it was possibly created specifically for this text, perhaps due to the fact that *Thesoro de poveri* was not a new work, but one that had been known and circulating for centuries, and thus its contents and status were pre-established.¹²⁴

On the other hand, the *ricettari* that were 'new works' had yet to establish their place in the print market, and employ various strategies to suggest the legitimacy of the information within. For example, early editions of *Dificio de ricette* are illustrated with a depiction of astronomers on the front page, while later editions feature a friar at work with an assistant, surrounded by pharmacy jars. All versions of the text, both from the 1520s and 1530s include an inset of a set-up for distillation at the start of the third section of the text (Figure 14), which emphasizes the processes involved in many of the recipes, as well as its connection to alchemical methods. The frontispiece of the 1525

¹²³ Hispanus, *Thesoro de poveri*, FGCV (FOAN.G.223).

¹²⁴ Notes attached to the inner cover of the volume 1498 copy of *Thesoro de poveri* (FGCV, FOAN.G.223) describes the image as a 'Florentine woodcut in the early grave style showing 2 surgeons, on treating a patient for a head wound, the other for a leg ulcer. As far as we know, this woodcut occurs nowhere else and is the only Florentine woodcut of medical interest...of the present edition only 3 copies are recorded by Stillwell'. For differences between the print markets in Florence and Venice, see Richardson, *Print Culture*.

edition features two astronomers in a study, surrounded by the tools of their trade, including a spherical astrolabe, gunner's square (hung on the wall), and drafting compass, emphasised by the starry night sky visible outside the window (Figure 15). The astronomers have no particular connection to the book's content—although a number of *ricettari* include direct reference to the zodiac, star signs and moon phases, *Dificio de ricette* is not amongst them. The *Secreti Medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia* contains a table with the properties of zodiac signs, and Caterina Sforza includes several recipes whose effectiveness is reliant upon the moon phase they are performed in.¹²⁵ Similarly *Specchio di virtu* recommends seasoning a hair oil beneath the moon for eight to ten nights.¹²⁶ The only reference in *Dificio de ricette* to astronomy is a trick 'to see the stars in the day', but it otherwise has no zodiacal information or reference to astronomical phenomena.¹²⁷

However, as a less literal symbol, figures of astronomers appear in text illustrations to signify knowledge of the wider world. For example, on Pico della Mirandola's copy of *Natural History*, Pliny's 'special understanding of the working of the cosmos' is represented by depicting him as an astronomer.¹²⁸ Astral influences were considered important in the treatment of health problems, as they were thought to impact the conditions of a person's birth and physical makeup, as well as the circumstances under which they fell ill.¹²⁹ Astronomy was also incorporated into the understanding of the properties of the materials used in recipes and cures. Astrological and alchemical theories were combined so that the same virtues that determined astrological influences also supported the alchemical virtues, resulting in an understood

¹²⁵ Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 64; Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v.3), 673-75, 726.

¹²⁶ *Specchio di virtu*. u. p., Rx. 21: 'Ad fare in vn tracto biondo & longo el capello & che mai non verra canuto'.

¹²⁷ *Dificio de ricette*, 4^v.

¹²⁸ McHam, 'Erudition on Display', 93-96. She refers to Pico della Mirandola's manuscript of Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* (Attributed to the Pico Master), ca. 1480s now held at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice, MS lat. VI. (coll. 2976), fol. 3r.

¹²⁹ Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine*, 67-69.

correspondence between gold and the Sun, silver and the moon, lead and Saturn and quicksilver and Mercury, among others.¹³⁰ In addition, at least a rudimentary education in astronomy was included in medical education during both the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the importance of which are defended, for example, in Cecco d'Ascoli's lectures given in Bologna.¹³¹ In fact, it was not unusual for images of astronomers to appear on texts dealing with the human body. An image of astronomers similar to the one on *Dificio de ricette* also appears on the extremely popular verse edition of 'rules for good health' from the medical school in Salerno, *Regimen sanitatis salernitanum*, which was also circulating in the early Cinquecento (Figure 16).¹³² Overall, the astronomers seem to have functioned as a symbol of knowledge and learned tradition, suggesting the text's value as a source of studied information, and perhaps associating *Dificio de ricette* with the *Regimen sanitatis salernitanum* as a helpful guide to healthy living.

In editions of *Dificio de ricette* printed after 1531, the image of astronomers was replaced by the representation of a Franciscan friar and assistant working at a mortar (see Figure 17), again suggesting the book's place among a legitimate studied tradition. There was a longstanding association between monastic communities, apothecaries, and medicinal practice as most monastic communities with infirmaries had their own adjacent medicinal gardens.¹³³ Many of these monastic pharmacies produced their own unique elixirs and remedies for distribution to the wider public, and were successful to the extent that many, like the pharmacies at San Marco and Santa

¹³⁰ Guccini, 'L'arte dei Semplici', 137-138.

¹³¹ Siraisi, *Medicine*, 68; de Sacrobosco (ed. Thorndike), *Sphere of Sacrobosco*, 244-46.

¹³² *Regimen sanitatis Salernitanum*, 1r. While the written work originates in the thirteenth century, the earliest printed edition was arguably made in 1480, held in the Brotherton Special Collections, Leeds. *Regimen sanitatis cum expositione* (Venice: Bernardinum Venetum de Vitalibus, 1480), Brotherton Collection, Leeds (Shelfmark: Cookery D.Reg). See also Nigro, 'La scuola medica salernitana'.

¹³³ Corvi and Corvi, *La Farmacia Monastica*, 13-60; Corvi, *La farmacia italiana*; Schwarz, *Storia della farmacia*, 56-63; Pedrazzini, *Farmacia storica ed artistica*, 233-274.

Maria Novella in Florence, continue to operate even today.¹³⁴ The image makes a clear reference to this tradition, with pharmacy jars visible on the shelves behind the monk and his assistant. This depiction suggests the book's association with health and wellbeing, creating a visual association with institutionalised pharmacies, even though the book itself seems more likely to have been sold in the unregulated setting of itinerant shops.

More broadly, the sense of teaching and instruction that this image of the friar and his assistant conveys also appears as a visual motif on the frontispiece of *Questa sie una operetta molto Piacevollissima* (ca. 1525). Here, one man seems to direct the other to hoe plants in a field (see figure 18)—seemingly harvesting the plants for use, as the former holds several similarly-shaped leaves in his hand.¹³⁵ This image has visual resonance with the cover page of Mondino de'Liuzzi's *Anatomy*, where the nonspecific representation of the 'author' appears to instruct another figure in a dissection, representing the author's expertise and the book's topic.¹³⁶ In both images a class distinction is deliberately made between the 'instructing' figure and the assistant. The 'instructing' figure's higher social status is indicated by his clothing: in the case of the *Operetta molto Piacevollissima* he wears scholar's dress, with a cap and heel-length *dogalina* with pleats of fabric and wide sleeves that drape to the level of his knees.¹³⁷ The man digging, on the other hand, is wearing a short tunic with considerably less fabric—no pleats on the skirt, and much narrower sleeves. As in *Anatomy*, the

¹³⁴ Giovannini and Mancini, *L'Officina profumo-farmaceutica di Santa Maria Novella*; a good survey of Florentine pharmacy culture is still Raffaele Ciasca's *L'arte dei medici e speciali*.

¹³⁵ *Operetta molto piacevollissima* (WL, 4630/B, no.6), 1r. The image is also reminiscent scenes of the labours of the month as depicted by Baccio Baldini—the pointing man has the same posture and placement as the woman in March, and the man digs in the same position as February.

¹³⁶ Siraisi, *Medicine*, 87.

¹³⁷ Newton, *Dress of the Venetians*, 37; Vecellio (ed. Rosenthal and Jones), *Clothing of the Renaissance World*, 586. My thanks to Carol Richardson for reference on the scholar's dress.

illustrations in *Operetta molto Piacevollissima* and *Dificio de ricette* seem to intend that the figure directing or teaching represents the book's author, or perhaps more appropriately, the book itself. Just as the author directs the other figure in the image, so too will he pass his expertise on to the reader.

The image of figures harvesting plants and mixing concoctions also conveys a sense that the author was involved in the making and testing of the recipes within, corresponding to the growing interest in 'tried' and 'tested' experiments, which Eamon in particular has examined.¹³⁸ While, as he points out, readers themselves were expected to follow an author's 'experiment' by the letter in order to achieve successful results, the interest in formulae that were the products of experience and observation, and perfected by an expert, was becoming increasingly central to the creation and popularity of Books of Secrets. Despite the fact that many recipes are clearly fantastical, the assertion '*e provato*' frequently concludes the formulae, asserting not so much that the recipes were 'proven', but that they had been tested.¹³⁹ Likewise the theme of 'tried and tested' features even when no indicative titular imagery is present, as in the titling of the 'Experiments' of Caterina Sforza, and the 'new very excellent work' of 1529 which, we are told, is named '*Probatum est*'—literally 'it is tested' (Figure 19).¹⁴⁰ While this assertion is no doubt largely a matter of rhetoric, its prominence in the recipe texts evidences the changing interests from a knowledge based on tradition to one based on experience, an interest which the images of experts actively involved in some type of study or recipe production also appears to reflect.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ For a discussion of the Renaissance idea of experimentation, and its development from the medieval scholastic differentiation between *via rationalis* and *via experimentalis* see Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 55-56.

¹³⁹ Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 55-56.

¹⁴⁰ *Probatum est* (WL, 4630/B, no. 2) : 1^r.

¹⁴¹ For more discussion of these changing interests, see Eamon, *Science and Secrets*.

DOMESTICITY

The frontispiece images on the remaining *ricettari* do not directly refer to learning or recipe-making in any obvious way, but instead centres loosely on motifs of love and female virtues. These books include *Secreti secretorum*, *Opera nova de ricette e secreti che insegna apparecchiare vna mensa*, and *Specchio di virtu*. The eight folio so-called ‘*Secreti secretorum*’ features on its title page an image of a lady with a unicorn (see Figure 20), a long-standing symbol for feminine virtue and chastity.¹⁴² Such imagery was common, and depicted in a number of printed and painted settings, such as Raphael’s *Lady with a Unicorn*, and the emblems of chastity engraved by Agostino Veneziano and Baldo Baldini (see Figures 21-23). Baldini’s print was intended for use specifically in the context of marriage, as indicated by the two empty shields which could be filled with emblems of the two families to be joined in marital union (Figure 23).¹⁴³ The image opening *Opera nova de ricette e secreti che insegna apparecchiare vna mensa*, mentioned above, features the figure of Venus, again associated with love and virtue. The somewhat unconventional rendering of the goddess pictures her holding a standard attribute of an oversized arrow and a less commonly-seen circlet (Figure 8). While, as stated above, it is most likely that this Venus was a woodcut recycled from another setting, it is worth mentioning that Venus has been depicted elsewhere with a circlet of leaves, in Lorenzo Lotto’s *Venus and Cupid* (figure 12). Lotto’s painting is itself unconventional, combining a number of symbolic elements for which a direct mythological or literary association has yet to be found. Some scholars have suggested it to be a visual rendering of a poem to marriage

¹⁴² *Secreti secretorum* (WL, 4630/B, no. 4): 1^r.

¹⁴³ Thornton, ‘Dish with an Allegory of Chastity’, 70-71.

(*epithalamium*), and it has been described as a ‘paradigmatic marriage painting’.¹⁴⁴

Whether or not there is any connection between the symbolism used by Lorenzo Lotto and the symbols in the frontispiece, the woodcut’s clearly labelled figure of Venus could invoke any of the goddess’s typical associations with love, beauty, matrimony or carnal delights.

Another motif commonly associated with love and marriage is that of a man and woman facing each other in profile, which appears in a small inset on the cover of *Specchio di virtu* (Figure 24). Similar portrayals of couples were extremely common on objects for domestic use and display, particularly those associated with marriage, including majolica dishware, pendants and girdles.¹⁴⁵ This popular motif appeared on the outside of pharmacy jars as a decorative feature, usually with no clear relation to the content of the jars on which they appeared. For example, a vessel from 1548 (Figure 25) features a couple intimately embracing with a banderol floating overhead announcing *isoepiu felice omo de questa terra 1548* (‘I am the happiest man on earth 1548’). Along with the romantic scene, the jar contains a label for *A[cqua] D[ella] Farfara*, or water of Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*), which was advised by the medical authorities of the time for respiratory problems and skin irritation.¹⁴⁶ Debora Krohn proffers rather tentatively that its use for a healthy heart (or chest region) could have led to the image of romantic success, but more broadly that ‘the suggestion of such a connection might have been a good advertising strategy’, a proposal which seems more likely.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, more recent research by Evelyn Welch has turned up evidence that pharmacies frequently spent large sums of money updating their collection of jars so

¹⁴⁴ Fahy, ‘Marriage Portrait’, 26; Bayer, ‘Venus and Cupid’, 321-323; Christiansen, ‘Lorenzo Lotto and the Tradition of Epithalamic Paintings’, 166-73; ‘Venus and Cupid’. Heilburn Timeline of Art History, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

¹⁴⁵ Bayer (ed.), ‘Belle Donne, Facing Couples, Fede’, 76-87 104-105; in the same volume: Musacchio, ‘Pendant with Facing Couple’, 103-104; and ‘Girdle End with a Profile Couple’, 104-106; and Krohn, ‘Rites of Passage’, 62-3.

¹⁴⁶ Krohn, ‘Pharmacy Jar with Embracing Couple’, 86-87.

¹⁴⁷ Krohn, ‘Spouted Pharmacy Jar’, 86-87.

that their stock was displayed in vessels decorated in the latest popular styles.¹⁴⁸ Most of the design elements, including whether or not the imagery actually reflected the jars' contents, she suggests, were chosen primarily for their 'look', serving as a marketing strategy by which apothecaries demonstrated their integrity, financial success, and, effectively, ability to keep up with trends.¹⁴⁹ The fact that *ricettari* were decorated with similar haphazard but popular motifs, albeit on a smaller scale, I would suggest, further indicates that, like the pharmacy jars, their imagery was primarily chosen based on which motifs were popular and appealing at the time, serving as a pleasing lure, more than a significant reflection of the contents. Equally, it is possible that the inclusion in recipe books of images that was also popular on pharmacy jars may have at least loosely been inspired by trends in pharmacy imagery as well, visually connecting even the books that do not have overt pharmacy scenes with pharmacy culture.

In addition, while all three of the books with 'amorous' imagery I discussed above have varied content, the theme of domestic upkeep runs throughout. *Secreti secretorum* is dedicated to household tips, including practical matters like preserving pomegranates, catching fleas, removing various stains from cloth, concoctions for the hair and skin, as well as a number of tricks that range from familiar illusions, like how 'to make a ring dance on a table' ('*A fare che uno anello ballera su per una tavola*') to preposterous ones including how 'to make an almond or a pear or similar fruit grow with written letters' ('*A far che una mandola o persico o simile frutto nasca con lettere scritte*').¹⁵⁰ *Specchio di virtu* has a similar variety of contents, typical to Books of Secrets, but also equally focused on the domestic sphere. The four-folio pamphlet's forty recipes include one recipe for dyeing hair blond, one for black hair, recipes for removing marks from skin, and curing rashes, including getting rid of flies, preserving

¹⁴⁸ Welch, 'Spice and Spectacle', 127-158.

¹⁴⁹ Welch, 'Spice and Spectacle', 127-158.

¹⁵⁰ *Secreti secretorum*, u.p.

eggs, and turning water the colour of wine.¹⁵¹ *Opera nova de ricette e secreti che insengna apparecchiar vna Mensa*, is specifically directed at feasting, a key occasion for display of one's wealth and a demonstration of one's abilities as a host. Banquets, and especially wedding banquets, were such prominent occasions for excessive display in Venetian culture that they were repeatedly subject to sumptuary restrictions from 1299 onwards.¹⁵² All three of the images above, when informed by the text, perhaps suggest that personal virtue will be ensured through the enabled upkeep of a tidy, well-presented household, and that, for a woman, maintaining a beautiful and ordered body was part of that.

Above all, the images were themselves advertisement, just like the exaggerated titles, which were aimed at promoting the books' content. Even when the texts do not directly pertain to love, virtue, chastity or other literal interpretations of the imagery, the frontispiece illustrations intentionally suggest that the books' contents are themselves virtuous, and hint at the pleasantness of the content, perhaps also serving as visual cues for which a street vendor could play off of when advertising the texts. The importance of both the imagery and the titles is not to represent the books' contents accurately, but to attract a reader successfully to purchase the text. Like the contents of the books, which contain a diverse range of recipes of potential interest to a broad populace, the imagery is also broad and generic, demarking the books as pleasant and easily accessible popular texts. In the chapter that follows, I further investigate this accessibility, examining whether or not the recipes themselves suggest cheap and readily available remedies, or restrictive luxury items.

¹⁵¹ *Specchio di virtu* (WL, 4630/B, no. 3).

¹⁵² Brown, *Private Lives*, 150-156, esp. 153: 'To the English observers, hospitality meant food and fine wine; to Venetians—although their kitchens were on the main living floors or on the mezzanines—it meant display'. See also: Brown, 'Behind the Walls', 319-29; Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, 91-105.

CHAPTER 4

THE COST OF BEAUTY

Turning from the accessibility of recipe texts, this chapter addresses the audience for cosmetic recipes from the perspective of material cost. Here, I examine the materials, time and equipment necessary to make cosmetic recipes. The chapter builds on previous research on Renaissance trade in medical ingredients and painters' materials to clarify where cosmetic materials fit into these markets. I combine specific examples of the resources required in individual cosmetic recipes with evidence from inventories as to the price of ingredients, to give clear comparative examples of the financial cost of cosmetics. Inventory evidence is further used to examine who was most likely to make, use and purchase cosmetics. The broad aim is to examine what commitments of time and financial resources were required to attain the ideal appearance and through it, what the ability to achieve the ideal look suggested about the wearer's social situation. My research in this chapter owes much to the pre-existing work on the culture surrounding pharmacies and colour sellers in Northern Italy. I am building on this pre-existing work to suggest how this culture would have specifically impacted the availability and accessibility of cosmetics, with the aim of further clarifying who the audience for cosmetic recipes was.

When I first began this project, it seemed like the most effective way to discuss the cost of beauty would be to price the ingredients from a range of recipes, and compare the cost of these. As the majority of the books I look at were written and

published in Venice, my initial aim was to do a case study on cost of ingredients there. However, the conditions of the Renaissance market, and in particular, the sparse nature of documentation in Venice have made this type of pricing exercise problematic.¹ A number of historians have noted that there is a relative paucity of inventories and priced lists of *spese* in Venice; it is, moreover, difficult to discuss price of ingredients and recipe costs in a meaningful way due to the fact that market pricing was highly variable in Renaissance Venice, and the price paid for items varied greatly from customer to customer.² My specific interest in pricing cosmetic recipes further complicates the process because the ingredients used in cosmetics were not all sold in one location. Pigments such as red lake (*lacca*), lead white (*biacca*), and resins like mastic (*mastice*) could be bought from *vendecolori* and appear in artists' *spese*, since they were also used in paints.³ Problematically, however, the few *vendecolori* inventories created during the period of my research only include lists of weight and quantity without prices.⁴ For the rest—items like incense, alums, roots, leaves, powders and resins which might be found in pharmacies, and food items like eggs, honey, and various fruits—the best information on prices has been found in families' and individuals' expense accounts. For information on Venetian ingredients, I have looked at three inventories that span the 1530s: two artists' inventories, from Francesco and Jacopo Bassano, and Lorenzo Lotto's *Spese diverse*, which are useful for comparing the price of pigments, and a

¹ Kirby et al., 'Foreword', xvi; O'Malley and Welch, *Material Renaissance*, xx-xxiv, 1-8; Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 235.

² Kirby et al., eds, *Trade in Artists' Materials*, xvi; O'Malley and Welch, *Material Renaissance*, xx-xxiv, 1-8; Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 235.

³ Kirby et al., eds., *Trade in Artists' Materials*; Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*; Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 93; DeLancey, 'Dragonsblood and Ultramarine', 141-150; DeLancey, 'In the Streets Where They Sell Colors', 193-232; Krischel, 'Zur Geschichte des venezianischen Pigmenthandels', 93-158; Matthew, 'Vendecolori a Venezia', 680-686; Kirby, 'Price of Quality', 19-39; Lotto (ed. Grimaldi and Sordi), *Libro di spese diverse*; dal Ponte (ed. Muraro) *Il libro*; Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia*, 637-39.

⁴ The known examples have been written about by DeLancey, 'In the Streets Where They Sell Colors', 193-232; Krischel, 'Venezianischen Pigmenthandels', 93-158; Krischel, 'Inventory', 253-266; Matthew, 'Vendecolori a Venezia'; Matthew and Berrie, 'Venice as a Centre of Purchase', 245-252.

March 1534 inventory for ‘messer Hettor Loredan’.⁵ To supplement the limited information available on Venetian prices, I have also referred to inventories from two other pharmacies from outside Venice, selected primarily for the completeness of their records and location on either end of my research period. One is a Pavian inventory with entries from 1441 and 1445, and the other is a Torinese inventory with entries from 1548.⁶ At best, these types of documents have allowed for the reconstruction of a rather rough and very momentary sense of ingredients’ cost in relationship to each other, and the items I discuss are entirely dependent upon what happened to be included in a specific inventory. Thus, the exploration of prices in this chapter is necessarily a preliminary investigation, limited by the sources available.

Problems with Home Production

Book of Secrets have been described by some as Renaissance ‘do it yourself’ manuals, however, previous work done on the markets for medicines and apothecarial materials suggests that their primary purpose may not have been to enable people to make the recipes within their home.⁷ In Chapter 3, I discussed how books of cosmetic recipes were likely to be created and sold, in part, by street sellers, who also sold a selection of premade cosmetics and remedies to the public. Evidence from apothecaries suggests that in these locations consumers were also more likely to buy remedies in complete or nearly completed states rather than raw ingredients. In a study on the Speziale al Giglio in Florence, James Shaw and Evelyn Welch found that clientele did not typically purchase basic material ‘simples’ from their local suppliers in order to

⁵ dal Ponte (ed. Muraro), *Il libro*; Lotto (ed. Grimaldi and Sordi), *Spese diverse*. The inventory of Hettor Loredan in 1534, is transcribed in Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia* (v. II), 636-639. (Original at the Archivio di Stato in Venice, Ufficiali alle Rason vecchie, Notatorio, Reg. no. 27, c. 188).

⁶ Aleati and Bianchi, ‘Farmacie pavesi’, 7-50; Caffaratto, ‘Inventario del Cinquecento’, 55-74.

⁷ On *ricettari* as ‘how to’ manuals, Eamon, ‘How to Read a Book of Secrets’, 23-46, 35; Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 254; Storey, ‘Cosmetics, Remedies, Alchemy’, 150; Ago, *Il Gusto delle Cose*; Bell, *How to Do It*.

concoct recipes from start to finish at their homes. Rather, while clients at times supplied some of their own ingredients, medicines were made to near-completion in the *speziale*, and the most involved preparation that clients were required to perform in their home was boiling the medicine one final time before consuming it.⁸

While Shaw and Welch found that boiling was the most involved procedure required by clients at the apothecary, cosmetic recipes frequently require processes which are time consuming and involve multiple steps for preparation. The following ‘miracle water’ for beautification in the *Gli experimenti* manuscript, for example, calls for over 30 ingredients, and requires an excess of twelve hours of boiling:⁹

‘Take 6 oz. silver sublimate, 3 oz. quicksilver, and having taken a dish of wood put inside the said silver and every morning for 8 days every day, stir with a stick of wood for 3 hours with saliva before you eat and at night leave it in the dew and then take 4.4 oz. of white lead of dregs and put on in the morning added with the spit, mixing constantly with a stick. On the ninth day this is done. And then everything is taken and tied tightly in a linen cloth and take one lb. of cured white lead *de trezo* in a pan on the fire and then tie in another piece of linen strong enough so that nothing will get out and tie these 2 pieces in a barrel of water so that they do not touch the bottom of the barrel & with a little flame boil for 3 hours. Then throw away the water in the barrel & put in some fresh water as above and boil 3 hours. And again throw out and refill the barrel with clean water & for 3 additional hours boil it, and this water is perfect for curing every spot and rash that comes on the face. Then take the said thing and put it in the sun for eight days and in the morning for half an hour in the dew and then grind it and mix with those gums little by little so that it becomes a water. Then mix together everything that you have saved. Then take 6 oz. aqua vita and put it in ground purslane for one night and put it with that from above. Then take 1 pitcher malmsey wine and put it 4 oz. of litharge of silver 6 oz. badger fat 1 lb. oil of bitter almonds, ½ lb. fat of the marrow of a cow. Everything is boiled in the malmsey wine until it boils away. 25 egg whites with the minced shell, 2 pigeons with bowels removed and all the aforementioned things and when they are mashed well, put them in the egg whites in the malmsey wine and the malmsey wine in the other things from above then take 4 citrons, 2 bowls of citron flowers, 25 lemons that are cut

⁸ Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 254.

⁹ Spicer, ‘Painted Breasts’, 47; Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 632.

and mash everything from above. Then take 1 oz. each of mastic and clove, 4 oz. myrrh, ½ oz. mace, 1 oz. white incense, 4 oz. myrrh, 5 oz. bdellium, 3 oz. storax, Calamint, 2 oz. musk gall, 6 oz cypress gall, 1 lb. camphor and having ground these throw them on top of the said things and for 6 hours put in the sun and then put them in the bowl and distil in the bain-marie and when enough water comes out to fill up a cup, the first and the second time that it comes out, put it back into the alembic and watch the fire and save all the water that comes out and you will have the best water made as you can have excepting talc water and with that wash your face and you will see miracles.’¹⁰

Because this recipe comes from the Sforza *Experimenti*, a private and elite manuscript compilation, it represents the interests and advantages of a privileged circle, and people whose home could have been equipped with the tools and labour necessary to follow the above recipe. Although, as noted in Chapter 3, it is unclear whether *Gli experimenti* was actually all written by Sforza or elaborated on by Lucantonio Cuppano, who compiled the text after her death, it is clear from correspondences that Sforza actively

¹⁰ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 632-33: ‘A fare aqua da fare bella miraculosa come aqua del talcho et de infinite virtu : Piglia argento sublimato on. 6. argento vivo on. 3. sia tolto vna scodella de legnio et sia messo dentro ditti argenti et omne matina insino a otto giorni sempre sia menato con vna spatola de legno per 3. hore con el sputo adigiuno et la notte lassarlo alla rosata et depoi tolli . 4. on de biacha de trezo et sia mesedato la matina adigiuno con lo sputo messidando sempre con uno bastone uno bastone al nono giorno sia fatto questo et de poi sia tolto omne cosa et legato in una peza de lino bene stretto et torre una L de biaca de trezo cavato el piombo in uno pane nel forno et poi legarla in una altra peza de lino forte accio non esca fora et legare queste doi peze in uno parolo de aqua che non tocchi elfondo del parolo et con poco foco fare bollire per tre hore. Da poi getta via quella aqua del parolo et mettene della fresca vt supra fa bollire tre hore. et iterum getta via et reempi el parolo de aqua netta et per tre altre hore fa bollire et questa aqua e perfetta a guarire omne machia et volatica che venesse sopra el volto. Da poi piglia la ditta robba da per se et mettila al sole per otto giorni et la matina per mezza hora alla rosata et poi fanne polvere et poi messida con quelle gomme a poco a poco tanto che deventi aqua Da poi mestida ogni cosa che tu hai servato insieme. Da poi piglia aqua vita ogne sei et sia messo drento porcellane pistate per una notte et sia messo con quel de sopra Da poi piglia malvasia bocali uno et sia messo drento letargirio de argento on 4. grasso de tasso on 6 oleo de amandole amare L. 1. sego de vitella medolla de boue an L ½ sia bollito ogne cosa in la malvagia a consumatione chiare de ovi con la guscia tridati vinti Cinque pipioni duj messe fora le budella con tutte le rechie et Ben pistati messi nelle chiare et le chiare nella malvagia et la malvagia in quelle altre cose de sopra. Poi piglia Citroni 4 fiori di Citroni scutelle dui Limoni 25 siano tagliati et buttati de sopra ogne cosa. Poi piglia mastice garofani an on j mirra on 4 macis on ½ incenso Bianco on. 1. mirra on. 4. Bideli on. 5 sturatij Calamita on 3 galia moscata on ij Gallia cipresso on. 6 canfora L.1 et siano poverizate et buttate sopra le ditte cose, et per sei hore al sole messidate et poi mettili in la boccia et lanbicca a bagnio maria et come sera uscito tanta aqua che sia uno bichiero la prima et la seconda volta che viene rebuttate de novo nel lambicco et seguita el foco et salva tutta laaqua che venira che hai la meglior aqua fare si possa excepto Quella del talco et con questa lavate la faccia che vederai miraculj.’

exchanged recipes for medicine and cosmetics with contacts around Italy. In one of these letters Caterina requests equipment that could be used in recipes.¹¹ In addition, she was clearly an active customer at her local apothecary, to whom she was indebted at the point of her death.¹²

Even if *Gli sperimenti* and the other manuscript *ricettari* are considered to be aimed at a smaller and more elite audience than the printed recipe books, the recipes in popular texts frequently call for the use of specialised equipment and multistep procedures. In the recipes I have looked at, the basic range of equipment required includes alembics, pots, knives, mortar and pestle, cloth for straining, bowls, basins, cauldrons, ampoules, and a variety of storage containers—often specifications are made as to whether these items should be made from glass, clay, wood, lead, marble or other material. Distillation by alembic is central to the production of many of the waters and washes in the *ricettari*, appearing in 71 of the cosmetic recipes in my database (just under 20%), although with a more significant presence in the manuscripts (in part because the manuscripts tend to be longer). The process is involved in 22% of the cosmetic recipes in the manuscript *Ricettario galante*, and also in just under 20% in the printed collection *Venusta*; however 40% of the cosmetic section of the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript require distillation. Other texts involving distillation are *Dificio de ricette*, *Secreti secretorum*, *Probatum est*, and the manuscript *Secreti medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia*. Sometimes the preparer must be able to fit several pigeons or hens into their alembic alongside the other ingredients; other times the user must identify and separately collect different waters that are extracted as they change colours.¹³ If Shaw and Welch's observations at the Giglio Pharmacy are representative,

¹¹ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 606; see also, Ray, 'Experiments with Alchemy', 163.

¹² Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (vol. 3), 551 (letter dated 8 September 1509); de Vries, *Caterina Sforza*, 210, 269.

¹³ For example, *Gli sperimenti*, Rx. 47.

these more complex processes would have been outside of the normal range of procedures that a Renaissance consumer was accustomed to doing, or indeed wished to perform, in order to make the final product ready to use.

In addition, Tessa Storey has observed in a recent survey of household inventories that the majority of homes were not normally furnished with the wide range of specialised equipment needed to produce the more complex cosmetic recipes, finding that items such as bell-jars and glass or copper alembics were not commonplace even in kitchens of the wealthy.¹⁴ For example, alembics, necessary for distilled recipes, are by no means universal in household inventories. The illustration of distillation in *Dificio de ricette* is too abstract to be a practical guide (Figure 14), and, as discussed in Chapter 3, seems more to be a visual assertion of the text's basis in empirical study. Illustrations in Mattioli's *Materia medica* show large and complex distillation devices.¹⁵ Even the most simple (Figure 14a) he describes to be common in German *spezierie*, not in households. In 1569, the courtesan Julia Lombardo, possessed an 'alembic of lead with a stove of iron', valued at 1 *lira* and 10 *soldi*, but an inventory of the home where Venetian *procuratore* Lorenzo Correr and Donna Andriana lived, taken in 1584, has no alembic, despite an otherwise large array of pots and pans.¹⁶ In fact, Lombardo's home seems particularly well stocked, as items in her inventory that pertain to a beauty routine include: 'to little copper vases of perfume, one good and one broken', 'a perfume box of wood', 'an *albarello* of lead', 'a mirror of *Azzal*', 'a little box of walnut', and 'eight cloths to dry the hands'.¹⁷ In the cupboard she has 'two *zarete* of lye, broken, with other little basins, of little value', and in the room with the stove 'six

¹⁴ Tessa Storey refers to a project carried out by herself, Marta Ajmar and Sandra Cavallo titled 'Healthy homes and Healthy Bodies in Renaissance Italy', a Wellcome Funded Project, in 'Cosmetics, Remedies and Alchemy', 150.

¹⁵ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, appendix, 'Del modo di distillare le acque da tutte le piante', section unpaginated, signature a3^v.

¹⁶ Santore, 'Somtuosa Meretrize', 77; Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia* (v. II), 634.

¹⁷ Santore, 'Julia Lombardo', 60.

medium-sized tubs for use in the house', 'a cauldron of copper', 'two cauldrons of copper, one of three *secchi* and another of two', and 'a pitcher of lye' which seems to perhaps be used not so much for the hair, but for washing clothes as it is in the same room as the 'table for washing'.¹⁸

Yet Lombardo is an example of a courtesan of relatively expansive means, and in fact the materials in her house contrast to the trend for poorly stocked homes that Storey found to be the norm amongst prostitutes and courtesans in Rome. The majority of women in Storey's study had only limited kitchen equipment—plates, knives, pots, grills and wine jars were among the most likely items to be present—but many had so few utensils that they habitually 'ordered food out' from nearby locales rather than preparing meals.¹⁹ With little space even to store food, and few implements for preparing it, these women were unlikely to have made their own cosmetics in the home, especially as there is no evidence of the necessary equipment. On the other hand, the range of items called for in recipe books corresponds more closely to the wares in apothecaries. For example, the inventory from Pavia taken in 1441 and 1445 records a much wider range of alembics, mortars and jars than appears in household inventories, including three lead alembics; large and small mortars, including two of bronze; and a whole range of vases, jars and jugs for various contents and purposes.²⁰ Overall, this suggests that household manufacture of cosmetic recipes was not that common a practice.

In addition, family and shop inventories from Venice and other parts of Italy, which have increasingly become the focus of study in recent years, evidence the fact that items such as ceruse, rosewater, and varieties of ground and whole ingredients were

¹⁸ Santore, 'Julia Lombardo', 68, 74.

¹⁹ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 203.

²⁰ Aleati and Bianchi, 'Farmacie pavesi', alembics on pp. 17-28; mortars on pp. 26, 27 and 29; containers in general on 15 and 25.

commonly sold and purchased in shops rather than produced at home.²¹ The ‘spese’ of Lorenzo Lotto, for example, include purchases of mastic, walnut oil, cinnabar and white lead.²² While they are listed mainly amongst his ‘work expenses’ white lead and walnut oil also appear amongst the expenses ‘per uxo et vestire’, as in April of 1542, when he purchases one pound of ceruse at a price of four *soldi* along with three *soldi* worth of walnut oil.²³ It is somewhat unclear if he actually was using these for something other than paint—white lead of course was used in skin whiteners, but walnut oil does not appear in use in any cosmetic recipes, although other parts of walnuts and other nut oils are used (see Appendix C). The wares of Venetian colour-seller Jacopo de’ Benedetti, recorded in a 1598 inventory included a number of products used in cosmetic recipes, including white lead (*biacha masenada*) alum of dregs (*lume de feza de friul*), red lake (*lacha in balle*), *sticados*, incense (*incenso menudo*), rock alum, gum arabic, orpiment and gall.²⁴ Venice was a centre for manufacture of a range of pigments and materials that used in both art and in cosmetics, including sublimate and white lead.²⁵ Mattioli notes in his *Materia medica* that ‘they make it [ceruse] continually in Venice, and in other mercantile areas in Italy, not only for use in medicine, but also for painters and other masters’.²⁶ The 1445 inventory from Pavia records having one pound and two

²¹ See: Kirby et al., eds., *Trade in Artists’ Materials*; Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*; Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 93; DeLancey, ‘Dragonsblood and Ultramarine’, 141-150; DeLancey, ‘In the Streets Where They Sell Colors’, 193-232; Krischel, ‘Venezianischen Pigmenthandels’, 93-158; Matthew, ‘Vendecolori a Venezia’, 680-686; Kirby, ‘Price of Quality’, 19-39; Lotto (ed. Grimaldi and Sordi), *Spese diverse*; dal Ponte (ed. Muraro), *Il libro*; Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia* (v. II), 637-39.

²² Lotto (ed. Grimaldi and Sordi), *Spese diverse* (v. 2), 212 (199v).

²³ Lotto (ed. Grimaldi and Sordi), *Spese diverse* (v. 2), 212 (199v).

²⁴ Roland Krischel, ‘Venezianischen Pigmenthandels’, 131.

²⁵ Matthew and Berrie, ‘Purchase of Painters’ Colours’, 247; Krischel, ‘Inventory’, 258.

²⁶ ‘... fassene continuamente in Vinegia, & in altri luoghi mercanteschi d’Italia, non solo per l’uso della medicina; ma anchora de i dipintori, & altri magisterij’. Pietro Andrea Mattioli, *Materia medica* (Venice: Felice Valgriso, 1585): 1411. Venice was a well known source of pigments, but was especially known for production of white lead and sublimate, both of which were used in cosmetic recipes. See Krischel, ‘Inventory’, 253-266; Mathew and Berrie, ‘Purchase of Painters’ Colours’, 247; Fiumi and Tempesta, ‘Gli “esperimenti” di Caterina Sforza’, 142. The significance of the similarity in painter’s materials and materials

grossi in stock of an ointment of cooked ceruse, valued at the price of 4 *soldi* and 6 *denari*.²⁷ One specific Venetian seller who specialised in those ingredients from 1520 until his death in the 1560s was even known as *Hieronimo da i sulimadi*, named after the sublimate he sold.²⁸ Other ingredients useful both in cosmetics and art that could be found in the shops of Venetian colour-sellers included vitriol, potassium nitrate (*'sal nitro'*), mercury, and sublimate (mercuric chloride).²⁹ Interestingly, despite what therefore appears to have been a ready availability of white lead in shops, some recipe books still include instructions for making white lead in a small-scale setting. The Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript, for example, includes a classic formula for making ceruse, which is noted as a low cost recipe, 'To make a cosmetic with little expense':

Take an *albarello*³⁰ that holds 3 jars of strong white vinegar and fill it with this vinegar to about 4 inches' [depth], then take 1 pound of old lard that is white, remove any crust, and have only the white lard, and chop it finely and put it into the vinegar and have a cover of thick lead that covers the *arbarello*, in a manner so that it does not breathe, and bury it in the ground in a place that gets air and sun for eight days, then bring it out and open it, and scrape away that which has stuck to the cover, and reseal it and return it underground, and every four days return to take away what has stuck to the cover until you have enough of it, and when you want to make yourself beautiful take a little in the palm of your hand, with a little water of white dittany or fava flower, and scrub your face and your breast and let it dry in place and it will make you very white.³¹

used in cosmetics was also acknowledged at the time. See discussion in Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 13; Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 31-32.

²⁷ Aleati and Bianchi, 'Farmacie pavesi', 7-50, 24.

²⁸ Matthew and Berrie, 'Purchase of Painters' Colours', 246.

²⁹ Matthew and Berrie, 'Purchase of Painters' Colours', 246

³⁰ Cylindrical pharmacy jar.

³¹ 'A fare un belletto con puocha spesa: Rx uno arbarello che tegna 3. ingestare de accetto bianco forte et empila di questo accetto apresso a guatro dita, puo togli lib. i. de lardo vecchio che sia bianco, tirali via quella scorza et habi solamente el lardo bianco, et taglialo sottile et mettelo intro l'acetto et habi uno copro de piombo grosso che copra l'arbarello, per modo che non respiri, et sotteralo intera in locho che habi laere et sole per otto giorni, di puoi cavalo fora et aprilo, et rassa via quello che se tiene allo coverchio et torna a serare, et tornalo a sotterare, et ogni 4 di torna a tor via quello che se tene al copro sino a tanto che tu n'habbi assai, et quando tu te voi far bella tone un pocho su la palma della mano, con un pocho d'Aqua de frassinella over di fior di fava, et fregati il volto e il petto et lasciatj sugare a sua posta, et farati bianchissima.' MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 185v-186r.

This recipe might have been described as ‘low cost’ because it includes the creation of one’s own white lead pigment, rather than the purchase of it. However, white lead itself was not that expensive, for example, costing around 4 *soldi* per pound in Venice, where the average pay of a skilled labourer was 1 Lira a day.³² Thus the ‘low cost’ might equally refer to the fact that the recipe itself does not require many other costly ingredients—it is simply white lead mixed with water of white dittany or fava. Dittany water itself does not appear in the stocks of all apothecaries, it is neither among the various waters listed in the inventories taken in 1441 and 1445 in a pharmacy in Pavia, nor those taken in 1548 the *spezieria* of the Ospedale Maggiore di San Giovanni Battista in Turin. However the dried plant is present, suggesting perhaps that the water might be made at home. In Pavia in 1445, dried dittany is listed at the price of 3 *denari* per ounce (6 *denari* for 2 ounces); for comparison, in the same pharmacy in 1441, ceruse powder cost 2.3 *denari* per ounce, and in 1445 ceruse ointment cost 30 *denari* per ounce (4 *soldi* and 6 *denari* for 1 lb and 2 *grani*).³³ In Turin in 1548, white dittany cost 1 *quarto* for half an ounce (4 drams), and fava water cost 1 *grosso* per pound, or just 1/3 of a *quarto* per ounce; in the same inventory ceruse powder was valued at 30 *quarti* for 1.5 pounds, or 1.7 *quarti* per ounce.³⁴

The possibility that cosmetic recipes were manufactured outside of the home is significant to considerations of the availability of cosmetics, because it reduces the extent to which a recipe’s preparation time can be seen to determine who could have made and used it. Labour costs were relatively low, for example, in a 1534 inventory, where more is spent on storax ‘for perfume’ than on the total wages for four kitchen

³² Hohti, ‘Innkeeper’s Goods’, 257; Pavanini, ‘Abitazioni popolari e borghesi’, 68.

³³ Aleati and Bianchi, ‘Farmacia pavesi’, 13, 20, 24.

³⁴ Caffaratto, ‘Un inventario del Cinquecento’, 61, 66, 72.

staff.³⁵ Thus, if a recipe was prepared in a shop, it was mainly the cost of the ingredients themselves that should be considered to have affected the overall cost of a remedy, and not the process required to prepare it.³⁶

Access to Ingredients

Even if cosmetics were primarily made in shops, overall access would have remained a problem for people living beyond the reaches of an urban centre. James Shaw and Evelyn Welch have argued that the difference between urban and rural setting had as much if not greater impact on the availability of medical ingredients as a person's place within social hierarchies because, outside of the urban setting, apothecaries were not very common, or accessible.³⁷ A passage from Delicado's *Loçana* relates the eagerness of peasant women to gain access to cosmetic tips and specialty ingredients, as they trade in whatever items of value they can: 'If I show tenderness to the peasants, their wives will seek me out, and since I'll show them how to make themselves beautiful, they'll bring me figs and a thousand other delicacies as that woman from Tivoli did when I sold her a cuatrin's worth of sublimate...'³⁸ Although fictional, this passage perhaps reflects the social reality that obtaining manufactured materials was problematic for those in rural places.

The *Thesoro de poveri*, as I previously noted, is understood to be intended for the use of doctors working in rural communities, based upon which, the remedies inside it can therefore be seen to suggest how medicine and hygiene was approached for these

³⁵ Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia* (v. II), 637: 'per femene 3 et un homo serviteno a lavar in cucina... L. 1 s. 4'; similarly he previously lists a daily wage as 14 soldi a day: 'per homeni 6 serviteno alla cucina per zorni 2, ed altri servitij a s. 14 per uno al zorno'.

³⁶ See my discussion below, and Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia* (v. II), 638; also Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 258.

³⁷ Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 259; Ciasca, 'La cultura di un farmacista del '400', 127; Giagnacovo, 'Due alimentazioni', 872; Skinner, *Health and Medicine*, 105.

³⁸ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 182.

communities, and whether it was indeed perceived to be different.³⁹ There are noticeable differences between the recipes in this text and other recipe books circulating at the same time which support Shaw and Welch's suggestion. The simple preparations and modest material requirements in *Thesoro de poveri* show a sensitivity to the environmental limitations of a rural setting—in particular a setting where apothecaries were not available to supply a diverse range of ingredients and pre-made or semi-made products. The recipes in *Thesoro de poveri* are generally brief, and call for only a few ingredients, with an average of 2.84 ingredients per recipe.⁴⁰ For example, the recipe for blonde hair dye calls for one main ingredient, and takes effect after a single application, reading: 'make lye out of ashes from hulled grass and wash your head one time. It makes hair blonde for two months'.⁴¹ It promises to deliver a long-enduring effect with a minimum investment of time and resources. Such brevity is characteristic of the text: for problems with hair growth, the reader is informed that 'the ashes of goat dung applied to the head with common oil multiplies the hair', for the opposite problem 'flour of fava with urine of children applied does not ever let hairs grow back where you put it'.⁴² Both these recipes require only two ingredients, with very little preparation (such as boiling, distilling, or straining) before they are ready for use.

This simplicity sets *Thesoro de poveri* apart from other recipe books in print.

Venusta is one of the longer print recipe books, so is comparable to *Thesoro de poveri* in that respect, but has an average of 4.58 ingredients per recipe. For example, to

³⁹ The suggestion that the *Thesaurus pauperum* includes cosmetics for financially limited audiences was first made by Patrizia Turrini. See Turrini, 'Bellezza di ieri', 13; for further discussion of the *Thesaurus pauperum*, see: Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 235; McVaugh, 'Medicine in the Latin Middle Ages', 59; Siraisi, *Medieval & Early Renaissance Medicine*, 131-2; Guaraldi et al., 'Il codice Palatino', 42-3.

⁴⁰ See Appendix E.

⁴¹ 'Item fa lasciva della cenere dellerba dibucciata & lava il capo una volta fa icapegli biondi per mesi due.' Hispanus, *Thesoro de poveri*, 2^v.

⁴² 'Item lacenere dello sterco della capra untone il capo collolio comune multiplica licapelli'; 'Item lafarina della fava con lorina de fanciulli [un]gini non lassa mai rinascere li capelli dove sipone.' Hispanus, *Thesoro de poveri*, 2^r, 3^v.

compare a recipe for blonde hair dye in *Venusta* to the previously given example in *Thesoro de poveri*, there is already a greater number of ingredients and a multi-step preparation required:

To make most perfect water for blondness for the hair: Take 1 pound alum of dregs: and put it to soften water from a river: and let it sit for one day, and one night. Then take a tub and put a cloth over the mouth [of the jar] and strain the said water in tub and put it in a basin and put in two ounces of sweet almonds & and dregs and white wine: and the whites of two fresh eggs, well beaten: and a little pig fat, well beaten: or in place of the lard, take fat of mane of a horse and then put it in a *zucha* of glass that is half dressed & and keep them always in the sun: and in the day wash the hair: and this will make it blonde.⁴³

Here, in contrast to *Thesoro de poveri*, there are not only numerous ingredients, but a number of them have to be processed or manipulated separately before being added to the final mixture and used. The particularly concise nature of the recipes in *Thesoro de poveri* is even more apparent when compared with recipes found in contemporary manuscripts (as in the example from *Gli experimenti* given above) or the printed collections which became popular in the later Cinquecento such as those by Isabella Cortese and Alessio Piemontese, and Giovanni Marinello.⁴⁴ For example, a four-page-long recipe by Piemontese for ‘A most beautiful way to make women’s hair blond easily, and without staying out in the sun for long, or also without staying at all’, described as a ‘very rare and most excellent secret’, is in no way unusual for the text, where a majority of recipes span several pages in length.⁴⁵

⁴³ ‘A far acqua de bionda per capelli perfettissima: Recipe lume de feza lire vna: e mettila a moio i[n] acqua de fiume: e lassa star vn giorno: e vna notte: poi to vna maste letta: e poni vna peza su la bocca e cola la ditta aqua i ditta mastella e mettila in vno catino e mettili dentro onze do de mandole dolce: & grepola e vin bianco: & doi chiare de oui freschi ben sbattudi: & vn puoco di laardo di porco be[n] battudo: ouer in loco di lardo tolli grasso de chrin de cauallo e poi mettilo in vna zucha de vetro che sia mezo vestita: & tienlo sempre al sole: e alla giornata bagnate li capelli: & falli biondi.’ Celebrino, *Venusta*, 6 (Rx. 47).

⁴⁴ Cortese, *I secreti*; Ruscelli, *De’ Secreti*; Marinello, *Gli ornamenti delle donne*.

⁴⁵ Ruscelli, *De’ Secreti*, 241-44: ‘Modo Bellissimo da farsi le Donne i capelli biondi facilmente, & senza star molto al sole, ò ancora senza starvi nienti. Et questo è rarissimo, & eccellentissimo secreto’.

In addition to requiring simpler combinations of ingredients than other texts, *Thesoro de poveri* refers to a narrower range of ingredients overall than the other *ricettari*, including mainly plant and animal materials, with only a few metals, alums and imported products that would have to be bought from a specialty shop.⁴⁶ In other words, *Thesoro de poveri* features relatively little variation amongst ingredients that would necessitate speciality purchases. For example, *Venusta* calls for varieties of wine including white wine, malmsey wine, sour malmsey wine, and perfumed white wine, while *Thesoro de poveri* calls for nothing more specific than white wine.⁴⁷ Likewise, unlike most other recipe books which incorporate a wide variety of alums, *Thesoro de poveri* only once calls for ‘alum’ and does not specify which variety. In addition, lead, mastic and white lead only appear once, and orpiment features in only two recipes. The cosmetic recipes in *Venusta*, on the other hand, include specialist and imported ingredients not mentioned in the *Thesoro de poveri* such as storax, sappanwood, musk, myrrh, frankincense, and amber (for a full ingredient comparison of the two texts see Appendix E).⁴⁸ This wider variety of specialty ingredients is visible in the following recipe, which is a typical example of the more complex recipes in *Venusta*:

Ointment to keep the face beautiful

Take two ounces marrow of stag, two ounces marrow of wether: one ounce of kid fat that is well ground and cleaned of hairs: ½ ounce lard of a red male pig: ½ ounce storax: 3 *caratti* (12 grains) fine musk, and put all these things in a wine jar: then put in fine rosewater and seal well: then boil it for three or four hours on a low flame: then strain through a thick linen cloth into a glass vase and let it cool off: then take that fat that has congealed on top of the said water and put it in a glazed pot and add ½ ounce of turpentine washed by 9 waters and put 2 *quartuccio* each roses and white wax: and combine them anew over the fire: and as it becomes cool again,

⁴⁶ An unspecified alum, lead, mastic, and white lead appear only once each, and orpiment features in two recipes. See Appendix E.

⁴⁷ See Appendix E.

⁴⁸ Ciasca, *L'Arte dei medici e Speciali*, 367-446; Lane, ‘Medieval Spice Trade’, 47-87, esp. 50; Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973): 71-72; Sanudo, *Cità Excelentissimassa*, 259.

put in $\frac{1}{2}$ *quarto* of finely ground mastic, and 1 *quarto* of burned borax mix everything together well: then with a little fine rosewater save it in a glass vase in an undisturbed place: and you will have a most dignified thing for making the face beautiful.⁴⁹

I would suggest that, while cosmetics at their most basic ingredient components may have been available to a relatively wide range of people, the addition of scented oils and waters, perfumes and nuanced ingredients, which defined cosmetics as something other than paint that was applied to the face, also raised their cost.

In an inventory from Francesco and Jacopo Bassano, the price of white lead is four *soldi* per pound in 1530, and 3 *soldi* per pound in 1537; and the cost of mastic, a resin used in a number of recipes for the skin, hair and teeth, in 1530 at 6 *soldi* per ounce.⁵⁰ The standard quantity of white lead called for in recipes ranges between one ounce and one pound, which, based on the prices above, would cost at most 4 *soldi* in Venice. A relatively simple face whitener, then, would not be overly expensive, as it would require only a small amount of white lead mixed with a bit of oil and water, this would at least functionally create a cosmetic, however all the recipes I have come across opt for scented ingredients like rosewater and oils infused with flowers. The simplest recipe for a face whitener using white lead calls for a mixture of white lead, rosewater and violet oil; another relatively basic one calls for white lead, white wax, egg white,

⁴⁹ ‘Unguento per mantener la faccia bella. Recipe medolla di ceruo onze do: medolla di castrone: onze do: grasso di capretto onze vna ben pesto & netto de peli: sonza di porco rosso maschio onze meza: storaze onze meza: muschio fino charatti tre: & tutte queste cose mette i vna inghestara: puoi mettili acqua rosata fina & serala bene: poi fa boglire per tre o quatro hore a fuoco lento: puoi colala p[er] vn panno de lino spesso in vaso vitriato & lassalo refredare: puoi piglia quello grasso che sera congelato sopra della ditta acqua & mettilo in vno pignarello inuitriato & agiongeli onze meza de buona trementina lauata a nove acque & poneli rose & cera bianca: anna quarti doi: & nouiter la incorpora al foco: & come fara refredato mettili quarto mezo di mastici pesti passati sutilmente. & vn quarto di boraso brusato & incorpora bene ogni cosa: puoi con un puoco de acqua rosa fina seruala in vasso di vetro ben serato al sereno: & harai cosa dignissima per fare bella la faccia.’ Celebrino, *Venusta*, 2, Rx. 2

⁵⁰ Kirby, ‘Price of Quality’, 36; dal Ponte (ed. Muraro), *Il libro*, 82; Kirby et al., eds., *Trade in Artists’ Materials*, 455.

rose oil and incense.⁵¹ If bought in the apothecary in Torino in 1548, rosewater would cost just over 3 *quarti* per pound, violet oil 16 *quarti* (or 4 *grossi*) per pound and ceruse 20 *quarti* (equivalent to 5 *grossi*) per pound (see Table 3, below). Other ingredients are more costly—Lorenzo Lotto’s *Spese diverse* include red lake pigment (*lacha*), at the cost of 124 *soldi* per ounce in 1531 or and 55 *soldi* per ounce in 1542.⁵² This expensive pigment is only a rare addition to recipes—the pseudo-Savonarola manuscript calls for one ounce of it, strangely not in a rouge, but a ‘Water in all goodness to make women white’ (*Aqua in tutta bontade per fare bianche le done*), and *Ricettario galante* calls for 3 *soldi* worth in a ‘Water for teeth and damaged gums’ (*Acqua per denti et gengive guaste*).⁵³ Perfume is also clearly listed as an expensive item in the inventory from March of 1534 for ‘messer Hettor Loredan’, which contains a number of ingredients recurrent in cosmetic recipes amongst an assortment items purchased for a large dinner, featured in Table 1.⁵⁴ While the items seemed to have been bought as food, the inventory itself also includes one entry of ‘storax to make perfume’, which costs 1 Lire, 16 *soldi*.⁵⁵ For a sense of comparison, on the same list of purchases, bread costs 2 *soldi* for one loaf (of indeterminate size), and, as I previously

⁵¹ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 629 (‘A guarire la Roseza del Volto’), 636 (‘Contra la rosseza de viso et de omne loco per causa del sole, et crepature’); Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 16 (‘Unguento che fa nascere la bella pelle’).

⁵² Kirby, ‘Price of Quality’, 36; Lotto (ed. Grimaldi and Sordi), *Spese diverse* (v. 2), 212.

⁵³ Although the Pseudo-Savonarola recipe is for making skin white, it calls for both red lake pigment and sappanwood (*verzin*) both of which result in a red dye, and it states that the first distillation results in a red water. Either the second distillation which follows removes the dyeing agents, there is an error in the title, or the recipe is supposed to effect white skin through physically effecting the body rather than dyeing it. MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 187^r; Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 64-65.

⁵⁴ Transcribed in Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia* (v. II), 636-639. (Original at the Archivio di Stato in Venice, Ufficiali alle Rason vecchie, Notatorio, Reg. no. 27, c. 188).

⁵⁵ ‘Per stores per far perfumego...L. 1 s. 16’. Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia* (v. II), 637.

noted, to employ three women and one man to wash up in the kitchen, they paid 1 Lira and 4 soldi—less than the price of the storax.⁵⁶

In many recipes, the amount of perfume to be used is not specified, but left up to the maker's preference. For example, a recipe for rouge in *Dificio de ricette* suggests, at the end, that 'if you like, and know what is good, put in a little musk or civet or other odour that you like'.⁵⁷ Similarly, the 'Water of Angels' in *Ricettario galante* asks the reader to add 'in your way and with discretion : fine musk, civet, ambergris, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, labdanum, benzoin [and] storax'.⁵⁸ How much a person added of these items likely depended not just on their preference for the scent of the final product, but also on what they could afford. In the Turin apothecary, items used in perfumes have a relatively high price per ounce, although musk, civet, ambergris and benzoin do not appear to have been in the wares of this particular apothecary, or in the Quattrocento inventory from Pavia. As shown in Table 3 below, all the spices and scents aside from nutmeg cost at least double the unit price of white lead. At 16 *quarti* per ounce, cloves cost over eight times as much as white lead, which cost 1.67 *quarti* per ounce, and almost 60 times more per unit than rosewater, which cost just over a quarter *quarti* per ounce.

Cost and Effect

While I have demonstrated that a wide variation in recipe cost and complexity existed, the question remains as to whether this variation in ingredients translated into a variation in appearance, particularly, a variation great enough to make differences in

⁵⁶ Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia* (v. II), 637: 'per femene 3 et un homo serviteno a lavar in cusina... L. 1 s. 4'; similarly he previously lists a daily wage as 14 soldi a day: 'per homeni 6 serviteno alla cusina per zorni 2, ed altri servitij a s. 14 per uno al zorno'.

⁵⁷ '... se tu uoi che sappia de buono metti uno poco di muschio dentro ouero Zibetto ouer altro odore che ti piace ...'. *Dificio de ricette* (Venice: Giouanantonio et i Fratelli da Sabio, June 1532): 8^v (Rx. 55, 'A far rosso per lo uiso dele donne/A far uno rosso per lo uiso per donne').

⁵⁸ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 14.

social status apparent. There is a clear anxiety for the cosmetic buyer regarding whether or not the product they buy is worth the cost—it seems to be the accepted fact that more expensive ‘quality’ ingredients will give the most effective results, however the buyer must always be wary of overpriced or even harmful concoctions that do not deliver results.⁵⁹ For example, in Francisco Delicado’s *Retrato de la Loçana Andaluza*, Loçana chastises one eager client for assuming that beauty comes cheap: ‘Did you really think that for two *julios* I could buy the suckling pigs, the lemon, the traditional unripe grapes and all the rest that the cream requires?’, she scolds, ‘My dear, you must pay me more than that if you want something good’.⁶⁰ Many episodes in the *Retrato de la Loçana* play on the fact that remedy sellers like Loçana often swindle their clients with overpriced and ineffective remedies. However, Loçana’s enthusiasm for expensive treatments corresponds to trends within the larger culture of medicine trade and production, where exotic or manufactured ingredients were often given higher value than native Italian plants.⁶¹ Within the urban environment, apothecary shops were influential in encouraging the use of imported or specialty products—namely, products which they supplied—simultaneously promoting the effectiveness of their wares, while negatively ‘branding’ easily accessible local plants as ‘spices of the poor’.⁶² As noted in the previous chapter, Shaw and Welch found at the Giglio pharmacy in Florence that doctors, patients, and pharmacists had highly interactive relationships, meaning

⁵⁹ Gentilcore, *Medical Charlatanism*; Gentilcore, ‘Martino Grimaldi’, 267-275; on cosmetic tricks in England, see Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*, 95-96. On attitudes towards apothecaries, see Welch, ‘Spice and Spectacle’, 127-158.

⁶⁰ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 154.

⁶¹ Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 259. For similar trends in Germany, see Katrizky, *Women, Medicine and Theatre*, 125-126, 128.

⁶² Shaw and Welch mention parsley, sage, rosemary and mint as examples, drawing attention to the fact that rosemary was frequently noted in folk traditions and herbals, but did not even appear amongst the wares of the Giglio apothecary in Florence. Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 259; Ciasca, ‘Cultura di un farmacista’, 127; Giagnacovo, ‘Due “alimentazioni”’, 105.

medicines were often amended to suit social status.⁶³ Wealthier clientele in particular could receive treatments tailored to their individual ‘complexion’, while other patients supplied some of their own ingredients, including luxury ones, to keep the remedies affordable.⁶⁴ Medicinal treatments for the wealthy often incorporated items such as pearls, gold, and gems as ‘additives’ to a remedy from more basic ingredients, resulting in gold-coated pills, or recommendations to swallow precious stones.⁶⁵

Perhaps reflecting this tradition, within *ricettari* there is a tendency for excess and complexity to be used to give an impression of authenticity—often the more involved and abstruse a recipe and its ingredients are, the more miraculous the author claims its effects to be.⁶⁶ The complex ‘miracle water’ in *Gli sperimenti*, which I discussed at the start of this chapter, is described as making ‘miraculous beauty’ and having ‘infinite virtue’, fuelled by its 30-some ingredients.⁶⁷ Likewise, at the end of a particularly lengthy recipe in the *Ricettario galante* which calls for 23 ingredients, the reader is reassured that ‘the cost will not sadden you if you want to make yourself beautiful’.⁶⁸ Another ‘Marvellous’ water for the face in the same volume includes a distillation of forty feet of pigs or rams, while an ‘Excellent water for the face’ which is ‘very good and most perfect’ only requires fresh eggs and vinegar, but suggests that the reader soak the eggs in vinegar for ten days, then tie them up with a thread in the sun,

⁶³ Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 254-56, 258.

⁶⁴ Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 254-56, 258.

⁶⁵ Shaw and Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine*, 258; Barker, ‘Making of a Plague Saint’, 124; Crisciani and Pereira, ‘Black Death and Golden Remedies’, 165-181; Crisciani, ‘Scholastic Medicine’, 118-39; Furdell, *Royal Doctors*, 50; Myers, *Captain of All These Men of Death*, 26; Beer, ‘Northumberland’, 9.

⁶⁶ For example, the ‘miracle water’ in Sforza’s *Experimenti* included in my text above. Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 632.

⁶⁷ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 632-22 (Rx. 37, ‘A fare aqua da fare bella miraculosa come acqua del talcho et de inenite vertu’).

⁶⁸ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 22 (‘A fare una acqua da viso perfettissima provata da molte gentildonne et signore’): ‘non ti doglia il spendere se vuoi farti bellissima’.

before piercing them and collecting the liquid that comes out.⁶⁹ In *Venusta*, a ‘most perfect coloured makeup that lasts fifteen days’ includes both sappanwood and kermes red dyes in addition to what appears to be distilled water of 6 day old puppies; the solution must be buried under dung for ten days in a shady spot before this long-lasting cosmetic is ready.⁷⁰

Another example where cost seems to lead to enduring effect is a recipe for white skin which promises to work for eight days, and involves distilling a white hen in an alembic with a selection of imported spices and perfumes inside, in addition to ground pearls and crystal, all of which would have been costly additions:

Take a white hen like you would like to put in the fire, without head and without feet, and without innards, skinned, dried and cut in pieces, put it in an alembic with these things inside. 4 ounces fine cinnamon 20 fresh eggs, chopped walnuts, cloves, tiny pearls, 2 ounces of each. Ginger, galangal 1 ounce of each 2 oz. spikenard, 5 ounces mace, 1 pound fine ground crystal, 2 ounces camphor and put all the aforementioned things in an alembic except for the camphor that you put in the water after it is distilled, and the said water you put in the sun for ten days and it is made, and when the woman goes to bed at night, take some of this water and wash the face and let it dry in place, in a few days it will make her white and fragrant and lasts for eight days, true thing.⁷¹

The distillation of one or two doves, pigeons or hens, appears in 17 different recipes in my database, and an additional 7 recipes in *Gli sperimenti*. Based on the cost in the Loredan inventory of three lire and ten *soldi* a pair, this would automatically put a

⁶⁹ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 24 (Rx. 32, ‘Acqua maravigliosa per il viso’); 9 (Rx. 11, ‘Acqua di viso ottima).

⁷⁰ Celebrino, *Venusta*, 4 (Rx. 24). Samuel Pepys also records his wife wearing ‘puppy-dog water’ in 1664. See Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*, 108-109.

⁷¹ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 184^v: ‘Aqua da far una dona bianca et odorifera che dura otto giorni: RX Una galina bianca come la volesti ponere al fuocho senza testa e senza gambe, et senza interiori, pellatta asciuta et tagliatta in pezetti, mettila in lambico con queste cose drento. Canella fina oz. 4 ovi freschi 20 nose masenate garofoli perle minute ane zz. ii zenzero galanga ane oz. i. spico nardo oz. ii. macis oz. 5. cristallo fino pisto l. i. camphora zz. ii. et tutte lo predette cose mettele nel lambicho salvo la camphora che se metta ne l’aqua dappoi lambichata, et la dita aqua sia messa al sole, per x. di et sera fatta, et quando la donna va la sera al letto, pilia di questa aqua et lavasi il volto et lasiassi assiugare la sua posta, in puochi di la fara bianca et odorifera e dura octo giorni, cosa vera.’

recipe at three times the average daily wage of a skilled construction worker (one Lira), and even more out of the range of, for example, another set of kitchen servants present on the Ferrara inventory, who were paid 14 soldi each per day.⁷² Distillation of hen also appears in a formula ‘To make the flesh white that lasts for some days’ which involves a cooked, fat, white hen, then ‘seasoning’ it inside and out with a combination of camphor, borax, rock alum, silver sublimate, and sugared alum, before distilling together with 20 lemons, beaten egg white and fresh cheese, in what must have been a rather sizeable alembic.⁷³ In each of these, the promise of spectacular or long-lasting results is substantiated by a complex or costly formula.

With certain ingredients, the link between cost and effectiveness would have been genuine. For example, in skin lotions, the variety of animal fats and oils would have contributed to a more moisturising solution, and also affected the solubility of the other elements (especially perfumes) within the concoction.⁷⁴ The variety of ingredients used to whiten the skin also would have resulted in a variable quality of colour, texture and overall effect, depending on how much one paid for the substances in their makeup. As I suggested in Chapter 3, the most subtle and reliable whitening effects were probably achieved through use of white lead, while other white powders tended to have less reliable results. Indeed, the obvious effects of chalk and ground pumice appear in complaints by Alessandro Piccolomini and Leonbattista Alberti.⁷⁵ Orris root, which I mentioned in Chapter 3 as an ingredient to bring colour to the face

⁷² Hohti, ‘Innkeeper’s Goods’, 257; Pavanini, ‘Abitazioni popolari’, 637-38: ‘per homeni 6 serviteno alla cusina per zorni 2, ed altri servitij a s. 14 per uno al zorno’.

⁷³ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 187^v, ‘A fare la carne bianca che duri alquanti giorni’.

⁷⁴ Anna Canning, personal communication, March 2013.

⁷⁵ Reference to chalk in: Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*, 32. ‘What worse can we see than a young lady who has powdered herself with chalk, and has covered her face with a mask so thick that scarce may it be known who she is’; Giannozzo’s wife is guilty of wearing pumice too noticeably: ‘allora la moglie mia col nome d’Idio tutta impomiciata’ Alberti (ed. Pellegrini and Spongano), *I primi tre libri della famiglia*, 359-360; translation in Alberti (trans. Watkins), *Family*, 215.

was also used as a powder for the skin, however, experiments done with this powder for the ‘Making Up the Renaissance’ workshop in 2010 found it difficult to apply in an even coat. None of these seem to result in the same thin, even, and water-resistant application that could be achieved with the use of white lead.⁷⁶ There is also a variation in colour—orris root, for example, has a yellower tint than white lead.⁷⁷ The range of treatments to bring colour to the face would have also produced a range of shades: red sandalwood (*sandalo rosso*) produces a light coral red stain; sappanwood or brazilwood (*verzine*) was perhaps the most recurrent rouge and is a slightly more pink pigment; red lake (*lacca*), as I mentioned above was rare and highly sought after for paint and a dark magenta; kermes (*grana*) and cochineal (*cremese*), both from insects, are respectively a dark red magenta and a brighter pink-magenta hue (Figure 26).⁷⁸

Whether or not these differences in hue and pigment were given any social significance remains a matter of conjecture. There is a fair amount of evidence that people were adept at recognising pigments and materials used in both paints and fabric dyes, and sumptuary laws introduced very specific hierarchies based on clothing material quality and colour.⁷⁹ However, there are no written accounts that clearly link

⁷⁶ Orris root (a variety of *Iris*) used in Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 627; Effects of white lead, white lead substitute, and orris root observed during ‘Making Up the Renaissance’ Study Day (National Galleries of Scotland, 18 March 2011), and especially through the participation of Anna Canning, Jill Burke and Sally Pointer. See project website: <<http://sites.ace.ed.ac.uk/Renaissancecosmetics/>>. The best resource for the visual effects of historical cosmetics to date is Sally Pointer’s *Artifice of Beauty*, 38, 72-101.

⁷⁷ See above, Burke et. al., ‘Making Up the Renaissance: Study Day’, project site; Pointer, *Artifice of Beauty*, 38, 66-71.

⁷⁸ For use of aqua vita, see Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 648: ‘a far la faccia bella et Colorita: Piglia lacqua de vita et ponela in una ampolla et lassala al sole et al sereno et de essa te ne lava la faccia et faralla colorita et bella usandola’; for red sandalwood, see *ibid.*, 648: ‘Rossetto ligiadrisismo et eccellentissimo. Piglia sciandoli rossi on. una acqua vita on tre...’ this red sandalwood recipe was tried out during ‘Making Up in the Renaissance: Study Day’; Excellent colour comparison of all the different pigments in Kirby et al., eds., *Trade in Artists’ Materials*, 444-45.

⁷⁹ Stella Mary Newton, in *Dress of the Venetians* discusses colour and amount of fabrics in relationship to social rank throughout the text. The two most comprehensive evaluations of Renaissance assessments of the materials used in artwork are found in the following two collections of essays: Neher and Shepherd (eds.), *Revaluing Renaissance Art*; and Kirby et

up specific cosmetic dyes with specific social groups in a similar manner. Pumice and chalk, as mentioned above, are criticised by Alberti and Piccolomini, and Alberti meanwhile critiqued the damaging effects of white lead; however, as I demonstrated in Chapter 1, these accounts are not so much directing their critique at the specific pigments used, but rather the lack of subtlety with which they were applied, so the criticism is not to do with the actual expense of ingredients involved. In addition, while many cosmetic recipes seem to associate complexity or luxury with effectiveness, they are not the only remedies that receive the praise or recommendation. For example, a recipe for an ‘Excellent cosmetic of little cost’ in *Venusta* recommends several solutions of one or two ingredients including lemons boiled in vinegar; a mixture of water of apples and berries; and equal amounts of peach leaf water and water of snails.⁸⁰ Another recipe in the same book for ‘Finest makeup’ is a paste made from starch cooked with nettle roots.⁸¹ Since, as Chapter 1 demonstrated, excessive expenditure on cosmetics was often criticised, it is not surprising that the recipes also suggest conflicting interests between celebration of luxury ingredients and offering remedies that are low cost.

Although descriptions of poor and rural populations often incorporate stereotyped descriptions of appearance, cosmetic use does not figure prominently. As Patrizia Bettella’s work has shown, the body of the *villano* was typecast by its robust, excessive features that imply a bestial and lascivious nature, ruled by urges and excesses

al. (eds.), *Trade in Artists’ Materials*; Especially Kirby’s ‘Price of Quality’ in Neher and Shepherd (pp. 19-42); and Mary Rogers, ‘Evaluating Textiles’, 122-133. Also on colour, see Hills, *Venetian Colour*. For an excellent overview and re-evaluation of previous treatment of fashion, class display and consumption, see Allerston, ‘Clothing and Society’, 367-90. Also on dress, see Giuliana Chesne Dauphinè Griffo, ‘Marin Sanudo e le vesti’, 259-72; Peter Burke, ‘Conspicuous Consumption in Seventeenth-Century Italy’, in *Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on Perception and Communication*, 132-159; Burke, ‘Material Civilisation’, 37-43, esp. 41; Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence*; and Frick, ‘Dressing a Renaissance City’; Bridgeman, ‘Condecenti et netti’, 44-51.

⁸⁰ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 184^r (‘Belleto optimo con poca spesa’).

⁸¹ Celebrino, *Venusta*, 3 (Rx. 10, ‘Beletto finissimo’).

to contrast them against the restraint and temperance that was meant to typify the upper echelons of society.⁸² Peasant bodies were described as rustic and excessive, with exaggerated skin colouration that implies their humoural composition and inherent character to be off balance.⁸³ For example, Angelo Beolco's *Betia* (1523) describes a peasant woman with 'rosy cheek more pink than a salty ham', teeth white as a turnip, and 'white and ruddy breasts like a turnip in the field'.⁸⁴ While Beolco's description technically conforms to the rose-and-cream ideal proscribed for noblewomen (creamy skin with rosy cheeks and lips), the description implies roughness and excess, not only in the shape of her body, but also in extremes of colouration, subverting the beauty canon. Her cheeks are not delicately rosy, but more pink than a ham, her breasts are not apple-like but large, with the extreme colour contrast of turnips.⁸⁵ The imagery that a ham and turnips inspire is that of a body that is large, indelicate, fleshy and rough, and deliberately invokes ideas of a farmyard rather than the delicate materials such as roses, pearls, and gold usually mentioned in poetic descriptions of beauty. *Betia*'s excessive and rubicund body also expresses the humoural imbalance typically associated with peasantry: her rosy body suggests a predominantly sanguine temperament which together with her excess flesh suggested the sexual wantonness of bestial natures.⁸⁶ While these descriptions stereotype and mock the peasant body, they do not offer any specific evidence or critique of cosmetic use, either in its presence or its lack.

The only time where cosmetic use is clearly associated with a specific social group is when it is tied with prostitution. Chapter 1 examined many examples where

⁸² Bettella, 'Marked Body', 152-156, 160-161; Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 112.

⁸³ Laughran, 'Oltre la pelle', 51, 54, 61; Laughran also discusses differences between bodies of the elite and the *popolani* in: Laughran, 'Body, Public Health, Social Control', 137-47.

⁸⁴ Bettella, 'Marked Body', 152.

⁸⁵ For discussion of *Betia* in relationship with other similar works, see Bettella, 'Marked Body', 152-156; on ideal breasts: Bembo, *Gli Asolani*, 158-59; Yalom, *History of the Breast*, 54; Bayer, 'Introduction', 5.

⁸⁶ Bettella, 'Marked Body', 152-156; Matthews-Grieco, 'Satyrs and Sausages', 22.

prostitutes were specifically associated with both knowledge of cosmetic remedies and over-use of cosmetics. However, as I asserted there, these associations appear to be primarily tropes, in which the over-use of cosmetics represents the excesses of these women's lifestyles and their moral dissolution. In fact, complaints about prostitutes being mistaken for noblewomen suggest that there was unlikely to be much difference between the makeup habits of the two groups.⁸⁷ For example, in 1476, Duke Ercole d'Este of Ferrara made a proclamation ordering certain restraints on noblewomen's dress so that they would not be mistaken for prostitutes, ordering that 'women not go about with their faces hidden, veiled, covered, and masked, in a manner that they cannot openly and clearly be recognised, and who they are be known, and so they are not confused with the dishonest [women]...' ⁸⁸ Later, William Thomas, in *A History of Italy* (1549), related that

In some places of Italy... you shall find that sort of women (courtesans) in rich apparel ... and in all things that appertain to a delicate lady, so well furnished that to see one of them unknowingly she should seem rather the quality of a princess than of a common woman..⁸⁹

However, overall, the standard beauty ideals do favour those with wealth and resources. For example, a number of historians have previously suggested that the preference for pale skin favoured those with the advantage of not having to work outside in the sun.⁹⁰ Sarah Matthews Grieco has even suggested that this may have contributed to the tendency to depict paler skin in women than in men, since noblewomen were expected to spend less time outdoors in the public sphere than men.⁹¹

The preference for blonde hair in a country where it is not a common naturally

⁸⁷ Henry, 'Whorish civility', 15-16; Wolk-Simon, 'Rapture to the Greedy Eyes', 46.

⁸⁸ 'le donne non vadano col viso avvilluppato, vellato, coperto, et immascherato, per mo' che apertamente et chiaramente non siano discernute et conosciute che le siano, et ciò per non confondersi con le dishoneste...' Cittadella, *Notizie Amministrative*, 291.

⁸⁹ Thomas, *History of Italy*, 16; for further discussion see Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 66.

⁹⁰ Laughran, 'Oltre la pelle', 51; Laughran, 'Body, Public Health', 137-47; Matthews Grieco, 'Body, Appearance, Sexuality', 46-84, 62; Vigarello, *Concepts of Cleanliness*, 11-17.

⁹¹ Matthews Grieco, 'Body, Appearance, Sexuality', 62.

occurring trait also favoured people with the time and resources to attend to their hair. In Chapter 1, I brought up a number of examples where cosmetics were criticised as a waste of time, including the lament in Ludovico Ariosto's *La Cassaria* about 'how many hours' were spent on cosmetics.⁹² Testament to the potentially time-consuming nature of beauty routines is confirmed by epistolary accounts recounting hair washing and drying rituals lasting all day, such as Isabella d'Este's account examined in Chapter 3.⁹³ The sun-bleaching method Vecellio refers to also requires sitting atop a *solana* beneath a large-brimmed hat for hours (Figure 42).⁹⁴ Some skin recipes were also time-consuming, for example, a recipe 'To clean the face' in the *Ricettario galante*, in which a paste must be worn like a mask for two hours, before being washed off with bran water.⁹⁵

In addition, those in higher social standing tended to have a better chance of avoiding many of the diseases that could permanently damage the appearance. As recent research on the spread of both the Black Death and the French Disease have shown, the urban poor and anyone suffering from hunger or famine suffered much greater losses in times of epidemic.⁹⁶ The connection between disease, poverty, and disfigurement was recurrent in Renaissance artwork. As Philip Cottrell, Christine Boeckl, and others have observed, disease, poverty and vagrancy were more often than not visually conceptualised as one and the same thing.⁹⁷ Images such as Pordenone's *Saints Martin and Christopher* (1527), installed in the church of San Rocco in Venice,

⁹² Ludovico Ariosto, *Le Commedie di Ludovico Ariosto* (v. 1) ed. Andrea Gareffi (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 2007): 139-140

⁹³ Luzio and Renier, 'Lusso di Isabella d'Este', 95; Welch, 'Hair and Hands', 244.

⁹⁴ Vecellio, *Habiti antichi et moderni*, 113^r.

⁹⁵ Guerrini, ed., *Ricettario galante*, 26 ('A mondare la faccia').

⁹⁶ Arrizabalaga et al., *Great Pox*, 20-21; Cohn, *Cultures of Plague*, esp. 208-237 (chapter 7, 'Plague and Poverty').

⁹⁷ Philip Cottrell notes that even in the more schematic and idealised images of poverty that became more common in the second half of the Cinquecento in Venice, the beggar was nonetheless 'a dual emblem of disease and poverty'. See Cottrell, 'Poor Substitutes', 64-85, esp. 77; See also Rinaldi, 'Le immagini della peste', 209-225; Boeckl, *Images of Plague*; Nichols, *Art of Poverty*, 24.

visually describe a multitude of contorted beggars congregating on the wings of the scene, and many accounts of begging describe the impoverished in states of illness and near death.⁹⁸ Even Saint Roch himself, who became particularly popular in Venice as an image of hope for sufferers of both the plague and the *mal francese* was shown as a pilgrim and pauper.⁹⁹ Governments also targeted the poor when health was under threat, both as a form of scapegoating and as a response to genuinely higher likelihood of disease spread amongst the underprivileged and underfed.¹⁰⁰ For example, during times of famine and outbreaks of plague and syphilis, the Venetian government's measures to contain the spread of disease more often than not translated into gestures to contain underprivileged populations of vagrants, beggars and prostitutes.¹⁰¹ Aside from having more food, medicine and spacious living quarters at their disposal, the wealthy were also more able to escape the cities during times of disease, often fleeing to country houses, and increasing their chances of survival.¹⁰²

Overall then, while there may not have been a specific social hierarchy of beauty treatments and appearances, the beauty ideal would have been more attainable for those with privilege, who had not only the resources to obtain cosmetics, and the time to attend to a cosmetic routine, but who could also avoid hard physical labour and famine-driven diseases. This is reinforced, to an extent, by the evidence in cosmetic *ricettari*, which suggests that more expensive materials were sought after for both the cosmetic effect they created and their medicinal properties. Yet, while an ideal beauty may have been more difficult to achieve for those with less privilege, the diversity of cosmetic

⁹⁸ Cottrell, 'Poor Substitutes', 67-69.

⁹⁹ Cottrell, 'Poor Substitutes', 67; Rinaldi, 'Immagini della peste', 215; Boeckl, *Images of Plague*.

¹⁰⁰ Paolo Preto, *Peste e società a Venezia nel 1576* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1978).

¹⁰¹ Cottrell, 'Poor Substitutes', 67-69; For associations between plague, pilgrims and vagrants, see Preto, *Peste e società*, 16-17, and Pullan, *Rich and Poor*, 423, 425; for later Venetian policies to contain the poor see Preto, *Peste e società*, 120-30; and Pullan, *Rich and Poor*, 238-40.

¹⁰² Frank, 'Donne Attempate', 32; Preto, *Peste e società*, 111.

materials and methods, and the existence of recipes aimed at providing beauty ‘without too much cost’ suggest that people from a wide range of economic means were nonetheless actively seeking to conform to the same paradigm. In other words, regardless of how effective or fantastical these recipes were, their existence suggests that women throughout the strata of society felt pressure to aspire to the same image of beauty, and worked within their means to attain it.

Table 1. Cost of Materials-Loredan	
MATERIAL	COST
Pair of Doves	L. 3 s. 10 per pair
Bread	L. – s. 10 for one
White wine	L. 13 per big. ^o
Red wine	L. 12 per big. ^o
Lard	L. – s 7 per lira
Saffron	L 1 s. 10 per ounce
Cloves and pepper	L. 1 s. 2
Ground ginger	L. – s. 10
Rosewater	L. 1 s. 10 per 5 lire
Storax for perfume	L. 1 s. 16

Table 2. Cost of Materials-Bassano & Lotto	
MATERIAL	COST
Lead White	L. – s. 4 per pound
Mastic	L. – s. 6 per ounce
Red Lake (<i>lacca</i>)	L. 20 s. 4 per ounce

Table 3. Cost of Materials-Turin 1548	
MATERIAL	QUARTI PER OUNCE
Cloves	16.00
Cinnamon	8.00
Labdanum	4.00
Storax	4.00
Nutmeg	1.82
White Lead	1.67
Rosewater	0.26
Violet Oil	1.33

CHAPTER 5

COSMETICS AND WOMEN'S IDENTITY 1:

BELLE DONNE, BRIDES AND WIVES

This chapter explores visual depictions of makeup application, asking how images of cosmetic objects and their use related to the complex social reality of cosmetic practice explored in previous chapters. The pre-existing scholarship on scenes of women applying makeup is vast, but has tended to revolve around identification of the female figures within. While these debates have led to many interesting considerations of the metaphoric role of women, beauty, and cosmetics, the ongoing ambiguity in these disparate interpretations suggests that the questions that have been asked of these paintings are effectively unanswerable. I suggest that it is time for the debate to be shifted away from questions of identity and poetics and towards a more material-based approach. While there has been some discussion of the metaphoric value of the objects shown within the paintings, there has been effectively no consideration of their meaning and value as objects of material culture. Equally, there has been no investigation of how these paintings related to women beautifying themselves in everyday life. I investigate these questions here.

Defining the Genre: *Abbellimento* Scenes

This chapter focuses on visual depictions of '*abbellimento* scenes' or '*donne che si fanno belle*' ('women making themselves up'), used here to describe a range of images in which the subject is portrayed making use of cosmetic products and implements. In previous scholarship, the label 'Woman at her Toilet' has frequently

been used as a descriptive category to refer to images of this type, and includes scenes of women with mirrors, makeup products, and at dressing tables from a wide range of periods and geographic settings.¹ My deviation from this standard terminology allows for a more neutral but exacting way of referring to the images in question. While the ‘woman at her toilette’ has been used to describe images from a wide range of periods and geographic settings, the phrases ‘*abbellimento*’ and ‘*donne che si fanno belle*’ refer specifically to the act of beautification, ‘*a fare bella*’, that was also the title of so many cosmetic recipes in the period, therefore locating the images and their interpretation within the framework of late-Quattrocento and Early-Cinquecento Italy.²

Bellini’s *Young Woman at Her Toilette* of 1515 (Figure 27) is generally acknowledged to be the first time that the depiction of a woman’s beautification ritual was monumentalised as the central focus of a painting in Venice, and the visual trend is seen to culminate in numerous representations painted in the workshops of Titian, Palma Vecchio, Paris Bordone and Tintoretto.³ Cathy Santore, in an investigation of the so-called ‘Tools of Venus,’ includes seventeen examples of Venetian *abbellimento* paintings: one by Bellini; six by Titian and his followers; three by Palma Vecchio (ca. 1480-1528) and his followers; two by Bernardo Licinio (ca. 1489-1565); and five by Paris Bordone (1500-1571); and this is not exhaustive, Tintoretto and Veronese also depict the theme in the second half of the Cinquecento.⁴ While I will discuss a range of images throughout the chapter, discussion will focus on Bellini’s *Young Woman at her Toilette*, and the *Girl Before the Mirror* from Titian’s workshop housed in Barcelona as

¹Goodman-Soellner, ‘Poetic Interpretations’, 426-442; Blake McHam, ‘Reflections of Pliny’, 151-171; Pericolo, ‘Love in the Mirror’, 149-179; Schäpers, *Junge Frau*; National Galleries Scotland, ‘Venetian Women At Their Toilet’.

²See discussion in introduction of this dissertation, and Appendices B and F.

³Humfrey, ‘Portrait’, 60; Brown, ‘Venetian Painting’, 23; Schäpers, *Junge Frau*, esp. 67-79, 135-164, 295-318; Goodman-Soellner, ‘Poetic Interpretations’, 427; Santore, ‘Tools of Venus’, 179-207; Junkerman, ‘Bellissima Donna’, 10.

⁴Santore, ‘Tools of Venus’, 179-207; Schäpers, *Junge Frau*, 135-164 ; 295-318.

case studies. Both scenes display typical qualities of the genre, but I have chosen them because they depict several cosmetic objects with great clarity. The Barcelona painting from Titian's workshop, for instance, portrays a comb, cosmetic pot and two mirrors, unlike the Louvre example, where there is no comb. In addition, of the three similar scenes by the Titian workshop (Figures 30-32), the Barcelona copy has the sharpest rendition of textural details, facilitating an analysis of the materials depicted.

Images of women with cosmetics were not foreign to Medieval or early-Renaissance art, however, the large-scale treatment of the subject which arose in the early Cinquecento was unprecedented in Italy.⁵ Two surviving scenes of *donne che si fanno belle* from the second half of the Quattrocento, the *Queen of Coins (Elena)* from the Sola Busca tarot deck, and *L'Acerba Eta, Luxuria with Mirror* from Cecco d'Ascoli's *Bestiary* of 1456 (Figures 28 and 29), both share similar visual elements to later *abbellimento* paintings, but on a much abbreviated scale. For example, the depiction of the cosmetic routine in *Luxuria* has many basic elements in common with Paris Bordone's *Venetian Women at Their Toilet* of almost a century later (Figure 37): in both images, comb, phial, and round mirror are depicted; the main subject is a woman whose blond hair is shown loosely flowing around her shoulders; and both subjects appear to be only partially dressed. However, Bordone's is, of course, a medium-size oil painting (97 x 141 cm) while *Luxuria* is a small illumination on one page of a manuscript. Equally the *Queen of Coins*, as a tarot card, is very small with dimensions of approximately 142 x 75 mm. Bellini's painting marks the beginning of a new tradition, where the cosmetic routine is depicted in a larger format, in independent

⁵ Petra Schäper's study on Venetian paintings in the genre includes numerous examples of influential precedents from antiquity, as well as parallel representations of toilettes from other parts of Europe. See Schäpers, *Junge Frau*, 295-319; For medieval depictions of Venus see: Friedman, 'L'Iconographie de Vénus', 51-82, esp. 63-73; For the influence of Northern imagery in Italy, see Nutall, 'Reconsidering the Nude', 299-318.

panel paintings, indicating equally that a new audience and setting for viewing such images was developing.

A New Visual Language

The painted panel *abbellimento* scene was a new genre of secular female imagery which sprang up in late fifteenth- and early sixteenth- century Venice. On one hand, they can be considered as one of many mutations of the northern Italian interest in depictions of idealized women and celebrations of female beauty—the *belle donne* images which have been explored by Luke Syson, Marta Ajmar and Dora Thornton, amongst many others.⁶ As their work has shown, images of idealised women, often with generic features, were extremely popular, not just in painted panels, but also on a range of domestic objects including mirrors, girdles, *cassette*, pharmacy jars, and perhaps most prominently, maiolica plates.⁷ However, in Venice, the production of *belle donne* images marks a significant shift in the local pictorial tradition.⁸ Venetian-painted *abbellimento* scenes were a novel artistic development not only because the image of women putting on makeup had not been a significant topic of paintings before, but more importantly because portraits of Venetian women and other secular female depictions were rare until the early sixteenth century.⁹ The preponderance of male portraits in Venice is not counterbalanced by secular depictions of women until the 1490s; earlier examples of Italian female portraiture and *belle donne* images can be

⁶ Syson, 'Belle', 246-254; Ajmar and Thornton, 'Belle Donne', 138-149.

⁷ Syson, 'Belle', 246-254; Ajmar and Thornton, 'Belle Donne', 138-149; Musacchio, 'Girdle End with a Profile couple', 104-105; in the same volume: Musacchio, 'Betrothal Chest with Female Busts and Rosettes', 'Betrothal Chest with Stags and Pinks', 107-108; Krohn, 'Rites of Passage', 62-3; and the chapter, by multiple contributors, on "*Belle Donne*", Facing Couples, and "*Fede*", 76-87.

⁸ Junkerman, 'Bellissima Donna'; Brown, 'Venetian Painting', 23; Humfrey, 'Portrait', 60.

⁹ This is in marked contrast to Florence, for example, where female portraits were relatively commonplace. See: Humfrey, 'Portrait', 60; Brown, 'Venetian Painting', 23; Ferino-Pagden, 'Women—Love', 190-192; Luchs, *Tullio Lombardo*, 22-23; Syson has noted that manufacture of images of generic ideal beauties seems to have been particularly popular in cities where female portraiture was less common, using the examples of Venice, Perugia and Siena. See: Syson, 'Belle', 250, 254; Syson et al., *Renaissance Siena*, 208-12.

found in Florence, Milan and Mantua but are highly uncommon in Venice.¹⁰ Even portraits of the Dogaressa were extremely rare; as Peter Humfrey points out, for the duration of the Quattrocento, a portrait medal of Dogaressa Giovanna Dandolo, spouse of the Doge Pasquale Malipero, was the only such impression made.¹¹ It is true that the effective paucity of women's portraits has been compounded by the fact that some female portraits recorded in the historical record, including a number by Bellini, are now lost, and numerous works by 'lesser' Venetian artists remain unseen and understudied, due to their inaccessible locations in museum store rooms and private collections.¹² However, this has not generally been accepted as an adequate explanation for the pattern overall. Venetian society differed from many other parts of the Italian peninsula, and these social differences have been thought to contribute to the lack of female portraiture.¹³ Humfrey points out that law denied the right of inheritance to daughters, suggesting that the lack of a court removed another opportunity for alternative leadership (e.g. 'in letters and the arts'), meaning women were less likely to have their status celebrated through portraiture.¹⁴ However, Mary Engel Frank has suggested that Venetian women in fact had comparatively higher security and independence than Florentine women, due to the Venetian dowry system which, unlike in Florence, allowed women to regain control over the majority of their inheritance on their husbands' death.¹⁵ Alternatively, it is possible that the relatively low frequency of extra-Venetian marriage alliances contributed: since marriages stayed within the republic, portraits of potential brides were not essential for the arrangement of

¹⁰ This is particularly clear in David Alan Brown (ed.), *Bellini-Giorgione-Titian*.

¹¹ Humfrey, 'Portrait', 61.

¹² Humfrey, 'Portrait', 62-63; Campbell, *Renaissance Portraits*, 204; Ferino-Pagden, 'Women—Love', 192; Heinemann, *Giovanni Bellini e i Belliniani*, vols. 1-2: 354-358, vol 3: 79, 80, 130-34, 183.

¹³ Humfrey, 'Portrait', 60; Knauer, 'Portrait of a Lady?', 95-117, 101; Luchs, *Tullio Lombardo*, 22;

¹⁴ Humfrey, 'Portrait', 60.

¹⁵ Frank, 'Donne Attempate', 7-8. See also Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, 109-112; Chojnacki, *Women and Men*, 95-111.

marriages.¹⁶ Whatever the reason, the important point here is that *abbellimento* paintings even in their broadest sense—as secular depictions of women—were new to Venice.

It has been convincingly proposed by Anne Christine Junkerman that these images are, in essence, voices in an ongoing discourse on the nature and place of women in Renaissance society; that the visual language developed in them is a language about the nature of femininity. Junkerman identified an emerging genre of ‘sensuous half-length’ paintings as a unique body of imagery whose concerns and aesthetics were in many ways particular to early sixteenth-century Venice.¹⁷ As the appellation suggests, Junkerman identifies the genre as typified by portrayals of women shown in the half-length format—that is, generally (though not exclusively) focusing on the upper part of their body—whose gestures, gaze and partially-undressed state of dishabille amount to an ‘implicit if often quite subtle erotic emphasis’.¹⁸ Examining images which include Titian’s *Flora* (1516-18) in the Uffizi, and Palma Vecchio’s *Blonde Woman* (*‘Flora’*)(ca. 1520) in the National Gallery, Junkerman emphasises that these paintings were created to engage with dynamics of power and control surrounding notions of women’s sexuality.¹⁹ She argues that the way in which the artists have presented their female subjects was deliberately arranged to create the fiction that she (the subject) is in control of the viewing experience.²⁰ The employment of an ambiguous ‘tantalising gesture’—as that made by the woman in Titian’s *Girl in a Fur Coat* (1535), whose hands could equally be in the act of concealing or revealing her skin beneath the fur garment—creates the fiction that the subject is controlling the extent to which her body

¹⁶ Fletcher, ‘Donor Portraits’, 42; Humfrey, ‘Portrait’, 60.

¹⁷ Junkerman, ‘Bellissima Donna’.

¹⁸ Junkerman, ‘Bellissima Donna’, 20.

¹⁹ Junkerman, ‘Bellissima Donna’, 8-10, 20, 366.

²⁰ Junkerman, ‘Bellissima Donna’, 8-10, 20, 22, 35-39.

is exposed to the viewer.²¹ Additionally, a sidelong gaze that is ‘at once direct and hesitant’, creates a ‘subtle yet unmistakable level of *active* engagement with the viewer and a seductiveness which is not part of standard portraiture’.²² Significantly, Junkerman argues that the ambiguity of the figures was deliberately created, and they occupy the boundaries of ‘unresolved dichotomous states’—such as public and private, dressed and undressed, passive and active—in a way that reflects and purposefully explores the role of women at the time.²³ As such, she does not so much propose a single meaning to these sensuous images, but rather suggests that they should be seen as paradigmatic representations of female beauty, which functioned as a medium through which the ambiguous status of Venetian women could be actively analysed or explored.²⁴

Junkerman’s study takes into account a wider range of images than I am interested in here, but she includes *abbellimento* scenes as one variety of the ‘sensuous half-length’. The identifying traits Junkerman proposes for the genre as a whole are indeed observable in *abbellimento* scenes such as the *Girl Before the Mirror* from Titian’s workshop, now in Barcelona (Figure 30). This specific painting is one of several nearly identical scenes produced by Titian’s workshop (Figures 30-33). The dishabille, Junkerman notes, is visible in the young woman’s partial state of dress: her gown is unfastened in the front, and no sleeves are attached, revealing much of the thin *camicia* at the bust. The abundant fabric on the sleeves of the woman’s *camicia* has fallen away from her raised right arm so that most of her creamy skin is exposed. This same exposed arm is engaged in the ‘tantalising gesture’ as it gently lifts the hair—the action itself is ambiguous, and could either be raising the hair to effectively reveal more

²¹ Junkerman, ‘Bellissima Donna’, 20, 37.

²² Junkerman, ‘Bellissima Donna’, 20, 35-39. Emphasis original.

²³ Junkerman, ‘Bellissima Donna’, 20.

²⁴ Junkerman, ‘Bellissima Donna’, 20.

of the neck and shoulders, or lowering it to conceal the skin below. The woman's self-reflexive gaze does not directly acknowledge the audience, but the fact that she is being viewed is visually referenced by the presence of the male spectator who holds her mirrors—again creating the impression of a deliberate and controlled viewing experience.²⁵

Of relevance here is Junkerman's suggestion that the act of making-up has specific significance as one of several 'gestures' whose depiction is operative in creating the 'fiction of control', by indicating the subject's 'active involvement both in the relationship with the viewer and in the craft of creating her own beauty'.²⁶ If what made this fiction so compelling to Renaissance viewers was the dialogue it opened surrounding femininity, I would suggest that cosmetics did not simply play a generic role in this, but were a uniquely effective vehicle through which the problematic place of femininity could be addressed. Conceptually, cosmetics were a particularly powerful symbol for the feminine. It has already been shown in Chapter 1 that cosmetics were often used as a metaphor to represent what were perceived to be fundamental aspects of feminine nature—in particular its flaws of deception, affectation and inertia. In addition, cosmetics and the female figure doubled as a commentary on the nature of art itself, a commentary whose rejection of excessive adornment stemmed from the written dialogue addressing art and rhetoric.²⁷ There exists already a wealth of scholarship exploring this relationship, which gives primacy to poetic interpretations of

²⁵ On mirrors, see Hills, *Venetian Colour*, 130; Goodman-Soellner, 'Poetic Interpretations', 426-30; Blake McHam, 'Reflections of Pliny', 157; Pericolo, 'Love in the Mirror', 149-179, esp. 160; Cranston, *Poetics of Portraiture*, 156-167; Yiu, 'Mirror and Painting', 187-210.

²⁶ Junkerman, 'Bellissima Donna', 20.

²⁷ This interpretation was first proposed by Elizabeth Cropper, whose exploration of this relationship has been largely influential on the subsequent interpretation of images of female beauty: Cropper, 'Beauty an Displacement', 175-183; Lichtenstein, 'Making up Representation', 77-78; Rogers, 'Beauty and Concepts of the Ideal', 127.

abbellimento paintings and thematically related images of beautiful idealised women.²⁸

The fundamental theme reiterated throughout this scholarship is that on this allegorical level, just as in moralising arguments, cosmetics, ornamentation and femininity are inextricably bound, becoming effectively synonymous notions.²⁹

In previous work on cosmetics and self-fashioning, both Patricia Phillippy and Farah Karim-Cooper argue that representations of cosmetics in art and literature express key Renaissance concerns regarding female image and power, addressing in particular women's ability to self-fashion, the propriety of ornamentation, and the potential for deception.³⁰ Phillippy has identified the 'self creative' process of making-up as problematic within the context of Renaissance society, as it challenged the gender hierarchy that questioned whether women could effectively create at all.³¹ She asserts that the act of making-up contradicted the gendered division of artistic talent at the time, evident in Vasari's *Lives of Artists*, where it was argued that while men have the creative quality of *ingegno*, women have only *diligenza*, that is, women may copy or mimic nature, but not improve upon it or create in their own right.³² Makeup, according to Phillippy's interpretation, was equally as problematic for women as artistic painting because it was an act of creation, where women were making an improvement upon themselves, even if the 'self' women could create through the process inevitably conformed to the ideal created through masculine discourses on beauty.³³ Karim-Cooper makes a similar argument to Phillippy, and highlights the implicit moral contradiction whereby women in Renaissance society felt pressure to conform to an

²⁸ See Goodman-Soellner, 'Poetic Interpretations', 426-442; Cropper, 'Parmigianino, *Petrarchismo*', 374-394; Pericolo, 'Love in the Mirror', 149-179; Cranston, *Poetics of Portraiture*, 156-167; Cropper, 'Beauty and Displacement', 159-205; Cropper, 'Problems in Rhetoric', 175-190.

²⁹ Lichtenstein, 'Making up Representation', 77-87.

³⁰ Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 11-18; Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 6, 10, 15, 34.

³¹ Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 15.

³² Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 16-18. She refers to arguments made in Jacobs, *Virtuosa*, 27-63.

³³ Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 18, 24.

impossible ideal which equated beauty with morality, but were then accused of immodesty if they attempted to modify their appearance with cosmetics so as to better fit these ideals.³⁴ She sees the dialogue surrounding cosmetic use to be tied up in fears and suspicions about altering the body, and demonstrates how face paint was often perceived to evoke, ‘not only the physical unreliability, but also the poisonous and contaminative nature of women and even art’.³⁵ The point in bringing up these various arguments is to illustrate that the figuration of the cosmetic routine functioned as an emblem of femininity on a number of levels. Yet these arguments on the whole refer to the visual and literary representation of this emblem, rather than their material counterparts. What remains to be explored is how the material culture of cosmetics—the recipes, bottles, combs, objects and actions—related to their allegorical figurations: how the symbolism of the cosmetic routine affected its execution in everyday life, and how the everyday came to be transformed into myth. In *abbellimento* scenes, we see the joining of the material and the figurative, and they therefore serve as an excellent vehicle through which this relationship can be better explored.

Interpreting materials

I have already brought up Titian’s *Girl Before the Mirror* as an example of an *abbellimento* painting, in which their typical attributes may be seen. I return to it here to examine more closely the way in which cosmetic objects and their use are represented. Typically *abbellimento* scenes feature one, if not two mirrors, among an assortment of other objects associated with the cosmetic routine. In Titian’s scene, the woman looks into a small square flat mirror held up by her male assistant, while a large convex mirror behind her reflects the back of her head. Overt depiction of cosmetic products such as balm, rouge, paint or powder is relatively limited. Bellini’s *Young*

³⁴ Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 6, 10, 15.

³⁵ Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 34.

Woman is rare in that a clear liquid is visible in the glass bottle on the windowsill; in other examples, the presence of cosmetics is implied through jars and makeup tools rather than overtly described. In Titian's scene, the woman holds a small squat phial of dark glass in her left hand, finger poised on its mouth as though she is about to tip out a few drops on her fingers. The substance, however, is not visible. Small bottles of various shapes are common, as in several scenes by Titian's workshop, Bellini's *Young Woman*, Bernardino Licinio's *Allegory* and a number of scenes by Paris Bordone (Figures 30-34, and 37-38). Boxes are also shown on occasion as by Palma Vecchio in Figures 35 and 36). The bottle is in some cases paired with a sponge, presumably for applying whichever product was inside, although residue of the product itself is never shown (Figure 27, and 37), a point which I will return to later. A comb like that in the Titian painting or *scriminali*, wands for parting the hair, are also common features, seen in the Sola Busca tarot card, Cecco d'Ascoli's *Bestiary* (Figures 28 and 29) as well as in the Titian *abbellimento* paintings housed in Barcelona and Prague (Figures 30 and 32) and in Paris Bordone's *Venetian Women* and *Young Woman at her Dressing Table* (Figures 37 and 38).³⁶ These features are typical of painted *abbellimento* scenes; in contrast, depictions of cosmetics in print are less common, but have more detailed illustration of specific cosmetic components, tools and procedures, sometimes with written explanations. In the next chapter, I examine an illustration from Francisco Delicado's *Retrato de la Loçana Andaluza*, (Figure 40) which shows a woman having her eyebrows plucked with tweezers. In the foreground, a character is seen processing ingredients with a mortar and pestle, and a number of plant ingredients litter the scene. Likewise, in two later prints, one a *Vanitas* by Enea Vico (Figure 41) and the other an illustration by Cristoforo Guerra for Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti Antichi et Moderni* (Figure 42), women are shown bleaching their hair in the sun, with help of a *solana* hat

³⁶ Brown, 'Behind the Walls', 315; Ludwig, 'Restello', 263.

specialised for that purpose.³⁷ Vecellio specifies that the woman is using a sponge-tipped spindle to apply a dyeing solution to her hair.³⁸ To summarise, painted *abbellimento* scenes seem less interested in portraying specific elements of the cosmetic routine than their printed counterparts, showing more general implements and containers whose contents are not generally made clear, with no overt references to ingredients such as those shown in the Loçana illustration.

The fact that the makeup procedures depicted in painted *abbellimento* scenes are somewhat vague and gestural corresponds to a second major characteristic feature of the genre: a marked ambiguity in both the identity of the sitter, and the overall ‘meaning’ of the image. The paintings do not bear any written labels to indicate the sitter’s identity, and in many cases the women shown by any one artist seem to be the same across multiple scenes—this is true in the case of several images by Titian’s workshop (Figure 30-33, compare to Figures 65 and 70), as well as by Palma Vecchio (Figures 35 and 36); Bernardino Licinio (Figures 34, 45, 69) and Paris Bordone (Figures 37 and 38). The surviving information on the circumstances in which these paintings were commissioned and displayed is minimal, so suggestions as to the potential audience have been based largely on inferences made from what is known about display of other secular female imagery from this period. It had previously been assumed that they were directed mainly at a male audience, to be kept behind curtains or in a secluded location privy to select parties only.³⁹ However, more recent work has shown that women also commissioned and displayed similar images.⁴⁰ Inventories from courtesans’ homes in particular attest to the presence of paintings of nude women and erotic themes displayed

³⁷ Vecellio, *Habiti antichi et moderni*, 113r. For a Florentine inventory from 1471 listing three hats ‘da ribiondire le fanciulle’, see Musacchio, *Art and Ritual of Childbirth*, 171.

³⁸ Vecellio, *Habiti antichi et moderni*, 113r.

³⁹ Rogers, ‘Decorum of Beauty’, 55-56; Hope, *Titian*, 82; Williamson (ed.), *Anonimo*, 99.

⁴⁰ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 197-199; Camerano, ‘Donne oneste o meretrici?’, 662; Schmitter, ‘*Quadro da Portego*’, 728-734.

on the walls, in both *camere* and in the more public display area of the Venetian *portego*.⁴¹ Tessa Storey has demonstrated that secular themed paintings had a much more prominent presence in the homes of Roman courtesans than in those of women in other stations; many courtesans kept a majority of secular paintings, rather than the preponderance of religious paintings which was typical in other women's homes.⁴² Storey observes that both the secular and religious paintings held by courtesans tend to make allusions to the courtesan's profession: erotic classical scenes of Venus and cupid or women with satyrs; female artists and Saint Cecilia suggesting artistic and musical taste and prowess; religious scenes depicting the Magdalene and erotically charged vignettes of Susanna and the elders, Judith, and Lucrezia.⁴³ Monika Schmitter has also observed a wide range of paintings inside a Venetian courtesan's home, including '*belle donne*' types, a self portrait, images of nude men and women, and a depiction of Mary Magdalene, patron saint of her profession, who was frequently shown with ointment jars as her attribute.⁴⁴ Without any evidence which clearly describes the presence of actual *abbellimento* scenes, such inventories can only go so far to suggest the setting in which they were viewed. Yet these findings are crucial because they suggest possibilities for varied settings and audiences in which secular depictions of women were viewed, and through this, the potential for multiple readings of the images depending on context.

A large body of pre-existing research is dedicated to the interpretation of *abbellimento* images, and the resulting scholarship is a testament to the images' potential for multiple interpretations: the field is marked by ambiguity, with

⁴¹ Santore, 'Julia Lombardo', 54-6; Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 195-199; Camerano, 'Donne oneste', 661-62; Rosenthal, *Honest Courtesan*, 106.

⁴² Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 196.

⁴³ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 197-199; Camerano, 'Donne oneste', 662; Cavazzini, 'Diffusione della pittura', 353-74; Schmitter, '*Quadro da Portego*', 729.

⁴⁴ Schmitter, '*Quadro da Portego*', 729-730.

interpretations that conflict and overlap. Numerous suggestions as to the intended identity of the paintings' subjects have been made without consensus: throughout the years the *donne che si fanno belle* have been suggested to be wives, courtesans, ideal beauties, and/or the artist's mistress, among other identities.⁴⁵ Due to the similar facial features with which the women were depicted, potential explanations have also been offered for why multiple scenes of the same woman might exist, even if her identity was known—commonly here the suggestion has been made that the lady represented was a celebrated courtesan.⁴⁶ These interpretive difficulties are compounded by the nature of the cosmetic objects represented in *abbellimento* scenes—as I have already demonstrated in previous chapters, cosmetics were highly multivalent and ascribed with different meanings depending on the setting in which they were addressed.

This too is true of the objects associated with the cosmetic routine, so when the objects in the painting have been used to inform the intended reading of the figures, a confusing array of conclusions have resulted, even when only one element in the paintings is considered. For example, a number of previous studies have focused on

⁴⁵ For suggestions that the women are wives, see: Bertelli, 'Cortigiane sfacciate', 3-33; Gentili, 'Amore e amoroze persone', 82-105; Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 165-166; Goffen, 'Bellini's Nude', 187-91. For identification as courtesans see: Santore, 'Tools of Venus', 179-207; Rogers, 'Decorum of Beauty', 54-55, 65; Herlihy 'Popolazione e strutture', 71-74; Held, 'Flora, Goddess, Courtesan', 201-18; Lawner, *Lives of the Courtesans*; Charles Hope's suggestion that the Titian's models may have been prostitutes, along with his likening of the sensual images to pornography has further perpetuated this identification: Hope, *Titian*, 58, 62, 82. On ideal beauties, see: Blake McHam, 'Reflections of Pliny', 159; Luke Syson notes their similarities as a genre to the *belle donne* maiolica which were also tremendously popular mass-produced depictions of 'beauties' with a generic appearance: Syson, 'Belle', 248-50. The suggestion that the subject is the artist's mistress has been made, in particular, with respect to Titian. See: Joannides, *Titian to 1518*, 258; Ferino-Pagden ('Women—Love', 195) notes instances where this has been suggested of both Titian's *Flora*, and the Louvre *Woman at Her Toilet*.

⁴⁶ This has been subject to a great deal of scholarly debate. See: Schuler, 'Courtesan in Art', 209-222; Lynne Lawner's *Lives of the Courtesans* has been seen as an exemplary attempt at over-enthusiastic identification of courtesans; Cathy Santore supports the identification using cosmetics as evidence: Santore, 'Tools of Venus', 179-207; other scholars who have assumed the women to be prostitutes/courtesans include: Rogers, 'Decorum of Beauty', 54-55, 65; Herlihy, 'Popolazione e strutture', 71-74; Held, 'Flora, Goddess and Courtesan', 201-18; Simons, 'Portraiture, Portrayal, Idealization', 263-311.

deciphering the iconographically rich presence of the mirror, often with the assumption that the mirror and the other cosmetic items carry identical meaning.⁴⁷ The mirror has been suggested to be a reference to Petrarchan poetics, where the mirror rivals the male lover, relevant especially in consideration of the *abbellimento* scenes produced by Titian's workshop, where male figures 'compete' with the mirrors for the woman's attention.⁴⁸ Others have supported more literal interpretations based on the paintings' material sensuality, these include Cathy Santore's investigation as to whether or not the mirror and cosmetic jars were proverbial 'tools of Venus', that is, a prostitute's 'tools of the trade', indicating the sitters' lascivious identity.⁴⁹ The reception of these images has only been confused by the fact that the more detailed descriptions of the paintings' contents were often given centuries after the original commission, and often by foreign collectors, whose preconceptions about Venice as a hotbed of material luxury and courtesan culture has surely informed their later titles.⁵⁰ While mirrors could indeed be associated with luxury, as in the print by Enea Vico (Figure 41) they were also a familiar attribute of *Prudentia* as a symbol of self knowledge—seen for instance in the image of *Prudentia* painted by Bellini which originally decorated the exterior of a *restello*, a luxury mirror case fitted with pegs to hold cosmetic items (Figure 43).⁵¹ Correspondingly, both the mirror and, in the broader sense, the depiction of cosmetic practice, have been thought by some to indicate a *vanitas* scene, while opposing

⁴⁷ On Renaissance thinking on the connection between mirrors and portraiture, see Whistler, 'Uncovering Beauty', 223.

⁴⁸ Hills, *Venetian Colour*, 130; Goodman-Soellner, 'Poetic Interpretations', 426-30; Blake McHam, 'Reflections of Pliny', 157; Pericolo, 'Love in the Mirror', 160; Cranston, *Poetics of Portraiture*, 156-167.

⁴⁹ Santore, 'Tools of Venus', 179-207; Blake McHam, 'Reflections of Pliny', 158-59; On the connections between images of Venus and images of Luxury, see Friedman, 'L'Iconographie de Vénus', 63-73.

⁵⁰ Cropper, 'Problems in Rhetoric', 179; Schuler, 'Courtesan in Art', 210; Santore ('Tools of Venus', 185) notes descriptions of a 'Curtezan in her haire done' by Titian in the Collection of Charles I, and another Titian 'Corteggiana' owned by Van Dyck.

⁵¹ Brown, *Private Lives*, 112; Fortini Brown, 'Restello', 188-189; Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini*, 228-231; Frank, 'Donne Attempate', 73.

arguments have pointed out that in many cases no deliberate emphasis is made to indicate this overtly moralising message, which was more popular in Northern Europe.⁵² Titian's *Woman with a Mirror* (later titled *Vanity*) (Figure 44) and Bernardino Licinio's painting of the same title (Figure 45) which was based on Titian's format, are two examples with identifiable moralising narratives, however even between these two there is potential for great variation in meaning. The scene reflected in the mirror depicted by Licinio identifies it as an 'Old Man with Young Prostitute' type, whereas Titian's scene captures a nondescript sense of vanity and loss through the coins and old woman represented in the mirror.⁵³ Complicating matters is the fact that the scene in the mirror was a later addition to Titian's painting—so it testifies not so much to the original conception of the painting's meaning, but to the changing tastes for such depictions and their potential for reinterpretation.⁵⁴

Related to the *vanitas* message, but perhaps more suited to the Italian context in this period, Mary Engel Frank has suggested that the mirror was used to evoke a sense of temporality, particularly as it relates to female beauty.⁵⁵ She suggests that both men and women are implicated, 'Time robs women of beauty and men of the ability to appreciate it'.⁵⁶ Her reading of the mirror as a symbol of temporality has parallels elsewhere. As Yvonne Yiu discussed, the mirror and the painting came to be elided in Renaissance art theory, so that by Benvenuto Cellini's time, the painting was discussed, in effect, as a mirror without need for explanation.⁵⁷ Yet, unlike the static surface of a painting, the mirror was able to reflect an infinitely changing scene which shifted both

⁵² Panofsky, *Problems in Titian*, 92-94; Ginzburg, 'Titian, Ovid', 28-31; Friedman 'L'Iconographie de Vénus', 51-82; Joannides, *Titian to 1518*, 260-264.

⁵³ For further discussion, see: Joannides, *Titian to 1518*, 262-64; Knauer, 'Portrait of a Lady?', 108-11.

⁵⁴ Joannides, *Titian*, 262.

⁵⁵ Frank, 'Donne Attempate', 64-106

⁵⁶ Frank, 'Donne Attempate', 98.

⁵⁷ Yiu, 'Mirror and Painting', 187-210.

with the viewer's own movement and, moreover, with time. In Frank's interpretation, then, the mirror becomes a tool and symbol through which the painter makes time visible.⁵⁸ A unifying thread throughout these previous arguments is that cosmetics tend to be interpreted essentially as an extension of the mirror, with identical symbolism and meanings; problematically, in the cases where cosmetics are acknowledged to bear their own meaning, their full range of significances within the Renaissance-specific context has not been thoroughly investigated.

My aim here is not to prove or disprove any of these specific interpretations, as they remain insightful and informative examinations of the potential ways of seeing and interpreting these images. It is fitting that imagery of cosmetics, which the previous chapters have shown to be items of multifaceted significance, should themselves be open to more than one meaning. Considering the varied role of cosmetics themselves, it seems a fair assessment that, as Christine Junkerman suggested, the quest for one specific overarching meaning or identity for these paintings is unlikely to bear fruit.⁵⁹ Rather I would contend that the ambiguity of the paintings bears meaning in and of itself, reflecting the ambivalent reception of cosmetics and their value as metaphors for unsettled tensions surrounding women's place in society. The nondescript identity and generic appearances of the women depicted likewise speak of a greater problem, namely that women were all meant to look the same, with individuality superseded by the ideal. Indeed, as Naomi Yavneh suggests, the *belle donne* represented in paintings and in the works of Torquato Tasso, Petrarch, Federico Luigini and others are treated in the same way, with the same problem, that 'each beautiful woman is as worthy as another; her individuality is of no consequence'.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Frank, 'Donne Attempate', 64-106.

⁵⁹ Junkerman, 'Bellissima Donna', 342.

⁶⁰ Yavneh, 'Ambiguity of Beauty', 138.

To further explore this relationship, the cosmetic objects in these paintings need to be considered in their own right. Even if it were the case that the bottles, combs and sponges in *abbellimento* paintings served, in their symbolic capacity, as ‘extensions’ of the mirror, their material counterparts had unique functions and significances tied to the context of their use which warrant thorough investigation. This first will inform our reading of the *abbellimento* paintings by expanding our understanding of the ‘period eye’ through which these objects were read. Equally, the depiction of certain objects and acts in *abbellimento* scenes serves as both a testament to and a perpetuation of these objects’ iconic status; thus close study of the specificities of the items and acts shown also suggests the connotations, considerations or thoughts that accompanied the act of using such items in daily life.

Objects: Combs, Mirrors, Cassetti

BRIDAL EFFECTS

The first objects I will discuss are combs, mirrors, and boxes for holding cosmetics and personal items. As mentioned above, all three of these items appear frequently, with mirrors perhaps being the most ubiquitous. Each of these objects had potentially significant roles as items associated with marriage. Previous research on the contents of trousseaus and dowries has turned up records of combs and mirrors among the items which contributed to both the monetary value and personal content of a woman’s goods.⁶¹ For example, the 1511 record of Ghostanza Minerbetti’s trousseau,

⁶¹ In the Florentine context, ‘trousseau’ refers to the items a bride brought with her into marriage, from her paternal family. This contrasts to Venice, where ‘trousseau’ has been used to refer to items the bridegroom supplies the bride, while the ‘*corredo*’ had a similar function to the Florentine trousseau, and originally included the bride’s personal and ornamental items, although monetary ‘gifts’ for the groom later became expected as well. See: Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence*, 234-38; Chojnacki, ‘From Trousseau to Groomgift’, 141-165; Chojnacki, *Women and Men*, 96-97; for inclusion of toiletries in dowries and trousseaus in Venice, see: Cecchini, ‘Material Culture in Sixteenth Century

examined by Carole Collier Frick, includes a gilded mirror in addition to combs of such materials as mother of pearl, yellow amber, and ivory.⁶² Despite their potential associations with vice and vanity, within the context of marriage, it seems mirrors were positively associated with female virtue.⁶³ Coffrets and small caskets appeared in trousseaus for brides and nuns, and also were given to brides by the bridegroom, sometimes bearing inscriptions and decorative motifs relating to love and virtue (Figures 46, 47).⁶⁴ While some seem to have been receptacles for ribbons and jewellery, others were used for storing cosmetics and perfumes, and were sometimes themselves decorated with perfumed paste.⁶⁵ Isabella d'Este's use of such items is perhaps the best known; the perfumes she made and gifted to people in various forms were kept in *pastiglia* boxes for storage and preservation.⁶⁶

The significance of these items as decorative goods is suggested by the fact that they often had simpler, more practical doubles among the unvalued personal goods within trousseaus. Such possessions did not figure into the overall monetary worth of the trousseau, but made up the bride's more intimate effects, which typically consisted of toiletries, towels, stockings, sewing supplies and ribbons.⁶⁷ The non-priced components in Minerbetti's trousseau, for example, include an ivory comb, gilded

Venice', 6, 13-16; Bellavitas and Chabot, 'People and Property', 77-78; See also Simons, 'Women in Frames', 17.

⁶² Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence*, 234.

⁶³ Krohn and Wolk-Simon, 'Tabernacle Mirror Frame', 226; Thornton, *Italian Renaissance Interior*, 167-74.

⁶⁴ Musacchio, 'Betrothal Chests', 107-108; Krohn, 'Casket (Cassetta)', and 'Coffer', 108-111; Thornton records numerous examples from inventories from locations including Ferrara, Genoa, Cesena, Milan and Palermo: Thornton, *Renaissance Interior*, 204, 383; For examples in Venice, see Fortini Brown, *Private Lives*, 101-110;

⁶⁵ On *pastiglia* see: Thornton, *Renaissance Interior*, 96, 204, 251; Yorke, 'Pastiglia'; Krohn, 'Casket (Cassetta)' and 'Coffer', 108-111; background on specific objects is given in the online catalogue entries for the V&A museum collections: 'Casket' (object number 1565-1855) and 'Coffret- Onesta e Bella' (object number 9-1890).

⁶⁶ V&A Museum, 'Casket' (object number 1565-1855), online catalogue.

⁶⁷ Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence*, 136, 236-37.

brush, mirror and a number of small boxes and chests.⁶⁸ It is exactly these small personal items that women are shown with in *abbellimento* paintings, suggesting an interest in invoking a sense of a very personal feminine sphere. *Abbellimento* scenes are visually contiguous with depictions of *belle donne* with other intimate objects relating to personal adornment. For instance, the small boxes that appear in Palma Vecchio's *Young Woman in a Green Dress* (1512-14) at the Kunsthistorisches Museum (Figure 35) and *La Bella* (1525) at Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza (Figure 36) appear similar to the jars in *abbellimento* scenes, but contain ribbons and jewellery chains rather than makeup solutions or sponges. Escaping the edges of the little box held by *La Bella* is a fine gold chain, and a white ribbon, and the nondescript multicoloured items inside the box suggest more bits of ribbon or fabric. Similarly, the *Young Woman in a Green Dress* opens a small rounded box of a golden hue (it appears to be of a light wood, as it does not have much shine indicated on it, although it is just a shade darker than the woman's two gold rings), and the end of a grey thread or ribbon falls out. Yet these items are still thematically similar to makeup objects, inasmuch as they are small intimate items belonging to the woman which suggest decoration of her body and its virtual extension into the clothing she wears.

Although both cosmetic containers and the boxes of ribbons certainly allude to ornamentation, the light in which this adornment was to be received by its viewers is not clearly proscribed. As we have seen previously, opinions on the use of ornamentation in rhetoric and art had come to influence perceptions of acceptable ornamentation in fashion and dress as well. While over-ornamentation was unacceptable, subtle and artful embellishment was appreciated, both in speech, and in use of fashion and makeup. The evidence of cosmetic items in the material record further indicates that there was an appropriate setting for the celebration of an artfully

⁶⁸ Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence*, 234-237.

cultivated appearance. As the items a bride brings with her into marriage, the cosmetic items within the trousseau had a value which was not only practical, but also symbolic, in that they physically stood for the roles a woman was to take up as a wife.⁶⁹ This symbolic relationship is suggested by the fact that many of the objects included in trousseaus were the same as those used in artwork to symbolise the ideal woman. Items such as the spindle, distaff and sewing basket, all present in Ghostanza's trousseau, have been shown by Sarah Matthews-Grieco to have been used in didactic prints to demonstrate the god-ordained role of women in the nuclear family and society.⁷⁰ Scenes of the postlapsarian Adam and Eve, the Holy Family, or indeed families of satyrs or other creatures alluding to an primordial past reinforced gendered divisions of labour, showing women in their 'natural' role as mothers industriously occupied with sartorial tasks, while their male counterparts busy themselves with farming, reading or skilled craft.⁷¹ *Abbellimento* paintings are, of course, presented differently to the didactic images—and are typified by ambiguity, rather than the heavy-handed moral message of the industrious Eve—however, I would suggest that they can equally be read as depictions of women with objects that were iconic representations of femininity.

The fact that items for beautification were frequently included in trousseaus, specifically provided to women by their families on the occasion of marriage indicates that they were understood as suitable and indeed expected possessions for a young wife to use. In Chapter 1, I noted that even Cosmo Agnelli's diatribe against makeup allowed for wives to use it to keep their husband's interest.⁷² Indeed, through the celebration and exchange of toiletries in a symbolic context, the act of beautification, at least within the context of marriage, would have itself been indirectly celebrated and

⁶⁹ Klapisch-Zuber, 'Zane della sposa', 20, 21; Simons, 'Women in Frames', 17-18.

⁷⁰ Matthews-Grieco, 'Persuasive Pictures', 285-314.

⁷¹ Matthews-Grieco, 'Persuasive Pictures', 288-292, 299.

⁷² Agnelli, *Amorevole avviso*, 23.

encouraged.⁷³ The occasion of marriage elicited an extended period of heightened ornamentation and display for the new bride. Just as on special civic occasions, when sumptuary laws were relaxed, allowing men and women alike to show off their city's glory by dressing in all their finery, young brides were allowed an extended period of greater freedom from sumptuary restrictions, reflecting the wealth and status of both her family and her new husband's through the display of her beauty and rich clothing.⁷⁴ Along with allowing her relative freedom of dress, the early years of marriage were also a significant and, at times, tense period in which the young bride had to learn how to negotiate her public face; this included learning the socially appropriate setting and manner in which to wear makeup.

The potential for tension and embarrassment is conveyed in Alberti's *I libri della famiglia*. Some texts suggest, as might be expected, that it was the responsibility of female relatives to mentor their younger relations in appropriate makeup use, however, here Giannozzo recounts playing an integral role in tailoring his wife's 'readjustment'.⁷⁵ At certain public occasions he is unsure whether she is wearing makeup, if she is, the effect is subtle enough that he does not feel the need to comment. However, one evening when guests are invited to an Easter dinner, she goes a bit too far, and he feels the need to step in:

⁷³ See also Syson, 'Belle', 253.

⁷⁴ On the relaxation of sumptuary regulations for civic occasions, see: Bistort, *Magistrato alle Pompe*, 185; Fortini Brown, 'Behind the Walls', 322; On the allowances made for new brides, see: Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence*, 88, 188-189; Chojnacki, 'From Trousseau to Groomgift', 149; Allerston, 'Wedding Finery', 28-32; Edwards, 'Betrothal and Marriage', 256; Woods-Marsden, 'Portrait of the Lady', 65-67; Landini and Bulgarella, 'Costume', 94-95; Klapisch-Zuber, 'Griselda Complex', 225-28; For Siena, see Syson et al., *Renaissance Siena*, 210 (cat. 52).

⁷⁵ Alberti, *Della famiglia*, 359-360; The role of women in teaching each other cosmetic secrets is suggested in Piccolomini's *Raffaella*, discussed below, which is largely dedicated an older woman sharing cosmetic recipes to a younger one, although there are similar undertones in Pietro Aretino's *Ragionamenti* and Francesco Delicado's *Retrato de la Lozana Andaluza*. Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 12v; for English translation: Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*, 32; Delicado, *Lozana*; Aretino, *Ragionamenti*; Aretino (trans. Rosenthal), *Dialogues*. See also Simons, 'Women in Frames', 17; Zuber 'Zane della sposa', 20-21.

It is true that at weddings, sometimes, whether because she was embarrassed at being among so many people or heated with dancing, she sometimes appeared to have more than her normal colour. In the house, however, there was only one time, when friends and their wives were invited to dinner at Easter. My wife, on this occasion, had covered her face with pumice, in God's name, and she talked all too animatedly with each guest on his arrival or departure. She was showing off and being merry with everyone, as I observed ... I waited till we were alone. Then I smiled at her and said, "Oh dear, how did your face get dirty? Did you by any chance bump into a pan? Go wash yourself, quick, before these people begin to make fun of you. The lady and mother of a household must always be neat and clean if she wants the rest of the family to learn good conduct and modest demeanour." She understood me and at once began to cry. I let her go wash off both tears and make-up. After that I never had to tell her again.⁷⁶

The moral message here is crafted through familiar tropes—his wife's overuse of makeup corresponds with her behaviour that evening, which itself displays too much rhetorical 'adornment', through her overly animated attempts to show off. Giannozzo's chastisement emphasises the opposite, positive, qualities—a neat and clean appearance accompanies an equally unembellished demeanour of well-behaved modesty. Significantly, his dislike of makeup is only expressed when the makeup is clearly visible, when his wife has failed to apply it in a way that is subtle enough to be socially acceptable.

The potential shame associated with poor makeup use is similarly conveyed in a passage from Piccolomini's *Dialogo*, discussed previously, where Mistress Raffaella complains that 'unlearned' makeup application, when a woman 'plasters herself at random not knowing what she does to herself' is even worse than the over-use of heavy

⁷⁶ 'Pur tale ora alle nozze, o che ella si vergognasse tra le genti, o che ella fosse riscaldata pel danzare, la mi pareva alquanto più che l'usato tincta: ma in casa non mai; salvo il vero, una sola volta quando doveano venire gli amici et le loro donne la pasqua convitati a cena in casa mia; allora la moglie mia col nome d'Idio tutta impomiciata, troppa lieta s'afrontava a qualunque venia, et così a chi andava si porgeva, a tutti motteggiava. Io me n'avidì ... Aspectatai di scontralla sola, sorrisi et dissili: Tristo a me, et come t'imbrattasti così il viso? forse t'abattesti a qualche padella? Laveràti, che questi altri non ti dilegino: la donna madre della famiglia conviene stia netta et costumata, s'ella vuole che l'altra famiglia impari essere costumata et modesta. Ella me intese, lagrimò; io gli die' luogo ch'ella si lavasse le lacrime et il liscio. Dipoi ebbi mai di questo che dirgliene.' Alberti, *Della famiglia*, 359-360; translation in Alberti (ed. Watkins), *Family* 215.

cosmetics.⁷⁷ Piccolomini encourages makeup use more than Alberti, and includes a number of makeup recipes in his text, but again defines the inappropriate and unskilled application of makeup as that which is too obvious. In both texts, it is imperative that the young women learn how to apply it properly to avoid embarrassment and social ridicule; considering the barrage of complex and contradictory messages surrounding cosmetic use, negotiating this balance deftly would have been no small task. In this sense, the cosmetic items within the trousseau were not unlike the articles for sewing and spinning, for both serve as tools which a young woman needed to master in order to fulfil societal expectations and to fashion her image in public and private.

LUXURY AND SHOW

Along with their presence in trousseaus, the importance of toiletries as meaningful symbolic possessions is further evidenced in their elevated status as luxury goods for display. As introduced above, gilded mirrors and combs made of luxury materials were not just for personal use, but were items of monetary value to demonstrate wealth. In Venice and elsewhere it was not uncommon for items associated with makeup to serve a dual purpose, both for private use, and to be conspicuously displayed to guests.⁷⁸ Decorated mirrors, combs, brushes, horsehair *code* for storing and cleaning combs, and storage containers were all prolific enough to attract the condemnation of sumptuary officials.⁷⁹ In Venice, *restelli*—framed mirrors with pegs designed to hold cosmetic items—enjoyed a swell of popularity from the mid-

⁷⁷ ‘quando ella e ignorante di tal esser citio, et s’impiastra a caso senza sapere quello che ella si faccia.’ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 12v; for English translation: Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*, 32.

⁷⁸ Fortini Brown, ‘Behind the Walls’, 321; I do not mean to imply here that the popularity of mirrors as decorative items was solely to do with their use for beautification. Other factors including interests in Neo-Platonic ideas of beauty have been shown to have had potential influence on the status of mirrors in the home. See Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 51-2; Thornton, *Scholar in His Study*, 127, 167-74.

⁷⁹ Sanudo, *Cità Excelentissima*, 306 (Diary entry for 5 February 1511); Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, 357; Thornton, *Renaissance Interior*, 240, and 234-239 for mirrors in general.

Quattrocento into the mid-Cinquecento, and came under regulation around 1488, for being ‘very sumptuous and valuable’ with ‘completely vain and superfluous’ decoration that put them far beyond the apparent necessities of private use.⁸⁰ A number of surviving *restelli* indeed display this high level of decoration: two examples from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Figure 48) and the V&A (Figure 49) both feature large, extensively carved frames covered in gilt, the latter coloured with both gold and silver gilding. A comparable level of decoration is also visible on other varieties of decorated mirrors, such as the Sienese *tondo* mirror frame at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Figure 50), which has a similarly heavy use of carving and gilt. Considering that all gilded decoration on *restelli* had been banned since the 1488 legislation, the Venetian examples seem to flout the sumptuary codes with particular ostentation, however it appears that as with so many sumptuary laws, the ban against decorated *restelli* did little to limit people’s possession of them.⁸¹ Sumptuary laws of 1511 also forbade combs, brushes and mirrors that were ‘of gold and silver, bejewelled, or ornamented in any way’, indicating the popularity of such items, and indeed roughly contemporaneous Italian examples of combs survive with intricate carving and inlay in ebony and ivory (Figure 51) or painted and gilded decoration (Figure 52).⁸² The meticulous record of inventory evidence of *restelli* made by Gustav Ludwig at the turn of the century also

⁸⁰ ‘Preterea, perchè da poco tempo in qua se è posto in consuetudine far nove spexe al tuto vane e superflue, le qual exciedeno el privato, nè mai se ne pol trazer alguna utilità, zoè i rastelli et chasse dorata, molto sumptuose et de valuta.’ Transcription and translation in Fortini Brown, ‘Behind the Walls’, 321; Original Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Senato, Terra, reg. 10 fols. 184-85 (10 December 1488); The restello appears to have been a form of mirror specific to Venice. See also: Bistort, *Magistrato alle pompe*, 369-71; Fortini Brown, *Private Lives*, 111-112; Fortini Brown, ‘Restello’, 188-189; Ludwig, ‘Restello’, 169-362; Thornton, *Renaissance Interior*, 239-41; for instances of the *restello* in dowry inventories, see: Cecchini, ‘Material Culture’, 7. I have been unable to find sources on the regulation of mirror decorations for other cities, as other works on sumptuary laws have focused on clothing. See: Hughes, ‘Sumptuary Law and Social Relations’, 69-100; Killerby, *Sumptuary Law*; Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions*; Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence*, 179-200.

⁸¹ For examples from inventories, see Ludwig, ‘Restello’, 203-211.

⁸² Sanudo, *Cità Excelentissima*, 306; For more examples, see Ludwig, ‘Restello’, 192-211; Thornton, *Renaissance Interior*, 239-41.

evidences a preponderance of mirrors and *restelli* described as ‘dorado’ (gilded), and Thornton also notes a wide range of materials and decorations possible for mirrors, including gilded and scented *pastiglia*, wood painted with gilded coats of arms, blue and gold decorations, and frames with carved ivory garlands.⁸³

This evidence suggests that it was relatively common for mirrors, combs and *restelli* to serve as luxury decorative objects, yet it should be kept in mind that the objects that remain in museum collections tend to give an exaggerated impression of how luxurious standard versions of these objects were. When mirrors, combs and *cassetti* are depicted in paintings, the decoration on them tends to be restrained in comparison with examples surviving in museums.⁸⁴ Both mirrors in Bellini’s *Young Woman at her Toilette* (Figure 27) have thin frames with no apparent moulded or carved decoration. Their ambiguous golden-brown colour could suggest a gilded frame but could equally indicate a light-coloured wood, such as poplar or lime.⁸⁵ The two mirrors featured in Titian’s *Girl Before the Mirror* in Barcelona are also framed by simple borders without substantial figured decoration, and appear to be mainly of un-gilded wood (Figure 30). Small accents of a golden shade suggest that there may be traces of gilding on the torus moulding of the large convex *tondo* mirror behind the woman’s head, but the frieze itself has no carved decoration and is in shadow, making it unclear whether it is also gilded. These items would still have been costly—for instance, a mirror ordered by Lorenzo Lotto in 1549 cost 22 ducats, which would have been three weeks of work for a skilled labourer, and the *tondo* mirror depicted by Titian behind the

⁸³ Ludwig, ‘Restello’, 205-206; Thornton, *Renaissance Interior*, 236.

⁸⁴ Thornton notes this as well with regards to *cassoni*, pointing out that the elaborately decorated ones kept in museums were likely luxury items, while those shown in paintings at the time are shown to be much plainer. Thornton, *Renaissance Interior*, 193.

⁸⁵ For discussion of wood materials used in mirror frames see the V&A Museum online catalogue, ‘Frame’ (object 10-1890).

woman's head is of a particularly large size.⁸⁶ However, the mirror frames do not exhibit the full extent of luxury apparent in the material record, as they do not feature carving, *pastiglia*, ivory or polychrome painted decoration.⁸⁷

The combs Titian depicts are likewise simple: the *abbellimento* scenes in Barcelona and Prague feature double-sided combs of what appear to be a light coloured wood, displaying none of the carved or gilded decoration forbidden in sumptuary laws. In fact, I have yet to come across a depiction of a comb which is anything other than functional, whether it appears in a *abbellimento* scene, for the use of Venus (Figure 53), or for a virgin to use combing a unicorn's hair (Figure 54). On the other hand, it is not uncommon to find variation in the style and pomp of mirrors depicted. A comparison to mirrors depicted in other contexts emphasises that the artists of *abbellimento* paintings were also making a deliberate choice not to show more elaborate mirrors. The mirrors in Bellini's painting *Young Woman at her Toilette* can be directly contrasted with the convex mirror shown in the hands of the allegorical figure of *Prudence* he painted around 1490 to decorate a *restello* (Figure 43). In the latter, the gilding on the mirror frame is clearly depicted, with glints of light reflecting off moulded borders. In addition, the frieze is highly decorated, filled with a raised curvilinear floral motif, and topped with the figure of a face. A surviving counterpart with many similarities is the Tuscan *tondo* mirror frame housed at the V&A museum (Figure 55), which also has elaborate gilded moulding and a floral motif around the frieze. Such grandiosity, it seems, was suitable for an allegorical figure like *Prudence*, and indeed, a fitting detail for the decoration of an elaborately painted *restello*, but apparently did not convey the sentiments with which Bellini wished to present the *Young Woman at her Toilette*.

⁸⁶ See Lotto, *Spese diverse*. Price equivalent estimate from Jill Burke, private communication.

⁸⁷ Thornton, *Renaissance Interior*, 237-239 for mirrors, and an example of another particularly large flat glass mirror in Girolamo Mazzola-Bedoli's *Portrait of Anna Eleonora Sanvitale* (1562).

Instead, the mirrors in both the Titian example and in Bellini's *Young Woman at Her Toilette* have more in common with the examples of pegged mirrors seen illustrated in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* than with the ornate *tondo* mirror frames at the V&A museum.⁸⁸ The mirrors in the *Hypnerotomachia* are not the focus of the action in the illustrations in which they appear, but hang in the background as everyday objects that, in combination with the other objects in the space, are the signs defining the setting in a bedchamber. The first (Figure 56) shows a *tondo* mirror centrally located above the head of a bed, with three pegs projecting from its undecorated triangular frame.⁸⁹ Another illustration from a different edition of the text shows a horsehair *coda* hanging down from below an even more simply framed *tondo* mirror (Figure 57).⁹⁰ Unlike the elaborate bed-frames, the mirrors are not depicted with any decorative moulding, but are shown as everyday bedroom accoutrements. In these portrayals, the mirrors help frame the setting within the domestic space of the home. Within context of the *abbellimento* paintings, they are also frames for actions taking place within a domestic, intimate setting, and appear as commonplace objects.

Giulio Romano's *Woman With a Mirror* (Figure 58) includes a different example of a sculpted and gilded mirror, with an emphasis given to depicting a range of opulent materials and textures in a way that visually sets it apart from the work of either Bellini or Titian. Throughout, care has been taken to evoke a variety of rich textures, from the gold jewelled armband and ornate pearl necklace the woman wears, to the impossibly fine veil that covers her body, to the lacelike carving on the incense burner smouldering on her table.⁹¹ Attention is drawn to the gold of the free-standing mirror

⁸⁸ Colonna, *Hypnerotomachia*, unpaginated, signature E^v.

⁸⁹ For a surviving example of a mirror with similar triangular frame, see Ludwig, 'Restello', 194.

⁹⁰ Ludwig, 'Restello', 263-264; Thornton, *Renaissance Interior*, 237-239.

⁹¹ While this vessel has a similar appearance to box for jewels or cosmetics, it is visibly glowing from within, and the back edge is obscured by a plume of black smoke that rises from it,

on the woman's dressing table: the sculptural feet and long neck of its base gleam with oil-like highlights which contrast to the muted sheen of the bronze ewer next to it. While Bellini's painting also features luxury goods—in particular the intricately woven rug where the woman sits, and the pearled *reticella* of blue and green brocade she wears over her hair—the ambiguity of their significance is maintained.⁹² The *reticella*, for example was a hairpiece commonly worn by married women.⁹³ Likewise in Venice the habit of covering tables and other surfaces with woven rugs imported from the East was fashionable and, as with so many things, done by a broad enough sector of the population that sumptuary laws were eventually put in place to restrict this display of wealth.⁹⁴

In the scene by Romano there are a number of elements with specific symbolic associations which suggest that, unlike the paintings made for a Venetian context, Romano intended to identify his subject as a courtesan: the monkey on the windowsill (associated with vanity and prostitution); the exotic yellow head scarf on her head (a colour used in some cities to denote prostitutes and Jews); and the figure of Venus on the building outside.⁹⁵ In addition, the open window shutters at the upper left of the painting and the wide, clear view from the balcony and could potentially allude to

indicating that it is some kind of lamp or incense burner instead. For suggestions that it a jewel box, Wolk-Simon, 'Woman with a Mirror' (cat. 87), 185.

⁹² Goffen, 'Bellini's Nude', 187-91.

⁹³ Goffen, 'Bellini's Nude', 187-91; Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 165.

⁹⁴ Sanudo, *Cità excelentissima*, 304.

⁹⁵ Although Linda Wolk-Simon reads her right hand as a greeting to someone entering the room, it is in fact in the act of pulling on or removing the very sheer veil wrapped around the woman's body—a classically ambiguous 'tantalising gesture' that Junkerman refers to. Wolk-Simon, 'Woman with a Mirror' (cat. 87), 185. On the association between monkeys and prostitution, see: Ruggiero, 'Mean Streets, Familiar Streets', 295-310, 304; Servadio, *Renaissance Woman*, 88; Kenneth Borris notes that Part One of Aretino's *Ragionamenti* is dedicated to a monkey: Borris, *Same-Sex Desire*, 350; On associations with vanity, see Nagel, *Controversy of Renaissance Art*, 290; Nagel, 'Fashion and the Now-Time of Renaissance Art', 48-49; for the use of yellow scarves and badges to stigmatise outcast populations, and their associations with *luxuria and lascivitas* see: Knauer, 'Portrait of a Lady?', 95-117, esp. 98-99; Shemek, *Ladies Errant*, 25, 198.

courtesans' practice of enticing clients from their windows and balconies.⁹⁶ On one hand, many of these goods with potentially libidinous connotations could have also been items indicating affluence, the latest fashion, and the ability to attain the luxuries of the east.⁹⁷ However, the open balcony view in this scene overtly highlights its voyeuristic potential. Not only is the viewer privy to the main figure's dressing routine, but the sight of another woman in contemporary Italian dress laying out a red cloth on the balcony across the way serves as a visual suggestion that someone else could look in and observe at any time. This may again be contrasted to Bellini's painting—although his subject also sits in front of an open window, the fields and distant city behind her have no human figures to accentuate the possibility of voyeurism in the same manner that Romano has employed. The setting of the *abbellimento* scene is, at its essence, voyeuristic, as though the viewer, or the male present in the picture has stumbled in on a dressing routine which is not yet finished. However Romano's painting deliberately exploits this potential in a way that Bellini's does not. The luxurious cosmetic items in Romano's painting are an accessory to this heightened sense of visibility; his emphasis on their opulent material qualities suggests the types of toiletries designed for show as much as for everyday utility, implying that, like the sitter, they too are intended to be viewed and admired.

In practice, women were unlikely to fully expose their bodies, even during sex, and full nudity, for women, was often associated with shaming and humiliation practices—such like the race of the prostitutes in Ferrara.⁹⁸ Yet voyeurism, and the act of looking and spying were dominant themes in erotic art and writing, with the act of

⁹⁶ Wolfthal, 'Woman in the Window', 57-75.

⁹⁷ Servadio, *Renaissance Woman*, 88.

⁹⁸ Burke, 'How to See People Naked', unpaginated.

viewing eroticised and potentially subversive.⁹⁹ A woman's dressing routine was an everyday setting in which body parts that were normally hidden could potentially be glimpsed, making it an ideal setting for erotic fantasies. Popular themes from myth and the Bible, such as Titian's *Diana and Actaeon*, Lotto's *Susanna and the Elders*, and the 'Bath of Bathsheba,' as portrayed by Giulio Romano (Figures 61-63), all unfold around the act of voyeurism in which a lady is unwittingly glimpsed during her bathing and dressing routine.¹⁰⁰ Unlike the libidinous scenes of sexual congress in *I modi*, for example, where women are shown to have willingly removed their clothing and are aware that they are on view, at least to their partners, scenes of bathing and *abbellimento* suggest that the spectator has stumbled in on a moment in the dressing routine and the glimpse they are awarded is stolen and momentary. The women's dishabille and the transitory nature of the 'tantalising gestures'—shifting her hair, tilting a bottle, adjusting a veil—help to create a sense of the figures' temporality, upholding the suggestion that the subject has been surprised in the act of getting dressed. The potential element of surprise, in turn, renders her effectively blameless for any exposure that has occurred.¹⁰¹ While these women are, strictly speaking, innocent victims of the male gaze levied upon them, the toilette offered a potential opportunity for women to orchestrate a similar voyeuristic encounter, displaying her bodily charms to a chosen audience, while still maintaining the guise of innocence. In Piccolomini's *Dialoghi*, Mistress Raffaella recommends 'accidentally' letting people catch one changing as a contrivance to show off one's breasts, an act which 'can be done if in the morning one devises it so it appears as if they have by chance come to your house when you have

⁹⁹ Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 28, 42-44, 154; Findlen, 'Humanism, Politics, Pornography', 49-108, 63-76; Wolk-Simon, 'Rapture to the Greedy Eyes', 48-49, 56 nn. 42-46; Romano (ed. Lawner), *I Modi*, 39-42; Aretino (trans. Brown), *Secret Life of Nuns*, 22, 23; Ginzburg suggests that the eroticisation of viewing was a relatively new interest in this period: Ginzburg, 'Titian, Ovid', 32-33; Burke, 'How to See People Naked'.

¹⁰⁰ Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 125-160.

¹⁰¹ Burke, 'How to See People Naked', quoted below.

just risen from bed and haven't quite had the time to tie up your clothing'.¹⁰² This description of the 'accidental' discovery of a dishevelled lady with unlaced clothing bears a strong resemblance to the partially undressed women depicted in the toilette scenes of Titian, Palma Vecchio and Paris Bordone. Both play on the act of viewing, and the delicate balance that women negotiated while they were being viewed. Like the hands in a *pudica* pose, the woman's state of partial undress in an *abbellimento* scene draws attention to that which it conceals, gratifying the viewer without condemning the honour of the subject.¹⁰³ Firenzuola played on a similar theme of artfully controlled exposure, in his *Dialogue on the Beauty of Women*, when Selvaggia's veil slips off revealing her chest in what, as Mary Rogers suggests, was likely to be a deliberate and flirtatious slippage.¹⁰⁴ The voyeuristic setting works in a similar way—like Bathsheba or Susanna, the sitter may only be a passive participant in the erotically charged situation she has become part of, or she may be deliberately controlling the experience. Yet, as Jill Burke observes, the sense that the woman has been surprised during her dressing routine means that 'these women are not culpable, or in social disgrace'.¹⁰⁵ The viewer may ponder whether it was her intent to be glimpsed or not, but the truth of her intention remains hidden, and honour preserved. The intimate cosmetic objects evoke a private feminine sphere and signal the ongoing act of dressing, through which they create a setting in which the woman's potential for active participation is

¹⁰² '...Se ella harra bel petto, ilche e d'importatia grandissima a una donna, cerchi con destrezza d'aver commodita che gli possa in qualche bel modo esser visto, per quanto ricerca l sua honesta, esser naturalmente bello, e non per arte nissuna, e questo gli verra fatto se la mattina singera qualche volte a quei cha a sorte gli verranno in casa di esser levata allhora del letto e non haver havuto tempo di strignersi le vesti, e cosi potra conoscersi che'l petto suo per se stesso e rotondo, e spiccato non e per forza di pontelli e bagatelle, puo occorrer questo medesimo giuocando a la neve, o bagnandosi con acque la state, come accade, e di poi mostrandosi tutta mole fa parere necessario lo scegnersi & asciugarsi....'. Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 18v; translation with modifications from Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), 48.

¹⁰³ Burke, 'How to See Naked People', unpaginated; Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions*, 216.

¹⁰⁴ Rogers, 'Decorum of Beauty', 70; Firenzuola (ed. Eisenbickler and Murray), *Beauty of Women*, 31, 81.

¹⁰⁵ Burke, 'How to See People Naked', unpaginated.

acknowledged while at the same time the necessarily ambiguous nature of that participation is brought to question.

Objects and Acts: Bottles and Sponges

So far I have looked at the cultural significance of combs, mirrors, and boxes, but I have not yet addressed the sponges and bottles which also appear in some *abbellimento* scenes. Bellini's *Young Woman at Her Toilette* (Figure 27) features a small bottle on a window sill which is not in the woman's immediate proximity, and she does not seem to be using it in this stage of her routine. However, the sponge atop this bottle suggests that the bottle is not just a decorative feature, but contains a solution to be applied.¹⁰⁶ This is reinforced by later images of *donne che si fanno belle*, where sponges are shown in more direct association with the other cosmetic items. For example, in Paris Bordone's *Venetian Women at their Toilet* (ca. 1545) (Figure 37), a sponge and small rounded pot are shown in the foreground to the left of the main figure in red, who holds a comb in one hand and a portion of hair in the other, while a darker-skinned woman with facial tattoos points to a small mirror held adjacent to the sponge and pot. The jar and sponge in both paintings could be taken as relatively generic cosmetic items, and the implements in Bellini's painting in particular have been subject to a range of interpretations in the past; however the other elements in the paintings suggest a specific association with hair care.¹⁰⁷ First, women in both paintings are arranging their hair: in Bellini's depiction the woman adjusts her snood with the help of

¹⁰⁶ This has not been the only interpretation of the blurry object atop the jar—Paul Hills interprets the 'sponge' as white grapes, however, considering the type of container the object is upon, and its context within a scene of a woman fixing her hair, it seems most likely to have been a sponge, as Sarah Blake McHam and others have identified. See: Hills, *Venetian Colour*, 131; Blake McHam, 'Reflections of Pliny' 2008, 157; Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 165; Cummings, 'Caravaggio's "Conversion of Mary Magdalen"', 572; Rona Goffen initially interpreted it as flowers in Goffen, *Bellini*, 257.

¹⁰⁷ Hills, *Venetian Colour*, 131; Blake McHam, 'Reflections of Pliny' 2008, 157; Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 165; Cummings, 'Caravaggio's "Conversion of Mary Magdalen"', 572; Goffen, *Bellini*, 257.

the double mirrors, which allow her to see the back of her head. Meanwhile the central figure in Bordone's scene holds a comb and a section of hair in either hand. In addition, the evidence in *ricettari* suggests that the sponge may have been a cosmetic implement specifically associated with hair dye, as sponges were used almost exclusively in this context. Of the recipes surveyed in this study, eight require a sponge for application and all of these are treatments for the hair; all but one are for hair dye and the exception is for hair removal.¹⁰⁸ Recipes for other cosmetics, soaps and perfumes from this period do not suggest sponges for application, perhaps in the case of the latter, because too much of the expensive mixture would be wasted in the material of the sponge.¹⁰⁹ In the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript, a sponge is used to apply the final solution for 'Florentine Blonde', and similarly in *Ricettario Galante* 'To make the hair the colour of gold'.¹¹⁰ Both *Opera nova de ricette e secreti* and *Opera nova excellentissima* suggest that sponges be used to apply dye to beards, in order 'To make the beard black'.¹¹¹ In the Sforza *Experimenti* sponges are recommended to apply dyes of a range of colours: 'To make white hair black as it was in youth', 'To make the hair, beard and every hair that was white the colour of chestnuts', and two recipes to make hair 'the colour of gold'.¹¹² The Sforza text also features the only non-dye sponge application, a depilation

¹⁰⁸ Recipes which use sponge: MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 192r-v ('Bionda alla Fiorentina'); Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 31-32 (rx. 44, 'A quel medesimo [A fare li capelli di color d'oro]'); *Opera nova de Ricette e secreti*, unpaginated, rx. 35 ('A farla barba negra'); *Probatum est*, unpaginated, rx. 29 ('A fare la barba negra'); and in Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 653 ('A far li Capelli Canuti Negri pelo che seranno come erano in iuventu'), 655 ('a far venir li capelli et la barba et omne pelo de color castagnacciose ben fossino canuti'), 656 ('al medesimo [a far li capelli biondi de color de oro]'), and 658 ('A far li capelli biondi come oro'). The hair removal recipe is in Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 660 ('Afar cadere peli che mai piu torranno').

¹⁰⁹ The suggestion it may be perfume is made in: Blake McHam, 'Reflections of Pliny', 163, 169; Santore, 'Tools of Venus', 193; I have compared perfume recipes in the *Ricettario galante* and Rosetti's *Notandissimi secreti de l'arte profumatori*.

¹¹⁰ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 192r-v ('Bionda alla Fiorentina'); Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario Galante*, 31-32 (rx. 44 'A quel medesimo [A fare li capelli di color d'oro]').

¹¹¹ *Opera nova de ricette e secreti*, unpaginated, rx. 35 ('A farla barba negra'); *Opera nova excellentissima*, unpaginated, rx. 29 ('A fare la barba negra').

¹¹² Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza*, (v. 3) 653, ('A far li Capelli Canuti Negri pelo che seranno come erano in iuventu'); 655 ('a far venir li capelli et la barba et omne pelo de color castagnacciose

‘To make hairs fall out so that they will never come back’.¹¹³ In these recipes, the sponge is used in the final stage of application, when the dye or bleaching agent is applied, as in this example from *Ricettario Galante*:

[To make hair the colour of gold]

Take 1 pound halite, one half pound roman vitriol, four ounces saltpetre, and a little celandine root. Grind everything together, and put them to distil in an alembic. The first water that will come out will be good, but the second will be most perfect. And when you want to use the said water, first wash your head with your ordinary lye, then when it is dry take a sponge and wash in the aforementioned water, and staying in the sun you wash your hair with this, combing it until it is dry, and it makes it like gold in no time.¹¹⁴

Nearly a century later, a very similar procedure is described and illustrated in Vecellio’s *Habiti Antichi e Moderni* indicating continued use of these methods, where women wet their hair with ‘a little sponge tied to a spindle’ to lighten it in the heat of the sun (Figure 42).¹¹⁵ Within the field of Cinquecento cosmetic treatments then, it is possible that sponges were implements associated closely with hair arrangement, and perhaps specifically with hair dye.

As with other types of cosmetic application, hair dye was met with mixed reactions and conflicting significance. As I noted in Chapter 2, blonde hair was thought to be the colour most appropriate to those of a phlegmatic humour, and was therefore the phenotypic ideal for women, and was also thought to suggest good bodily

ben fossino canuti’); 656 (‘al medesimo [a far li capelli biondi de color de oro]’); and 658 (rx 156, ‘A far li capelli biondi come oro’).

¹¹³ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 660 (‘A far cadere peli che mai piu tornaranno’).

¹¹⁴ ‘A quel medesimo

R. Salgema...libre una

Vetriolo Roman...libre mezza

Salmitrio...oncie quattro

Et un puoco de radice di Celidonia. Polverezza ogni cosa insieme, et metti a distillare a lambicco. La prima acqua che uscirà serà assai buona, ma la seconda serà perfettissima. Et quando vuoi operare detta acqua, lavati prima il capo con la tua lessi ordinaria, poi quando sarà asciutto piglierai una sponga et la bagnarai in la sopradetta acqua, et stando al sole ti bagnarai con essa li capelli pettinandoli sino che siano asciutti, et si faranno in poco tempo com’oro.’ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario Galante*, 31-32.

¹¹⁵ Vecellio, *Habiti antichi et moderni*, 113r.

constitution.¹¹⁶ However using dye to achieve this effect was not generally recommended from a medical standpoint, as some regarded it to have potentially damaging effects on the brain.¹¹⁷ It has at times been suggested that blonde hair dye, like the use of makeup, was a trademark of those involved in prostitution.¹¹⁸ This argument I have refuted in previous chapters, and maintain that the assertion that prostitutes made themselves up in a manner significantly different than noblewomen is not supported by documentary evidence, which instead suggests that the dress of prostitutes and noblewomen was similar enough to allow for the former to be mistaken for the latter.¹¹⁹ If we consider images to be a record of contemporary fashions and ideals as well as agents that moulded perceptions and desires, than we can trace a long pattern of promoting blond hair. The hair is a favourite topic of lyrical lauds—Petrarch, for example, praises Laura’s golden hair more than any other body part.¹²⁰ The visual trend towards depicting hair routines could be interpreted as part of this societal fetishising of women’s hair.¹²¹ The artistic record attests to recurring fashions for blonde hair in a number of cities. An image of an amorous chess match decorating the side of a *cassone* from Siena shows young men and women alike boasting clouds of frizzy hair of a brilliant flaxen hue in the mid-Quattrocento (Figure 64).¹²² Blonde hair is frequently depicted in Venetian art as well, in both secular scenes such as Titian’s

¹¹⁶ della Porta, *Fisiognomia*, 238-239; Laughren, ‘Oltre la Pelle’, 59;

¹¹⁷ Wheeler, *Renaissance Secrets*, 41; Bell, *How to Do It*, 204; Agnelli, *Amorevole aviso*, 6-24; Reference to Isabella d’Este’s friend’s daughter not going outside after washing her hair is in Welch, ‘Hair and Hands’, 244.

¹¹⁸ Knauer, ‘Portrait of a Lady?’, 110.

¹¹⁹ Knauer, ‘Portrait of a Lady?’, 103, 110.

¹²⁰ Petrarch mentions Laura’s hair over 30 times in his sonnets: Petrarca (ed. Jones), *Canzoniere*; Wolfthal, *In and out of the Marital Bed*, 57-58; Matthews-Grieco, ‘Body, Appearance, Sexuality’, 62.

¹²¹ While the *belletti* paintings address women’s beauty, there is evidence that flowing blonde hair was also celebrated on male youths, something which seems likely to be an accessory to their passive and not-fully-masculine status on the Renaissance sexual continuum; On the Renaissance sexual model in theory and practice, see: Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, 83-84, 109-111, 135; on male beauty, see Campbell, ‘Eros in the Flesh’, 631-632, 646.

¹²² On the sexual connotations of the chess match in this panel, see: Simons, ‘(Check) Mating the Grand Masters’, 66-67; Syson et al., *Renaissance Siena*, 213-217; Metropolitan Museum of Art, Online Catalogue, ‘The Chess Players’.

abbellimento paintings and the *Venus of Urbino* (Figure 65) and in religious settings, as in the sea of pale hair depicted in Carpaccio's monumental *Apotheosis of St Ursula* (Figure 66). Palma Vecchio and Bernardino Licinio had a particular penchant for portraying women with locks of bright golden hues, often with curious shading that suggests hair dye. For example, the women in both Licinio's *Allegory* (Figure 34) and Palma Vecchio's *Woman in Green* (Figure 35) have hair that is noticeably darker at the roots of the centre parting, in a way that stands out from the shades in the light and shadows which have otherwise been used to mould the shape of the hair. A number of portrayals from 1520-30 in Venice likewise depict the fashion for wearing a thick wreath of what appears to be false blond hair on the back of the head, often in a shade which does not match the rest of the hair (Figures 67-69).¹²³ In the *Dialogue of Giulia and Madalena*, attributed to Aretino, Giulia goes as far as to list 'certain blonde hairs' (i.e. pubic hair) amongst Lucrezia da Forlì's many charms and beauties.¹²⁴ The text is obviously satirical, and seems to make a mockery of the poetic tradition in praise of blonde hair, and while no recipes in the period of my study indicate that women might strive to achieve this ideal, in 1564, Giovanni Marinello's recipe book on women's adornment included the suggestion that the 'shameful parts', should ideally be covered by 'threads' that are 'fine and golden'.¹²⁵ However Giulia's assessment that she had 'never before seen the likes of it' does seem to confirm that people with a natural proclivity for blondeness were indeed unusual in the peninsula at this time.¹²⁶ Thus, in their veristic capacity, these images record hair colours which appear, in all likelihood, to have been achieved through the use of dye and modifying agents. Equally, both the

¹²³ Pietro Casola noted seeing false hair for sale in the markets at Piazza San Marco when passing through Venice in 1494. Casola (ed. Newett), *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*, 144-45; For further discussion, see Junkerman, 'Bellissima Donna', 197.

¹²⁴ 'Then she has a plump and pronounced cunt, with certain blond hairs above, the likes of which I'd never seen before' '...Poi ha un conno grassa e rilevato con certi peli biondi suso che non viddi mai simile...' Aretino, *Dialogo di Giulia e di Madalena*, 54.

¹²⁵ 'I fili, che le ricoprano, saranno sottili, & d'oro.' Marinello, *Ornamenti delle donne*, 278^v.

¹²⁶ Aretino, *Dialogo di Giulia e di Madalena*, 54.

portraits and the idealised figures celebrate a hair colour which was not natural for a large section of the population, and through this celebration, continued to encourage the use of dye products.

The addition of a sponge in *abbellimento* scenes is not particularly common; the Bellini and Bordone paintings are the most notable examples. While it is possible that the suggestion of hair dye was not intended, the figures' actions (adjusting their hair) and associated objects (comb, double mirrors for viewing the back of the head) go further to confirm that the ointments pictured are indeed meant to be associated with the hair rather than the skin. This trait is typical not just in the scenes by Bellini and Bordone, but of *abbellimento* paintings in general. Bordone emphasises the hair as the focus of attention by including a comb in the lower foreground. In Titian's *abbellimento* paintings, it is clear that the woman is using the depicted cosmetic on her hair: one hand is poised with a finger over the mouth of a small jar, while the other holds out her hair, as though about to apply the treatment. As I mentioned earlier, the type of hair product she is using is unclear—it could as easily be conditioner, a bleach or a perfume, although one might wonder why the mirrors are necessary if it were the latter. Palma Vecchio's *La Bella* likewise grasps her hair, while holding a box that overflows with ribbons, and the frontmost figure in Licinio's *Allegory* holds a delicate glass flask in her right hand while grasping her flaxen hair in the right (Figures 34 and 34a). The classical precedent of Venus at her bath is visible in Titian's scenes, where he has used a similar gesture both when he shows Venus wringing her hair as she rises from the sea (Figure 70), and when he shows women applying cosmetics before a mirror.¹²⁷ Venus' iconic gesture is transposed and repeated in the contexts of both classical and Christian myths: Giulio Romano depicts Bathsheba grasping hair in a similar gesture in the Palazzo del Te (Figure 63), and Raphael also shows Bathsheba not

¹²⁷ Joannides, *Titian to 1518*, 258-60; Schäpers, *Junge Frau*, 127-130.

so much bathing, as doing her hair, with a comb in hand (Figure 71). Indeed, the visual motif of a woman tending to her hair is so iconic as to be almost ubiquitous, and *abbellimento* paintings record a process by which dressing the hair became transformed into a representative female activity, suggestive of the nature of womanhood, such that by the time of Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti Antichi et Moderni*, the author found it essential to include a depiction of this very act as a representation of the female populace of his city (Figure 42).

Abbellimento scenes cannot be viewed just as images of women putting on some type of makeup, but as icons which, through repetition of gesture and attributes, visually connect a woman in contemporary dress, taking part in a daily routine, to scenes with the likes of Venus, Bathsheba and Susanna. These are examples whose meanings differ at face value, reiterating that the gesture of doing the hair could take on different meanings as the context required: it was as appropriate to the secular women with *belletti* and the amorous Venus as it was to Bathsheba. Yet when viewed broadly as icons of femininity and fantasies of the female body, all these images engage with common issues concerning female beauty and male spectatorship, never straying far from the notion that female beauty has the overwhelming power to entrance and seduce the spectator, regardless of the intent of the woman herself.

A companion question to 'why depict hair dye' is to ask why other alternatives have not been shown—why, for example, there are no surviving depictions of a woman with a jar of red *rossetto* and finger poised at her cheek or chest instead. I would suggest that the overt depiction of the act of applying skin makeup raised too many problems on both an artistic and a social basis to be frequently shown; that is, that it presented both artist and viewer with too many conflicting concerns and anxieties to be a topic that was either pleasurable or ambiguous enough for what the *abbellimento*

genre required. On a practical level, depicting overt use of face makeup posed a challenging artistic problem in a society where subtlety was the preferred result when makeup was used. If what Castiglione wrote was representative, and women strove to achieve an ‘uncontrived simplicity’ (*sprezzata purità*) with their facial adornment, how could an artist successfully depict a woman applying makeup that was, in the socially acceptable manner, too subtle to be distinguishable from her actual appearance?¹²⁸ Indeed, the struggle to differentiate an artist’s convention for depicting ideal skin-tone from an attempt to depict makeup is apparent in previous scholarship: because the act of applying makeup directly to the *skin* is never overtly depicted in this period, the evidence that the sitter is wearing face makeup remains subjective at best, based on the viewer’s own assessment of the artists’ choice of pigments.¹²⁹ The fashion for subtle makeup allowed for beautification which did not overtly violate moral calls for naturalism or the stylistic condemnation of over-ornamentation. However, the depiction of deliberately heavy makeup would have invoked a strong moral overtone, touched with the sentiments of shame and embarrassment that Alberti encapsulates in the exchange between Giannozzo and his wife, if not with outright moral condemnation. In *abbellimento* scenes, the impression of cosmetics is given by the objects and actions of the participant rather than through clearly discernible colouration of skin. By making it clear that the cosmetic products in *abbellimento* scenes were being used specifically on the hair, reference could still be made to making-up as a whole, but through the familiar motif of Venus Anadyomene, which did not require artists or viewers to grapple with disturbing discolorations of the skin and the moral implications that overdone cosmetics would have suggested.

¹²⁸ Castiglione (ed. Maier), *Cortegiano*, 155; Castiglione (trans. Bull), *The Book of the Courtier*, 86- 87.

¹²⁹ Knauer, ‘Portrait of a Lady?’, 97-98; Brown, *Virtue & Beauty*, 160.

Patricia Phillippy suggested that self-fashioning was perceived as a masculine activity linked to *disegno*, and that, since women were not believed to possess this creative impulse, their ability to self-fashion, including their manipulation of appearance with cosmetics, was not only problematic, but often altogether in doubt.¹³⁰ Yet *abbellimento* paintings present cosmetics in a way that is often neither clearly active or passive, positive or negative—an ambiguity of depiction which collaborates both with Alberti and Piccolomini’s urgings that subtlety is key, and with the tendency within *ricettari* to prescribe waters and subtle solutions over thick ‘paints’. Renaissance cosmetics had to be subtle to be successful, and I would suggest that the ambiguity of *abbellimento* paintings, whether directly or indirectly, reflects and even celebrates the successful negotiation of this subtlety. The paintings occupy the balance between the morality of natural beauty and the immorality of adornment that is performed in excess. More broadly, they represent a system that celebrated not women’s individuality as much as her ability to conform to a predetermined and unattainable ideal.

¹³⁰ Phillippy, *Painting Women*, 11, 15.

CHAPTER 6

COSMETICS AND WOMEN'S IDENTITY 2: WAYWARD WOMEN

Subtlety, artfulness, and the illusion of naturalism are the qualities that gave the *belle donne*'s cosmetic routine its allure. But what happened when the boundaries were transgressed, when subtlety was surmounted by excess? This chapter explores two case studies in which cosmetic use is overt and undisguised, an illustration to Francisco Delicado's *Retrato de la Loçana Andaluza* (1528) and the anonymous dialogue *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* (1538). In each, the motifs of cosmetic excess, cosmetic deception, and sexual excess and deception, introduced in the first chapter, are combined. The examples I have chosen for this chapter go beyond portraying cosmetics in a generic sense and depict specific cosmetic acts and ingredients in detail. I explore how these fictionalised cosmetics have been specifically distorted, becoming, once more a medium through which a number of social concerns are projected.

Sexualised Remedies: *La Loçana Andaluza*

As I introduced in Chapter 1, Renaissance sources also often equate makeup wearing and prostitution, describing prostitutes' use of cosmetics largely in terms of excess—the women are portrayed as using too much makeup which is not artful adornment but blatant deception, and this cosmetic excess is equated with their sexual excess. The illustrations from Francisco Delicado's *Retrato de la Loçana Andaluza*, are a unique visual example of this. These images are unusual for the time as they are, to my knowledge, the only example printed in Italy before 1540 in which scenes of

cosmetic use are directly juxtaposed to a text containing makeup recipes.¹ Delicado's work, as previously described, is not technically a recipe book, but the cosmetic recipes that Loçana makes and distributes amidst her sexual adventures are described in great detail, often equal to that found in *ricettari*.

Delicado's *Retrato*, and related texts including Pietro Aretino's *Sei giornate* and Alessandro Piccolomini's *Raffaella*, have similar basic elements, as all are set within a voyeuristic framework and both prominently feature cosmetic routines. Delicado's *Loçana* has nearly equal portions of the main character's cosmetic prescriptions and sexual adventures: on one hand, Delicado provides the 'insider's' (or voyeur's) view of Loçana's sexual encounters, complete with conversational sound effects to let the viewer know how the intercourse is progressing, on the other (and often in close succession), cosmetic recipes and their manner of application are described in full detail, presumably for the reader's entertainment.² Piccolomini's *Raffaella* has a similar juxtaposition—although it is not as sexually explicit as *Loçana*, (indeed, the women are not intended to be prostitutes), it nonetheless explores the 'secrets' of women's lives from an 'inside' perspective, including titillating suggestions for how to allow men to glimpse your pleasing body parts while feigning innocence, and how to take a lover if your marriage becomes unsatisfactory.³ Amongst the secrets of seduction and sexual behaviour, Piccolomini also includes a significant section of cosmetic

¹ Although Delicado wrote in both Spanish and Italian, this text seems only to have been printed in Spanish. The only surviving copy is held in Vienna, at the Oesterreichische Nationalbibliothek, and a facsimile edition was made available by Antonio Pèrez Gòmez in 1950. See: Ugolini, *Nuovi dati*, 446; Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, i.

² For narration of a sexual encounter, see Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 53-57; for examples of Loçana's cosmetic prescriptions: 58, 60, 76, 102-103, 120, 154, 192, 206.

³ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*; Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*.

recommendations, which are often as detailed as the instructions within actual recipe books.⁴

Cosmetics are presented in these texts as one of the secret realms of women's knowledge, equal, in their occult nature, to women's intimate sexual desires, hidden trysts, and subtle tricks to seduce. Like women's bodies, which were often partially hidden even during sex, women's cosmetic routines were generally encouraged to be kept out of the male eye, and Delicado, Aretino and Piccolomini all propose to offer the (male) reader 'never before seen' insight into this eroticised secret world, based on their own 'privileged' personal knowledge, given to them by the supposed female acquaintances who served as informants.⁵ Cosmetic recipes, which so often rely on the assertion that they are personally tested and proven, appear almost as a form of proof to verify that the authors' stories also derive from real experiences, demonstrating, through their detailed prescriptions, the author's 'genuine' first-hand knowledge of the secrets of women (even if the source could easily be one of the many male-authored recipe books contemporaneously in print). What appear at face value to be remedies for women's health and beauty are transformed here into titillating entertainment.

As introduced in Chapter 1, the depiction of prostitutes as experts in makeup was a *topos* in which was embedded the Christian doctrine associating cosmetics with seduction and deception. This chapter addressed, in particular, Tertullian's influential argument, which made use of apocryphal stories to emphasise the connections between

⁴ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 13-16; Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), *Raffaella*, 32-41.

⁵ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 2r-3v; Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 5; Aretino, *Ragionamenti*; Pietro Aretino, *Ragionamento: Dialogo*. For encouragement that makeup use be hidden, or kept private, see: Castiglione, *Il cortegiano*, 154-156; Castiglione, *Courtier*, 86-87; Alberti, *Della famiglia*, 359-360; Alberti (trans. Watkins), *Family*, 215; On nakedness during sex, see Burke 'How to See People Naked'; Rogers, 'Decorum of Beauty', 70; For examples of women's unease at nudity even in a sexual context, see Aretino, *Dialogo di Giulia e di Madalena*, 77, 84.

embellishment, seduction, and sexual transgression.⁶ The perpetuation of this topos can be seen not only in the writings of later Christian theologians, but also in the creation of characters like Loçana, ‘wandering whores’ who dispense treatments for beauty and health alongside sexual favours. An interesting example of the theme’s pan-European persistence was pointed out by Monica Green, who observed that, during the Middle Ages, the highly popular *Trotula* handbook on women’s health became associated with prostitution—the text’s authorship came to be attributed with a mother-daughter pair of prostitutes who purportedly travelled through ‘many lands in order to become experienced’.⁷ Even in recipe books, makeup recipes are sometimes interspersed with a number of suggestive sex-related recipes, such as applications for re-virgination or for restoring erections, which would only perpetuate the notion that women’s secrets were in essence sexual.⁸ Loçana is another manifestation of this motif: the plot alternates between scenes of sexual encounters and administration of remedies which Loçana boasts she has learnt both from her mother and from her travels in the Levante.⁹ Sexual trafficking and the selling of makeup are shown side by side as interconnected activities.

In the illustrations as well, overt use of makeup and blatant sexuality are shown to be one and the same thing—unlike the *belle donne* of the previous chapter, both the makeup use and the sexuality is explicit. The original edition of *Loçana Andaluza* contained several illustrations, from which I will discuss the two scenes which overtly

⁶ Tertullian, *Ornamenti delle donne*, 20-25; Colish, ‘Cosmetic Theology’, 3-9.

⁷ Green, *Women’s Healthcare*, 151. Green notes that the appearance of the ‘meretrices’ lore coincides with the appearance of what she calls the ‘notoriously misogynistic’ *Secreta mulierum*, a pseudo-Alberus Magnus text.

⁸ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 26, 102-103, 120; MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 192^v, 193^r; Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 57. Caterina Sforza includes a recipe in code to ensure that a man ‘stara sempre duro’, noted in Fiumi and Giovanna Tempesta, ‘Gli “esperimenti” di Caterina Sforza’, 146. It appears that their citation is from Cuppano’s manuscript, rather than Pasolini, who appears to have censored that recipe from his transcription.

⁹ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 22, 34.

depict making up (Figures 39 and 40).¹⁰ The title page contains a well-labelled figure of Loçana and her retinue travelling by boat, which, as indicated by the small flags on either end, is taking them from Rome to Venice (Figure 39).¹¹ Loçana's servant, Rampin, directs the boat forward, while Loçana can be seen in the front of the boat, plucking the eyebrows of a woman who sits with her hair exposed, looking in the mirror. The next scene, which I will focus on, appears to be in Loçana's house (Figure 40). Here again, Loçana is plucking a long-haired woman's eyebrows, labelled as the character 'Clarina'. A group of three women hover in the back, one (Aquilea) appears to be fixing her hair while looking in a square mirror. Beside them, a woman (Divicia) and man are in bed together. Rampin (refigured as a dwarf) appears twice in the foreground, grinding a mortar and heating the fire with bellows.

Throughout Loçana's chamber are the materials necessary for her remedies. A mortar appears three times in the foreground, and next to Clarina's feet is a small vessel with a cloth draped over the top; a variety of vessels dangle overhead and rest on the windowsill. An array of flora is also present: a basket of plants in the lower left (bearing round small fruit with long, pointed leaves), varied flowers pots atop the bed, and fruits resembling pomegranates dangling overhead with the pots. There also appears to be a birdcage atop the bed, and one has to wonder whether it was intended to contain a pet (as the little dog in the right foreground) or another recipe ingredient, considering the frequent inclusion of doves, hens and 'domestic pigeons' in makeup recipes.¹² The flowers placed over the Loçana's bed may be located there only out of

¹⁰ Ugolini, 'Nuovi Dati', 473-476.

¹¹ Ugolini, 'Nuovi Dati', 473-476.

¹² See MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 183^r ('Belletto da far Bella una donna e Biancha'), 184^r ('Aqua da fa' la dona biancha'), 184^v ('A far la Dona Biancha'), 185^v ('A far uno belletto perfectio'), 190^v ('Per imbianchire la carne'); use of pigeon/dove dung in: *Operetta molto piacevöllissima*, (unpaginated) 'Se li capelli te cadisseno del capo per fare che non cadino' and Pseudo-Galen, *Ricettario di Galieno*, 40 ('Se li capelli te cadisseno del capo per fare non

convenience of depiction, but I wonder if they might also relate to the frequent use of herbs and flowers to scent bedrooms—a practice which was especially praised in poetic descriptions of courtesans.¹³ Either way, it is not a neutral, ‘literal’ rendering of the text. By grouping the scenes of copulation, cosmetic-making and toilette routine in one physical setting, this illustration creates a visual affiliation between the making and application of makeup, and Loçana’s activities as a prostitute.

The artist also seems to have selected plants and implements which reinforce the humorous sexual connotations of the illustrations, ensuring that the Renaissance viewer identified the connection between makeup, prostitution and sex. The attention to detail in rendering the different varieties of plants invites us to question whether the artist had a specific agenda in depicting them—while he may be making a connection with prominent recipes or remedies, several items featured seem to engage verbal sexual puns. Plants and foods were frequently used as visual metaphors for genitalia and sexual acts, with suggestive cucumbers, phallus-bearing trees and other anthropomorphic fruit appearing in prints, frescos and dishware alike (Figure 74).¹⁴ The caged bird atop Loçana’s bed may not be merely a pet or unfortunate recipe ingredient—birds, caged and otherwise, were frequently used as metaphors for the penis (a practice which of course still exists in the use of the words *uccello* and *uccellino*).¹⁵

The ‘bird-in-a-cage’ imagery was linked with the sexual act, as in this poem by

cadino’); and the use of pigeon feathers in: *Probatum est*, u.p., Rx. 2 (‘A fare che li capilli non caschino’), and Celebrino, *Venusta*, 7^v (‘A fare che li capilli non caschino’).

¹³ Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 42; Cathy Santore provides an excellent enumeration and summary of key sources which refer to courtesans’ perfumed homes and possessions, suggesting that while most people used perfume, only prostitutes and courtesans are portrayed with it: Santore, ‘Tools of Venus’, 181-182; examples include: Verini, *Lamento della cortigiana Ferrarese*, 357; Garzoni, *Piazza universale*, 259^f; Coryat, *Crudities*, 399.

¹⁴ Wolk-Simon, ‘Plate with a Woman and a Basket of “Fruits”’, 215, and in the same volume, cat. nos. 106, 107, 111, 219; Wolk-Simon, ‘Rapture’, 43-45, 49-58; Matthews-Grieco, ‘Satyrs and Sausages’, 36-44; Welch, *Shopping*, 66.

¹⁵ Allen J. Grieco has done an excellent analysis of the evolution of this metaphor, including a table of all the various bird names used in this context from the fourteenth- to early seventeenth-centuries. Grieco, ‘From Roosters to Cocks’, 89-140; Boggione and Casalegno, *Lessico Erotico*, 271 (‘uccello’).

Florentine Bernardo Bellincioni: ‘fat, hard, erect, red and pretty/ are the birds in the women’s cages/ that give consolation through their song’.¹⁶ Likewise, the act of grinding the mortar and pestle, which appears in the foreground no less than three times, was seen to mimic the motions of sex.¹⁷

Another notable feature is the pair of womb-shaped pomegranates that dangle prominently in the centre of the overhead rack. Pomegranates appear in other visual potpourris of sexualized fruits (Figure 74), and had various connotations of fertility, lust, marriage, and (especially in religious contexts) rebirth.¹⁸ The pomegranate’s mythical and symbolic value was mirrored in its medicinal application. Pomegranates, especially pomegranate peels, were a common recurring ingredient in classical birth-control remedies, and while usage of the plant specifically to prevent conception does not seem to have been retained into the Renaissance, its association with sexuality and specifically with female genitalia still persisted.¹⁹ In the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript, for example, pomegranate peels are one of the main ingredients in a recipe ‘To tighten a woman’s vagina and erase wrinkles from her body’.²⁰ To achieve this effect, the distillation is applied as a pessary, but it can also be spread on the skin to

¹⁶ ‘...grossi, duri, ritti, rossi e begli / che sono in gabbia delle donne ucegli, / che dàn col canto lor consolazione’. Grieco, ‘Roosters to Cocks’, 92, 129; Boggione and Casalegno, *Lessico Erotico*, 271 (‘uccello’); Bellincioni, *Le Rime* (vol. 1), 227.

¹⁷ Boggione and Casalegno, *Lessico Erotico*, 111 (‘pistolare’), 247 (‘pistola’), 382 (‘mortaio’); Dennis, ‘Unlocking the Gates of Chastity’, 236-37.

¹⁸ Meagher, ‘Food and Drink in European Painting, 1400-1800’; D’Ancona, *Garden of the Renaissance*, 312-318; Schneider, ‘On the Pomegranate’, 117-20.

¹⁹ Riddle, *Contraception and Abortion*, 25-26, 126, 128; on recent studies on pomegranate’s anti-fertility effects, p. 26, 33, 51-53, 88; classical examples of use as contraceptive in Soranus and Aëtius, p. 93-96; use as a male contraceptive on p. 97; mention in Salernitan works, p. 126.

²⁰ ‘A stringere la natura della donna et cazare le falde dal corpo: Rx galletto nose de cipresso pigne piccole verde capari scorza de castagni scorze di pomi granatj an. ..16. lume de roza an. ii et tutte queste cose rompile a grosso modo et mettile a molle in aceto forte per 8 giorni dapoi lambicha tutte queste cose et cavata l’aqua, agiongeli on. 3 d’aqua de pigne, et e fatta dapuoi la dona bagna delle pezzette sottile et mettasene nella natura, et come e sciuta torna a bagnare et faccia cosi per 4 giorni, venira come se fusse donzella et anche chi se ne mettesse sul corpo a una che havesse fatto filioli caza via le falde et anche fa le tette piccole, et chi l’avesse grande bagna delle peze et ponali sopra.’ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 193^r. For discussion of modern day use of ingredients, see Corrain, ‘Alcune ricette’, 39-40.

erase wrinkles and keep breasts small.²¹ The prominent appearance of pomegranates in the *Loçana* illustration might emphasise the sexual content, visually re-enforcing the link between Loçana's recipes and the sexual acts they encourage and/or facilitate.

In both the text and the illustrations for *Loçana*, the relationship between cosmetics and sex is implicit—Loçana knows all the secrets of beauty and sex, and her success at the former aids success at the latter. Likewise, a knowledge of one seems to imply a knowledge of the other. The connection implied in the novella's text is made even more clear in the illustrations, where ingredients and methods are used as visual allusions to the sexual act.

Unlike in the *belle donne* images, Loçana's gestures are neither ambiguous nor romanticised. The fact that she is shown plucking another women's eyebrows, rather than privately fixing her own hair, emphasises the scene's comic vulgarity. These images, to my knowledge, are the sole depictions of eyebrow plucking from this period in Italy. Women's use of tweezers and shaving to remove hair does not appear in any *ricettari* from this period, but both methods appear in literature, in association with licentious women. In Delicado's text, Loçana complains about the 'plucker's bite' leaving her face swollen after which she recommends using 'a sharp edge of glass that skims off the hairs and leaves the skin fresh and clean, and then a drop of oil from the seeds of a stout pumpkin and some juice from the flowers of beans from Venice will leave the face as pretty as can be'.²² An earlier account of shaving with glass appears in Giovanni Boccaccio's *Corbaccio* which describes 'old biddies ... who go about peeling other women, plucking their eyelashes and brows, shaving their cheeks with thin glass,

²¹ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 193^r.

²² Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 58.

smoothing the hide on their necks, and removing little whiskers'.²³ The exclusion of shaving from recipe books may be due to the fact that a recipe is not immediately necessary for the method to be effective, however the example from *Loçana* demonstrates that shaving could be combined with toning 'aftershaves' as well. It seems likely, then, that mechanical shaving and plucking was associated with a certain type of woman, and a particular critique of behaviour. Both Boccaccio and Delicado represent women who are described as amoral and sexually promiscuous: Loçana is a syphilitic prostitute, and the woman in the Boccaccio is described as lustful, seeking to attract men even while in church and engaging in adulterous sexual trysts. As I noted in Chapter 1, Boccaccio further suggests that the 'old biddies' who do the hair removal also serve as go-betweens and procuresses.²⁴ In the humoural understanding of the body, discussed in Chapter 2, facial and body hair were products of internal heat, typical to men, not women. Excessive warmth was thought to cause not only an abnormal amount of body hair, but also heightened lust.²⁵ Semen was thought to warm women's bodies, awakening an insatiability not possible before their first sexual encounter.²⁶ The more ejaculate a woman took in, the warmer her body, and the greater her lust. Thus a woman's need to shave her face or body suggests that she is more libidinous than average and also implies a high number of sexual encounters.

Significantly, both these works choose to mock a cosmetic procedure that is not solitary, but a social activity between women. Not only are Loçana's cosmetic

²³ 'certe feminete ... che vanno facendo gli scorticatoï alle femine e pelando le ciglia e le fonti e col vetro sottile radendo le gote e del collo assottigliando la buccia e certi peluzzi levandone...' Boccaccio (ed. Erboni), *Corbaccio*, 256; Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 42.

²⁴ Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 42.

²⁵ This ties back to the point made in Chapter 2 that, for men, excessive sex was thought to eventually cause baldness since the unchecked inordinate loss of semen deprived them of too much heat. See Manfredi, *Il perche*, 59, 80^v, 84^v.

²⁶ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 62; Cadden, 'Western Medicine', 62. For an example, see Aretino, *Ragionamenti*, 95-98.

modifications obvious, rather than subtle, but unlike in the *abbellimento* paintings, cosmetic use is not primarily framed as an act carried out for the benefit of the male spectator. The passage from Boccaccio's *Corbaccio* above also refers to hair removal as a social activity, where older women specialise in removing hair, travelling to women's houses to do so.²⁷ In both these depictions, women's use of beautification routines as a female social activity is mocked and seen as suspect, so that the women who help with one another's hair removal also facilitate other women's illicit sexual encounters.²⁸ Through this, the positive and negative depiction of cosmetics are once again tied to concerns about female power and mobility, so that when applied for male delectation, as in the *abbellimento* images, cosmetics are acceptable, but shown as a method by which women interact with each other and maintain financial independence, as in *Loçana*, they become a negative thing, undermining the male monopoly on women's sexuality.

Cosmetic Disgust: The *Ragionamento dello Zoppino*

The critique of prostitutes' cosmetic excesses is taken to the extreme in the anonymously authored *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* (1539), a fictional conversation between Lodovico, a pimp, and Zoppino, a former pimp who has renounced his ways to become a monk.²⁹ This dialogue has been noted by Duncan Salkeld for its extremely misogynistic representation of the female body. Zoppino, the primary narrator, speaks as the 'scourge' of prostitutes, defaming them and revealing their world to be one of 'disease, corruption and filth'—these same three evils, Salkeld suggests, Zoppino also views as 'the essence of women's sexuality'.³⁰ Throughout, Salkeld observes that the female body 'is not merely denaturalized as demonic, putrefying and mutilated, but

²⁷ Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 42.

²⁸ Boccaccio (ed. Erbani), *Corbaccio*, 256; Boccaccio (ed. Cassell) *Corbaccio*, 42.

²⁹ Transcription and translation of the entire dialogue published by Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 49-166.

³⁰ Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 60.

fantastically reduced by self-harm, disease and waste to a pure excrescence'.³¹

Cosmetics play an integral role in Zoppino's figuring of the excesses of the prostitutes' bodies—as I explore below their use serves not only as evidence of diseased bodies in need of remedy, but their substance also adds to the melange of fluids and excretions that surround the women's bodies, the physical excesses representing and evidencing their sexual intemperance. In the passage that follows, the makeup practices of prostitutes are described with a disgusted vituperation, transforming the stuff of beauty to the stuff of nightmare:

These are the ones you consider the most beautiful, who spend the whole day setting their hair with pine-water. At night, if sleeping alone, they wrap it in bandages to keep them pressed ... Moreover, they smear their bellies with wax, apples and figs, or rub them with pine-water as I mentioned before. First, they remove the strands of skin which continuously hang off them; then they peel themselves off and have a bath, one of those known as 'skimming baths'. And they like to darken their foul smelling, hairy limbs. And what about those putrefying lotions they put on their lips? Don't they reek? And that lubrication they produce while doing it [i.e. sex]? What causes that? Take it from one who knows, something even worse.

What's more, they have to put scourers and brushes made from rags, or even metal, inside themselves to stop corruption dripping down their filthy thighs. Some of them keep a sponge down there, and many leave it inside since, when experienced dry, they seem better, having a nature [i.e. vagina] less wide than it really is...

And what about all those pestilent, toxic creams they put on their faces, lips and teeth, so that, sometimes, you'd be better off kissing a sewer rather than their faces? And what about those rags with gray and red stains that always speckle and stain their shifts? What causes that? Musk? If you only knew about the powder and crushed glass they put inside their vaginas in order to absorb that moisture inside. And it rubs on thousands of poor young men, making them seriously damage their cocks. Usually, they have lice and crabs too...

And then, when they get up in the morning? If only you could see them as I've seen them, they're dreary, they look green and soft, as if they were rotting, because their make-up has run with sweat. It's then that you really

³¹ Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 60.

see their blemishes: the veins, the nerves, the wrinkles, the yellow and stinking teeth before they've cleaned the dead gnats off them.³²

This passage from the Zoppino dialogue is not a standalone piece, but can be seen as part of a pre-existing *topos* which expressed anxieties about the deceptive qualities of female beauty, and the dangerous potential of female sexuality. Within this formula, apparent beauty is revealed to be a deception which hides a grotesque and diseased reality beneath. Patrizia Bettella has examined similar portrayals of 'ugly women', illustrating the often repetitive and tropic qualities with which female ugliness was portrayed in Italian poetry throughout the Medieval and Early Modern periods.³³ She observes that, through the Middle Ages, female beauty was defined as 'harmony, perfection, decorum, fruition of divine love' and, ultimately, 'truth'.³⁴ In Medieval literature, youth is a symbol of 'purity, beauty and morality' while old age becomes a symbol of 'decay, evil, and sexual excess'.³⁵ These depictions perpetuated a strong misogynistic tradition obsessed with concerns over women's potential deceitfulness.

³² 'E sono queste quelle che tu stimi, che siano le piu belle, è poi tutto'l di perdon tempo dietro ad acconciarscle con acque di pino: è la notte quando dormono sole, se le fasciano per tenerle in soppresso...si fanno a le lor pancie impiastri con cera, mele è fichi, o si discespano la pancia con le sopra dette acque di Pino: & hor con galle retirando la guinza pelle, che li pende di continuo: è poi con pelati, è bagni, I quali scorticatoj gli chiamano, imbruniscono le pelose membra, di che il puzzo ammorbata. E gli putrefatti lisci, che sui labbri si pongono, puzzano egli? Quell liquor, che di continuo de le facende gli esce, di che sa? Non sa gia di buono questo...

Et il piu de le volte bisogna, che portino dentro struffioni, spazzatoj di forni, o stracci: perche non gli coli giu per le lorde coscie la compitura corrotta. Alcuna vi tiene di cōtinuo una spugna, è molte ve la lasciano dentro mentre che tu usi seco, per parer meglio robba, & hauer la natura men larga, perche urtando in quelle spugne, ti par che sia alquanto piu stretta...

E quelle poltronerie sulimati è tossichi che tengono in sul volto, sui labbri è sudenti, che qualche volta saria meglio basciar un cesso che I lor volti: è quelli stracci con la Marcia bigia è rossa, che di continuo gli colano è ricamano le lor camiscie, di che sanno, di muschio? è se tu sapessi com si mettono dentro ne la natura è poluere è uetro pesto per asciugar quella umidita chev'hanno dentro, che stropiano mille poueri giouani, che gli fanno spaccare i lor membri: i caruoli è i piattoni ve ne hanno per ordinario...E piu. La mattina quando le si leuano se tu le vedessi, come l'ho viste io, le sono disconce, le sono Verdi, frolle che paiano marce, perche il liscio è andato via per il sudare: all'hora se gli veggono le lor magagne, le vene, I nerui, le cresse, I denti gialli è puzzolenti, prima che si liscino, è piglino in bocca I moscardini.' Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 74-76, English translation 99-100.

³³ Bettella, *Ugly Woman*; see also Bettella, 'Marked Body', 149-181.

³⁴ Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 5-6.

³⁵ Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 6.

However, Bettella argues that the Renaissance approach to transgressive female aesthetics shifts so that it ‘no longer targets age and morals but social groups and manners’.³⁶ She suggests that female ugliness became associated with women from poor and rural backgrounds, and came to be increasingly described in terms of filth, excess and disproportion, in direct contrast to the ideals of proportion, decorum, elegance and cleanliness that were sought after in Renaissance courts.³⁷ Here, female ugliness frequently served as a direct and parodic reversal of the Petrarchan poetic model embodied by Petrarch’s Laura, such that rather than having black eyes and skin like snow, for example, the ugly woman would be described as having hair like snow and blackened teeth and skin.³⁸

Bettella’s observations regarding recurrent elements in the ‘ugly women’ motif are useful in understanding how the Zoppino passage fits into this broader narrative. However, while she suggests that the association with sexual excess and bad morals became less significant during the Renaissance, I would maintain that these critiques are in fact still prominent, particularly when tropes of female ugliness are combined with discussions of ornamentation. The *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* is heavy with imagery that conforms to what Bettella defines as characteristically ‘Medieval’ themes of ‘decay, evil, and sexual excess’. For example, Zoppino directly describes the women’s appearance in the morning after a sexual encounter in terms of decay, saying they look ‘as though they were rotting’, with makeup sloughing off and flies in their teeth.³⁹ In addition, the colours he chooses to describe the women do not fit the pattern of a typical inversion of the beauty ideal, such as that used to describe Isabella d’Este, seen in

³⁶ Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 6.

³⁷ Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 7.

³⁸ For further discussion, see: Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 81-123; Bettella, ‘Marked Body’, 192-203; Findlen, ‘Humanism, Politics, Pornography’, 49-108.

³⁹ Salkeld, ‘Zoppino’, 76, 100. As the author of the passage is unknown, throughout, when speaking of Zoppino, I am referring either to the dialogue’s title, or to the character Zoppino, whose ‘voice’ narrates the entirety of the passage examined here.

Chapter 1. Rather than switching about the colours of an ideal woman, so that teeth, rather than eyes are black, and hair, rather than teeth are white, for example, the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* describes the women as green (skin, makeup) and yellow (teeth), colours associated with decay and disease.⁴⁰ Likewise, Zoppino makes numerous references to the women's evil intent, not only suggesting that their unhealthy sexual practices might maim or injure their male partners, but elsewhere claiming that they use witchcraft and practice cannibalism to ensure they retain their clientele, a suggestion which Pietro Aretino also makes.⁴¹ It is not their 'beauty and caresses' that lure men in, but the concoctions from 'hairs, herbs, ribs, teeth and eyes from the exhumed, blank paper, children's umbilici and the soles of dead men's shoes' they keep in their cupboards.⁴² Finally, the dialogue is rife with references to sexual excess, not only implied in the women's livelihood as prostitutes, but also explicitly described in multiple references to their 'greedy' sexual habits, for example Zoppino's lurid account of how, directly after sex with one client, 'their right hand is between their own thighs, working up yet more lubrication' for the next.⁴³ Throughout, the implication of moral dissolution is maintained through the continued equating of cosmetic excess and sexual excess, and the figuring of cosmetic deception as an effectively sexual deception.

The *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* has clear similarities to other passages describing deceptive and sexually immoderate women. An earlier example whose influence carries through in the Zoppino passage comes from Boccaccio's *Corbaccio*,

⁴⁰ This is perhaps most clearly visible in the green, black and yellow colouration of the dead in Gaetano Zumbo's *Cere della peste*, at La Specola in Florence; see also McTavish, 'Birth and Death', 26; Gélis, *Enfants des limbes*, 97.

⁴¹ Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 70-72, 93-94; Aretino (trans. Rosenthal), *Dialogues*, 46, 129.

⁴² 'E hanno ne loro armari piu ferruzzi, piu erbe, piu capegli, piu coste, denti, & occhi dei sepolti, carte vergini, belichi di fanciulli è suola di mort.' Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 71, 94.

⁴³ 'Contemplale un poco in letto quando sotto altrui doppo l'amoroso piacer, si tolgano via, vedrai che bello spettacolo fanno di loro mentre elle hanno sotto al capezzale la mano stanca, con che ti porgono un panno, che ti netti: è con la dritta fra le coscie proprie, dove raccolgon l'olio che è fra quelle, l'odor di che pensi che sappia? che deggia confortar altrui?' Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 76, 100.

which I previously introduced. In the *Corbaccio*, the ghost of a lady's deceased first husband appears to her new husband, recounting her true nature, revealing, as in the Zoppino passage, that rather than being beautiful and chaste, her beauty is false, and she is lustful and promiscuous.⁴⁴ Her former husband emphasises that her cosmetic skills have fooled many into thinking her beauty is natural, but, as in the Zoppino passage, he describes how it is in the morning when the rotting and off-colour makeup reveals its true nature. 'When she arose from her bed in the morning, she had ... a face green and yellow, discolored with the hue of swamp-fumes, knotted like molting birds, wrinkled and encrusted and all sagging'.⁴⁵

Yet while this and the Zoppino passage satirise the deceptions of cosmetic use, they also fit into a larger motif expressing anxiety about women's potential for sexual deception. This can be seen in their similarity to a letter written by Niccolò Machiavelli on December 8, 1509 to Luigi Guicciardini, where Machiavelli frames the discovery that a woman is grotesque and diseased within a distinctly sexual context. Machiavelli describes a supposed encounter with a prostitute, where he is effectively lured into sex with a woman whose features he does not see until after the act.⁴⁶ Like Zoppino's description of the horrors of the 'morning after', it is only after having sex that Machiavelli realises that the woman he has been with is hideously ugly. In Machiavelli's account, the woman subverts feminine standards of beauty in the typical

⁴⁴ Boccaccio (ed. Ermani), *Corbaccio*, 255-274; Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 41-56.

⁴⁵ '... quando la mattina usciva dal letto, col viso verde, giallo, maltinto d'un colore di fummo di pantano, e broccuta quali sono gli uccelli che mudano, grinza e crostuta e tutta cascante ...' Boccaccio, *Corbaccio*, 270; Translation with amendments from Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 53-54.

⁴⁶ This letter has received varied treatment by scholarship, but in light of its adherence to the 'ugly woman' topos, I view it as a metaphorical, fictional encounter, rather than a description of an actual occurrence. See discussion in: Schiesari, 'Libidinal Economies', 169-70; Rebhorn, *Foxes and Lions*, 242-44; For approaches that suggest it is mainly an amusing joke: Tarlton, *Fortune's Circle*, 133; Hulliung, *Citizen Machiavelli*, 112-113; de Grazia, *Machiavelli in Hell*, 126; For a political reading: Carroll, 'Venetia Figurata?', 93-106; Barbara Spackman reads it as a 'grotesque parody of the rape of Fortune by *virtù*': Spackman, 'Machiavelli and Gender', 223-238, esp. 230-232.

manner pointed out by Bettella, and is aged, masculinised, non-symmetrical and disproportionate.⁴⁷

‘Even though I found her thighs flabby and her cunt watery and her breath stinking a bit, my lust was so desperate that I went ahead and gave it to her anyway! And once I had her, I had the urge to see my merchandise...My god! The woman was so ugly that I almost dropped dead. The first thing I noticed was a tuft of hair, half white and half black, and although the top of her head was bald, which allowed you to observe a number of lice taking a stroll, nevertheless a few hairs mingled with the whiskers that grew around her face; and on top of her small, wrinkled head there was a scar-burn which made her look as if she had been branded at the market; her eyebrows were full of nits; one eye looked down, the other up, and one was larger than the other. Her tear ducts were full of mucus and her eyelashes plucked; her nose was twisted into a funny shape, the nostrils were full of snot, and one of them was half cut off; her mouth looked like Lorenzo de’ Medici’s, but it was twisted on one side and drooled a bit since she had no teeth to keep the saliva in her mouth; her upper lip was covered with a thin but rather long moustache; her chin was long and sharp, pointed up, and from it hung a bit of skin that dangled to her Adam’s apple. As I stood there, amazed at this monster, she noticed my surprise and tried to say: ‘What is the trouble, sir?’; but could not, since she was a stutterer; and as she opened her mouth there came from it such a stinking breath that my eyes and my nose, the two gateways of the two most outraged senses, found themselves offended by this pestilence; this was such a shock to my stomach that, not being able to bear it, it heaved so much that I vomited all over her. And so, having paid her in the way she deserved, I left...’⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Discussion of inversion of beauty standards in Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 81-123; Bettella, ‘Marked Body’, 150-152; Findlen ‘Humanism, Politics, Pornography’, 49-108.

⁴⁸ ‘...la fotte’ un colpo e benché io le trovassi le coscie vize et la fica umida e che le putissi un poco el fiato, nondimeno tanta era la disperata foia che io havevo, che la n’andò. E facto che io l’ebbi, venendomi pure voglia di vedere questa mercatantia... Omè, fu’ per cadere in terra morto, tanto era bructa quella femina. E’ se le vedeva prima un ciuffo di capelli fra bianchi e neri cioè canuticci e benché l’avessi al cocuzolo del capo calvo, per cui la calvitie ad lo scoperto si vedeva passeggiare qualche pidochio, nondimeno pochi capelli e rari le aggiugnevono conle barbe loro fino in su le ciglia; e nel mezzo della testa piccola e grinzosa haveva una margine di fuoco, ché la pareva bollata ad la colonna di Mercato; in ogni puncta delle ciglia di verso li ochi haveva un mazeto di peli pieni di lendini; li ochi li aveva uno basso ed uno alto ed uno era maggiore che l’altro, piene le lagrimatoie di cispa ed enipitelli di pilliciati: il naso li era conficto sotto la testa aricciato in sù, e l’una delle nari tagliata piene di mocci; la bocca somigliava quella di Lorenzo de’ Medici, ma era torta da uno lato e da quello n’usciva un poco di bava, ché per non haver denti non poteva ritener la sciliva; nel labbro di sopra haveva la barba lunghetta ma rara: el mento haveva lungo aguzato, torto un poco in su, dal quale pendeva un poco di pelle che le adgiugneva infino ad la facella della gola. Stando adtonito ad mirar questo mostro, tucto smarrito, di che lei accortasi volle dire: “Che havete voi messere?” ma non lo dixè perché era scilinguata; e come prima aperse la

As in the Zoppino passage, Machiavelli emphasises that the woman's body is plagued by parasites, stinking, and emitting a range of excretions. Although there are no cosmetics in Machiavelli's account, he nonetheless portrays himself as being initially lured into the encounter by female trickery—the encounter is initiated by a procuress who first pretends to be selling shirts, before offering him other 'wares'.⁴⁹ The fact that the woman in Machiavelli's passage is a prostitute suggests her complicity in the arrangement, even if she is not described as actively seducing him herself.

Machiavelli's lust is also to blame, however it is the prostitute, simply through her presence, who enables him to succumb to it. This part of the encounter shadows the mentality in Tertullian's *De ornatu mulierum*, in that a woman's passive presence is enough to stimulate male lust and incite him to action. Following on this, the disgust Machiavelli expresses afterwards is not disgust at himself, but at the woman whose culpability, in effect, is in her very existence. Similar to both the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* and the *Corbaccio*, the deception here is conceptualised in terms of the female body, so that the extent of the deception is conveyed in the degree to which a woman's body is described as revolting and transgressive.

Each of these three passages above exhibit the same level of misogyny that Salkeld described in the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino*, the 'denaturalisation' of the female body, and its reduction to 'pure excrescence'.⁵⁰ While the elements by which this ugliness is constructed can be understood, to an extent, as reversals of the standard ideal for female beauty in the way that Bettella suggests, they also share in common a

bocca n'uscì un fiato sì puzzolente, che trovandosi offesi da questa peste due porte di due sdegnoisissimi sensi, li ochi e il naso, e messi ad tale sdegno, che lo stomaco per non poter sopportare tale offesa tucto si commosse e, commosso oprò sì, che io le rece' addosso; e così pagata di quella moneta che la meritava mi partii...' Italian in: Machiavelli (ed. Bonfantini), *Opere*, 1088-1090. Translation in: Bondanella and Musa, eds., *Portable Machiavelli*, 59-60.

⁴⁹ Machiavelli (ed. Bonfantini), *Opere*, 1088-1090; Bondanella and Musa, eds., *Portable Machiavelli*, 59-60.

⁵⁰ Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 60.

fixation on bodily excretions and excessive body matter that, I would argue, does not have a direct relationship to the poetic beauty canon. Bettella uses Mikhail Bakhtin's notions of the open and closed body to inform her reading of these elements, suggesting that the ideal body in Middle Ages and Renaissance is that which Bakhtin describes as classical, or closed, which is sealed off, proportionate and 'decorous'.⁵¹ The ugly body then is exemplary of the Bakhtinian grotesque, described as 'open, overflowing, disgusting, unruly, sexually excessive and unconventional'.⁵² While this interpretation is successful in that it highlights the extent to which the bodies of 'ugly' women are being portrayed as transgressive, I would second Bettella's caution that the power for positive change and disruption of social hierarchies that Bakhtin sees in the transgressive body is largely invalid in context of these passages' extreme misogyny.⁵³

In the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* and thematically similar passages, I would argue that the female body is portrayed as physically transgressive specifically out of an urge to control certain female behaviours seen to be problematic. In fact, other scholarly approaches to the cultural significance of notions of dirtiness and disgust have emphasised that ideas of cleanliness are fundamentally mechanisms for social control. Mary Douglas's work in social anthropology remains one of the most important studies in ideas of cleanliness and pollution.⁵⁴ She argues that in a given society, rules about cleanliness rarely turn out to spring from strictly logical or 'scientific' concerns for hygiene as it directly impacts health, but have a strong illogical element born out of traditions.⁵⁵ Societal taboos, she suggests, are a way through which a society enacts tensions regarding what it perceives to be threats to the social fabric, by way of

⁵¹ Bettella, 'Marked Body', 150.

⁵² Bettella, 'Marked Body', 150; Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 26, 317.

⁵³ Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 92-93; for further critique of Bakhtin's applicability to Renaissance literature see: Spackman, 'Inter musam et ursam moritur', 19-34, esp. 22.

⁵⁴ Douglas, *Purity and Danger*.

⁵⁵ Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 8.

ritualised beliefs and behaviours which ‘work upon the body politic through the symbolic medium of the physical body’.⁵⁶ The borders of the body become stand-ins for the borders of society, which may be ‘threatened’ by either internal or external forces, and pollution is therefore perceived to have occurred when social or bodily boundaries are transgressed.⁵⁷ Similarly, Douglas Biow, in his work on cleanliness in Renaissance Italy argues that, ‘at stake in any discussion about cultural cleanliness ... is an understanding of how a given culture ... tolerates various degrees of disorder; how it perceives, protects, and plays with bodily and territorial boundaries; and how it polices behavior and forms of speech’.⁵⁸ Norbert Elias, in *The Civilizing Process*, observed that rules for social manners during the Middle Ages, including precepts for what is disgusting or unacceptable, changed in relation to other mechanisms for social control, so that increasingly complex rules for social manners, and directives for tightly policing individual behaviour (which became Renaissance ‘self-fashioning’), accompanied an increase in centralised control.⁵⁹ Together, these would suggest that the discussion of dirty, polluting bodies in the Zoppino passage can be seen as representing greater societal disorders. Thus understanding what meaning was ascribed to the grotesque bodies in the Zoppino passage is imperative to understanding cosmetic anxieties because the bodies are, in effect, literal ‘embodiments’ of the threats that cosmetics supposedly veil.

Health

To begin with, when read in context of the humoural understanding of the body, the fixation on bodily fluids and excretions in the Zoppino passage would have

⁵⁶ Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 159.

⁵⁷ Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 152, 159.

⁵⁸ Biow, *Culture of Cleanliness*, 30.

⁵⁹ Elias, *Civilizing Process*; for an insightful interpretation of Elias’ work with comparison to Michel Foucault, see Smith, ‘Comparing Elias and Foucault’, 79-100.

indicated to the Renaissance reader that the women's bodies were diseased—a state which their cosmetic tricks disguise. There was a wide range of ills associated with the excessive production of bodily fluids. Women were considered to be particularly prone to humoral stagnation. The naturally cool and moist female body, with its uncontrollable excretions and seemingly unavoidable physical evidence of sexual activity, was seen as particularly flawed—particularly permeable and permeating.⁶⁰ Excessive and/or foul-smelling humours emitted from the vagina were signs of a range of ills: from ulcers, to an excess of phlegm, bile, or blood, or a defect in the woman's body preventing her from properly processing her humours.⁶¹ A wide range of recipes address pathological menstrual flux, and 'white menses', both seen as indicators of disease.⁶² In common medical explanations as to why prostitutes did not have higher birth rates, it was suggested that their wombs had become too 'slippery' to retain the seed necessary for conception, and this same problem is quoted elsewhere as a cause of infertility.⁶³ Hippocrates, for example, suggested that 'those who have the womb watery do not conceive, for the seed is drowned'.⁶⁴ In addition, prostitution was believed to make a woman's body comparatively warmer than normal women, due to the motion of frequent coitus, and higher amounts of 'hot' male sperm in her body, as I previously noted.⁶⁵ Rather than being a positive thing, this residual heat was also seen to lead to sterility.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 14; Cadden, *Meanings of Sexual Difference*, 175; Miller, *Medieval Monstrosity*, 3; McGough, 'Quarantining Beauty', 216; Green, 'Diseases of Women' 5-39.

⁶¹ See for example Green, *Trotula*, 66-71; for ulcers see pp. 70, 76.

⁶² Green, 'Flowers, Poisons, Men', 56; in the same volume Aragata, 'Menses in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*', 17.

⁶³ Green, *Trotula*, 76; Lemay, *Women's Secrets*, 67, 73, 136-137; Jacquart and Thomasset, *Sexuality and Medicine*, 35-36, 64, 80-81; Simons, *Sex of Men*, 196; Cadden, *Sexual Difference*, 92-94.

⁶⁴ Simons, *Sex of Men*, 196; Allen, *Concept of Woman*, 47; Hippocrates (ed. Jones), *Hippocrates* (vol. 4), 175 ('Aphorisms', 5.62); also volume 1 of the same series, p. 79, 101 ('Airs, Waters, Places', IV, X).

⁶⁵ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 62; Cadden, 'Western Medicine', 62.

⁶⁶ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 62; Laqueur, *Making Sex*, 101; Simons, *Sex of Men*, 196.

The ill health harboured by prostitutes' bodies was seen as a threat to male clientele, and their humours could corrupt and bring harm to their sexual partners. Anxiety over the corrupting potential of the prostitute's body often exceeded a rational level of concern for health, and served rather to scapegoat or demonise. For example, although the syphilis epidemic was not initially associated solely with sexual contact, one of several myths surrounding the origins of the disease which became prominent in the Mid-Cinquecento blamed its genesis on the corrupting moisture of the female body. The disease, which had previously been attributed to miasma and planetary shifts was now thought to be germinated in the stagnation of a beautiful French prostitute's ulcerated womb, from which it then permeated the vulnerable members of her subsequent sex partners.⁶⁷ The *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* also takes the health threat posed by the prostitutes' bodies to a fantastical level of horror at numerous points throughout the dialogue, for example, suggesting that when, out of greed, the prostitutes have sex on their periods, it leads to 'the downfall of a thousand young men's members'.⁶⁸ The 'downfall' referred to here seems tied in to the equally fantastical belief that menstrual blood had toxic potential, perpetuated by texts such as Pseudo-Albertus Magnus' *De secretis mulierum*, which warned that sex during menstruation could result in epilepsy, cancer, leprosy, and deformed offspring.⁶⁹

The *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* makes frequent reference to the women placing rags inside their vaginas to sop up these excess fluids, a practice which, as well as indicating an unhealthy level of humidity in their bodies, was itself likely to be considered harmful to the humoral balance. In her study on perceptions of

⁶⁷ McGough, 'Quarantining Beauty' 211-212, 216-220; on the vulnerability of the penis during sex, discussed below, see Bildhauer, 'Secrets of Women', 71.

⁶⁸ 'E fannosi ficcar, quando hanno il Marchese per l'ingordigia del guadagno, è per non perder l'amico, accio non uadi altroue. E da queste tal cose poi nasce che cascano i membri a mille giouani...' Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 76, 100.

⁶⁹ Miller, *Medieval Monstrosity*, 3, 57, 60, 77-79, 83-85, 177-78; Lemay, *Women's Secrets*, 48-49, 52-3, 60, 77, 129.

menstruation in the Early Modern period, Sara Read presented a wealth of material to demonstrate that the placement of material inside the vagina was used primarily for medicinal purposes, mainly in the forms of pessaries.⁷⁰ The natural flow of menses was believed essential to maintaining the natural balance of the body, and any method that might inhibit it was considered hazardous to the health, leading to dangerous imbalances.⁷¹ Even medical pessaries were normally designed with holes in the centre so as not to inhibit the flow of fluids.⁷² Having said this, Read observes a number of English examples which refer to prostitutes putting sponges inside themselves during their periods to allow them to continue working.⁷³ She points to examples, including a poem by the Earl of Rochester, where it is assumed that prostitutes will take part in such a practice—Rochester complains that he prefers a sponge to having his ‘prick’ bloodied.⁷⁴ However, Read concludes that because such methods were considered highly unhealthy, women who were not prostitutes were unlikely to take part in them.⁷⁵ The *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* does not specifically state which liquids are being absorbed by the rags the women use, but either way their use of the rags within their bodies suggests unhealthy habits which further upset their humoural balances and generate illness.

Zoppino’s reference to the women’s stained *camicie* is another suggestion of their poor hygiene and ill health.⁷⁶ Although bathing was viewed somewhat more cautiously during the Renaissance than it had been during the Middle Ages, changing into clean white linen became its replacement, so the mention of stained *camicie* suggests that, despite their use of pine-water baths, the women’s bodily cleanliness is of

⁷⁰ Read, *Menstruation*, 109-113.

⁷¹ Read, *Menstruation*, 109, 113.

⁷² Read, *Menstruation*, 109.

⁷³ Read, *Menstruation*, 107-108.

⁷⁴ Read, *Menstruation*, 108; Wilmot, (ed. Ellis), ‘On Mistress Willis’, 72-3.

⁷⁵ Read, *Menstruation*, 113.

⁷⁶ Salkeld, ‘Zoppino’, 75, 99.

a low standard.⁷⁷ It is unclear which part of the *camicia* the ‘grey and red stains’ are on, they could be the remains of menstrual fluid and other vaginal discharge or alternately some manner of pus exuded from the skin.⁷⁸ More broadly, his discussion of pus, scabs and peeling skin suggests a whole range of diseases. Syphilis was among the ills particularly associated with oozing skin and stinking bodily emissions, graphically described, for example, in Fracastoro of Verona’s account of the early syphilis outbreaks, published in 1546. In explaining the disease’s effect on the skin in early years of the outbreak, he recounts that:

Unsightly sores broke out over all the body and made the face horrifyingly ugly, and disfigured the breast by their foul presence: the disease took on a new aspect: pustules with the shape of an acorn-cup and rotten with thick slime, which soon afterwards gaped wide open and flowed with a discharge like mucous and putrid blood.⁷⁹

Whether or not the excretions Zoppino refers to are meant to be caused specifically by syphilis is not explicitly stated. However, it is made clear that the women have the disease, as Zoppino directly mentions scabs left over from the ‘French Pox’ as one of the many ‘souvenirs’ left behind on the sheets where the prostitutes have lain.⁸⁰ In Zoppino’s framing of this scene, the ‘morning after’ reveals clear evidence both that the prostitutes’ beauty is a cosmetic artifice, and that the seduction of this beauty has hidden a host of health problems from the lust-addled minds of their clients.

⁷⁷ Cavallo, ‘Health, Beauty and Hygiene’, 182-183; Georges Vigarello charts the shift from bathing to changing linen in *Concepts of Cleanliness*, 11-17; Biow, *Culture of Cleanliness*, 16-17, 53-54. See also Sekules, ‘Spinning Yarns’, 79-91.

⁷⁸ Sarah Read notes that while mention of menstrual rags is not uncommon, it seems to be an equally accepted fact that many women would bleed into their *camicie* or equivalent underclothing. Read, *Menstruation*, 111.

⁷⁹ ‘Protinus informes totum per corpus Achores / Rumpebant: faciem’que horrendam, & pectora fæde / Turpabant : species morbi nova : pustula summæ / Glandis ad effigiem, & pituita marcida pingui // Tempore quæ multo non post’adaperta dehiscens, / Mucosa multum sanie, tabo’que fluebat.’ Fracastoro, *Syphilis*, (unpaginated, pp. 18-19 of the text). English translation in: Fracastoro, (ed. Eatough), *Syphilis*, 55.

⁸⁰ Salkeld, ‘Zoppino’, 76, 100.

The proposal that cosmetic beauty hides health problems on one hand links back to the discussion of beauty, truth and the humoral body looked at in Chapter 1. Zoppino, in essence, argues that the prostitutes' beauty is not natural, thus they are ugly, and this ugliness, within the humoral system, implied an array of health and character problems. However, the framing of cosmetic deception in close association with the revelation of syphilis, parasites and other unnamed diseases is reminiscent of other accounts expressing anxiety about the difficulty in recognising a disease. In particular, the insecurity about being able to identify syphilitics from exterior signs makes several appearances in Delicado's *Retrato de la Loçana*, since the eponymous heroine specialises in making cosmetic remedies both to improve beauty and to remedy a range of sexual ailments, including syphilis.⁸¹ The text of the story demonstrates the potential confusion people felt surrounding the disease's signs and symptoms. Loçana is described as being very beautiful, however, she is noted as having a scar on her forehead, which she claims is due to an injury on a ship, but which other characters suspect is a syphilis scar.⁸² The engraver has left no question in the viewer's mind whether or not this is the case, and has given her an upturned saddle-nose, a deformity characteristic to the tissue loss caused by advanced syphilis.⁸³ Thus in both the Zoppino passage and *Retrato dela Loçana*, one of the dangers of cosmetic beauty is that it distracts viewers from the signs of disease if not disguising disease altogether until it is too late.

As was previously mentioned, in the early years in which the 'French disease' became known, it was not understood solely as a sexually transmitted infection, but it

⁸¹ Delicado, *Lozana*. For a discussion of similar anxieties about virginity remedies hiding disease in Fernando de Rojas' *La Celestina* (1519), see Dangler, *Mediating Fictions*, 116.

⁸² Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 16, 20, 23.

⁸³ See William Eamon, 'The Renaissance Nose Job'. Although Loçana is described as being very beautiful, one side character mentions that her nose is half-eaten away by syphilis, although several other characters disagree with her. See Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 16, 20, 23.

was conceptualised as a problem to do with beauty, thus linking it with cosmetics, at a relatively early point. Fracastoro dedicated a part of his lament to bemoaning the loss of beauty that befalls a youth who contracts the disease.⁸⁴ Laura McGough has also noted how extreme beauty was repeatedly linked with temptation and vulnerability, and specifically vulnerability to syphilis, demonstrating how Venetian reactions to the French Disease throughout the Cinquecento and Seicento fixated on collecting and containing not just any infected party, but specifically beautiful women.⁸⁵ She highlights quarantining institutions such as the *Convertite* and the *Zitelle*, both of which based ‘entry’ at least partially on the candidates’ beauty—*Convertite* focused on repentant prostitutes and ‘fallen’ women, and *Zitelle* strove to protect vulnerable virgins from succumbing to a life of sin.⁸⁶ Her work offers another facet to the theme of Renaissance moderation, as it suggests that while beauty itself was celebrated, even beauty in excess was seen to be potentially hazardous, here leading to a heightened vulnerability to temptation and disease. Finally, in the opening section of Mattioli’s *Materia medica*, with the list of simples used to treat specific conditions, introduced in Chapter 2, Mattioli has added treatments for the ‘mal francese’ amongst the section on ‘decoration of the body’, suggesting the extent to which the disease was perceived as one that attacked beauty, and moreover, demonstrating that at least for Mattioli, the treatment of syphilis was understood to best fit amongst the cosmetic arts.⁸⁷ In the Zoppino passage, cosmetics serve as a medium through which the author has projected a horror of disease and the anxiety about the difficulty in recognising it.

Even if the peeling and oozing skin discussed in the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* is not necessarily caused by syphilis, the symptoms together with the presence

⁸⁴ Fracastoro (ed. Eatough), *Syphilis*, 56-59.

⁸⁵ McGough, ‘Quarantining Beauty’, 220, 227-231.

⁸⁶ McGough, ‘Quarantining Beauty’, 227-231.

⁸⁷ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, k3^r.

of lice and crabs further demonstrate their lack of diligence to overall bodily upkeep. Renaissance recipe books frequently feature treatments for a range of skin problems and parasites, including fleas, lice, bedbugs, *volatica*, mange, warts and scars. The periodic inclusion of these recipes not only suggests that these were relatively common problems, but moreover that attempts to deal with them was an expected part of upkeep of one's body and domestic space, in this way similar to the frequent changing of linen. Of course, the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* is a satiric criticism of prostitutes, not a commentary on domestic upkeep, however, it still reflects the association between well behaved women, and well-kept homes and bodies that I discussed in Chapter 1 in particular. Douglas Biow, for example, notes how the clean and efficient habits of the washerwoman who lived below Benvenuto Cellini lead him to praise her to the extent that he suggests that her cleanliness, despite her low social status, makes her better than the likes of Giorgio Vasari, who has 'dirty little hands' and uncut nails.⁸⁸ The women in the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* care solely about the deception of a beautiful external appearance, which aids them in their seduction; their lives are ruled by excessive vanity, lust and greed, rather than the diligence which might be evidenced in a well kept body and domestic space.

Similarly, in the Loçana illustrations, Loçana's facial deformity is as much an emblem of her unconventional behaviour as her disease. The saddle nose, as William Eamon notes, was seen as a mark of shame, 'a visible sign of the moral and bodily corruption that stigmatized its unfortunate victims,' thus in the illustrations as an instant reminder of Loçana's moral aberration and otherness.⁸⁹ Loçana fits the role of the

⁸⁸ '... sua sporche manine, le quale non si tagliava mai l'ugna' in Cellini (ed. Padovan), *Vita*, 169; Biow, *Culture of Cleanliness*, 54.

⁸⁹ Eamon, 'Renaissance Nose Job', unpaginated. In a broader discussion, Patrizia Bettella discusses the various ways in which an unconventional appearance was used and exaggerated by both artists and poets to indicate someone's social status as a member of a

Other in more ways than one: first, as an independent woman and moreover, as a prostitute who lives outside the morally acceptable roles prescribed for her gender; as a foreigner who is set apart culturally and spatially from the native Italians; and as a frequenter of the Jewish and foreign quarters, who defies taboos against interfaith sexual relations.⁹⁰ The artist's desire to stigmatise Loçana and her retinue is clearer in the second illustration, in which Rampin is shown as a dwarf—a departure from the novella's text, where he is described as a virile youth, apparently Jewish.⁹¹ This shift is particularly notable since his appearance is that of a young man in the frontispiece illustration (Figure 39). Like the scarred and diseased image of Loçana, Rampin's reimagining as a dwarf may emphasise the work's setting within the realm of the Other, where everyday moral codes are imagined to be void.⁹² In Renaissance Italy, dwarves were often perceived to have strong sexual appetites and be incapable of distinguishing between right and wrong, resulting in their frequent depiction within the context of

stigmatised social group, e.g. peasants, foreigners, or non-Christians. See Bettella, 'Marked Body', 176; Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, esp. Chapter 3, pp. 81-123.

⁹⁰ Simone de Beauvoir's assertion that women have been perceived as the essential Other to the masculine Self has been highly influential in the development of feminist schools of thought. de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 12; Butler, *Gender Troubles*, 15-17. Note that although prostitutes were permitted by Italian authorities, they were nonetheless treated at least governmentally as one of the many marginalised groups to be regulated and controlled. See Richard Sennett for discussion of the ways in which Venetian State's treatment of courtesans as 'foreign bodies' was very similar to their treatment of Jews and foreign peoples: Sennett, *Flesh and Stone*, 212-251, esp. 237-241. On early origin myths of syphilis coming from Jewish immigrants from Spain: Sennett, *Flesh and Stone*, 225-227; Patricia Bettella discusses the common feature in Renaissance poetry to combine elements of repulsion (e.g. descriptions/depictions of bodily ugliness) with sexual desire when describing the peasant, foreign or aged female body made 'other', she follows on Peter Stallybrass and Allon White's *Politics and Poetics of Transgression*: Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 89-107, esp. 96; Stallybrass and White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, 4-5; on sexual relations between Jews and Christians see: Davis and Ravid, *Jews of Early Modern Venice*, 5-6, 21, 59.

⁹¹ Delicado (ed. Damiani), *Lozana*, 35-36, 53.

⁹² There is a huge amount of literature on this, but Stephen Greenblatt outlines the general precept succinctly: 'Self-Fashioning is achieved in relation to something perceived as alien, strange, or hostile. This threatening Other—heretic, savage, witch, adulteress, traitor, Antichrist—must be discovered or invented in order to be attacked and destroyed,' moreover, 'the alien is always constructed as a distorted image of the authority'. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 9; See also Sennett, *Flesh and Stone*, 212-251; Katz, *The Jew in Art*; Nichols (ed.), *Others and Outcasts*; Bettella, 'Marked Body', 149-181.

obscene jokes.⁹³ Assuming the artist did indeed read the text, or was responding to the guidelines of someone who had (which seems likely, based on the array of characters and details shown), the illustration also demonstrates an act of negotiating the depiction of a Jewish character, and the ways in which negative ‘types’ could be grouped together. For this artist, the figure of a Jewish youth is interchangeable with a bearded dwarf, or at least it is assumed that the visual leap is not so great as to be incomprehensible for the viewers. With both the images of Loçana and Rampin, it is assumed that the readers will understand, and perhaps even expect that the two characters’ statuses as outsiders are made visually apparent in their flawed appearances—even when fulfilling visual expectations contradicts the text.

While Loçana is a light-hearted text, these depictions of Loçana and Rampin draw ties between bodily corruption through the potential contraction of syphilis, and spiritual corruption through association with non-Christians. Cosmetics are shown as the products and props of people who behave in amoral ways and are slaves to their base urges—the ‘Jews and barbarians’ that Laura Cereta imagined to be the bottom rung of the moral ladder.⁹⁴ In effect, Loçana is a foil to the *donne che si fanno belle*, both in her deformity and in the explicitness of her makeup use. Linda Wolk-Simon has suggested that popular imagery on maiolica and floor tiles includes ‘*brutta donna*’ images of unappealing women of questionable virtue as a parody of the beautiful and virtuous *belle donne*.⁹⁵ When cosmetics are treated as a problem, as they are in the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* and, indirectly, in *Loçana*, the ambiguity of appearance brought to attention by mention of cosmetics is treated both as a problem of disguising inner character, and of disguising the state of health.

⁹³ For discussion and numerous examples, see: O’Bryan, ‘Grotesque Bodies, Princely Delight’, esp. 274-275.

⁹⁴ See full quote in Chapter 1. Translations can be found in Cereta (ed. Robin), *Renaissance Feminist*, 84-86; and Bell, *How to Do It*, 207.

⁹⁵ Wolk-Simon, ‘Dish With an Allegorical Subject’ (cat. 107), 214-216.

Cosmetics as the Cause of Disease

In addition to suggesting that cosmetics hide disease, the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* also suggests that cosmetics themselves are harmful and poisonous. For example, the description of cosmetics for the skin and hair exaggerates their disgusting and dangerous potential: skin cosmetics are described as ‘pestilent and toxic creams’ and men would ‘be better off kissing a sewer’ than the women’s faces.⁹⁶ Strangely enough, despite this complaint and the overall propensity in the dialogue to draw attention to revolting substances and exaggerate the dangers of the female body, the skin recipes Zoppino mentions involve no overtly harmful substances. His most specific complaint is that the prostitutes ‘smear their bellies with wax, apples and figs or rub them with pine-water’.⁹⁷ The only recipe I have found in my survey using wax, apples and figs in combination is a ‘liqueur’ to make the hands beautiful:

Take 20 figs, 8 apples, one bowl of bran then boil in three or four jars of water, until all the water is half-consumed, then squeeze with a white cloth and out will come a liqueur like milk, with which you wash your hands when you go to sleep.⁹⁸

Figs in particular are a relatively frequent addition to a range of recipes to beautify the skin. One recipe in the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript recommends figs in combination with a variety of fruits, flowers and gums to keep breasts in the ideal ‘small and firm’ apple-like shape:

To make breasts small and firm
Oak gall,⁹⁹ mint, roses, figs, wild green pears, medlar, rowan berry, sour plum, Cytinus (*Cytinus hypocistis*), orchid (*Calanthe triplicata*), dragon’s blood, plantain, the aforementioned things are ground well and boiled in

⁹⁶ Salkeld, ‘Zoppino’, 99.

⁹⁷ Salkeld, ‘Zoppino’, 98.

⁹⁸ ‘A far belle le mani delle done: Rx fichi 20. pome 8. remolla una scudella puoi fa bolire intre o quatro inchistare d’aqua, fin che sara quasi consumata tutta l’aqua, puoi strucha con una peza bianca et uscirene uno licore come lacte, del qual lavori le manj quando vai adormire.’ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 190^f.

⁹⁹ Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 231-232.

vinegar and then make them into a poultice with flour of fava or of rye and put it on top of the breasts, gently heated, and change it frequently.¹⁰⁰

Elsewhere in the same manuscript, water of white mature figs is listed amongst the waters that make skin white.¹⁰¹ In *Ricettario galante*, figs and bran are also used to make hands beautiful (along with mallow root, pigeon dung and hen feathers), and figs in combination with camphor, pine nuts and mustard are used to make the hands white.¹⁰² In addition, in Caterina Sforza's *Gli esperimenti*, water of white figs is used in a recipe to prepare white lead.¹⁰³ Pine water, as I discuss further below, was used both in vaginal astringents, and appeared in a recipe which also served to 'erase wrinkles from the body' and keep breasts small.¹⁰⁴ A further possibility is that the 'pine water' he mentions is in fact some variety of turpentine or pine resin, which would be more harmful to the skin, but these are usually referred to as 'trementina' or 'ragia di pino', respectively, rather than 'acqua di pino'.¹⁰⁵

While the actual skin remedies Zoppino refers to are therefore not particularly noxious, his suggestion that cosmetics are disgusting and toxic was a common motif. His declaration of revulsion at the thought of kissing a woman wearing cosmetics once more echoes a passage by Boccaccio. In the *Corbaccio*, the narrator describes how his wife occupied herself in 'distilling, making ointments, finding various animal fats,

¹⁰⁰ 'A fare piccole e dure le mamelle: Galla, menta, rose, fichi, pere salvatiche verde, nespole, sorbe, prunj acerbi, acetie ipoquistidos, fior di calanta, sangue di drago, piantagine, siano le preditte cose ben piste et bolite in acetto et puoi fa lo impiastro con farina di fava o di segala et mettilo sopra le mamelle caldeto et mutalo spesso.' MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 192^v.

¹⁰¹ 'Tutte queste sono aque che fano bianche le done usandone: L'Aqua del chiaro d'ouo, Aqua de gilij bianchi e di calestri Aqua de fior de rosmarin aqua de fior de faua aqua de figi bianchi maturi Aqua de vitro pisto cristalino Aqua de frasinella.' MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 183^v-184^r. And in the same source: 'Per fare bianco il volto', 191^v.

¹⁰² Guerrini, ed., *Ricettario galante*, 77 ('A fare belle mani); *ibid.*, 71-72 ('A quel medesimo [da a fare bianche le mani]).

¹⁰³ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 644 ('Questo e el modo de Aconciar la Biacca').

¹⁰⁴ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 193^r ('A stringere la natura della donna et cazare le falde dal corpo').

¹⁰⁵ Storey suggested in the glossary of her recipe book study that 'ragia di pino' is turpentine, however, other sources tend to translate this as 'pine resin' instead. Storey, 'Glossary', 59; Kirby et al. (eds.), *Trade in Artists' Materials*, 456.

herbs, and other such things'; busied the apothecaries and gardeners with 'making sublimated quicksilver, purifying verdigris, and producing a thousand lotions... going to search and fetch wild roots and herbs, never heard of except by her'; and troubled bakers with 'cooking eggshells, wine dregs, pottery glaze, and a thousand other strange things'.¹⁰⁶ After applying the concoctions, he complains that,

... not being on my guard while I kissed her, my lips got all caught in the glue; and better sensing that greasy mess with the nose than with the eyes, not only did I have trouble keeping down the food in my stomach, but could scarcely retain the soul in my breast.¹⁰⁷

In a similar tone, in 1562, Giuseppe Orologi imagined a dialogue between authors Ludovico Dolce, whose writing on beauty in painting was introduced in Chapter 1, and Girolamo Ruscelli, a 'professor of secrets' and likely creator of the *Secrets of Alessio Piemontese*.¹⁰⁸ Both relate husbands' disgust when their wives' cosmetics rub off on their faces. Dolce laments that:

[Women] continuously apply polishes, white lead, fats and alum to their faces, using infusions, masks, pastes, alembic waters, sublimations, and oils; all these disgusting things they plaster on at bedtime so that their poor husbands who think they have slept with a wife find themselves with a piece of stucco, having kissed a Modenese [facial] mask.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ 'La qual cosa acciò ch'avenisse, appresso la cura del ben mangiare e del ben vestire, sommamente a distillare, a fare unzioni, a trovar sugne di diversi animali ed erbi e simili cose s'intendeva; e, senza che la casa mia era piena di fornelli e di lambecchi e di pentolini e d'ampolle d'alberelli e di bosoli, io non avea in Firenze speciale alcuno vicino, né in contado alcuno ortolano, che infaccendato non fosse, quale a fare ariento (sic) solimato, a purgar verderame, e a far mille lavature, e quali ad andare cavando e cercando radici salvatiche ed erbe mai più non udite nomare, se non a lei; senza che insino a' fornaciai a cuocere guscia d'uova, gromma di vino, marzacotto, e altre mille cose uove n'erano impacciati.' Boccaccio (ed. Erbani), *Corbaccio*, 255; translation Boccaccio (ed. Casell), *Corbaccio*, 42.

¹⁰⁷ '... non guardandomene io e basciandola, tutte le labbra m'invischiai; e meglio col naso quella biuta che con gli occhi sentendo, non che quello che nello stomaco era di cibo preso, ma appena gli spiriti ritenea nel petto.' Boccaccio (ed. Erbani), 256; Boccaccio (ed. Casell), *Corbaccio*, 42.

¹⁰⁸ On Dolce, see: Cropper, 'Beauty and Displacement', 175-183; on Ruscelli, see: Eamon, *Science and the Secrets*, 136-137, 139-151.

¹⁰⁹ 'A questo fine adoperano continuamente i lissi, le biache, i grassi lavati a tante acque; l'allume di roccha; le infusioni, le spellature, gli impiastri, i solimati, le acque lambicate, gli ogli; & tante loro schiffezze, con lequali s'impiastrano andando al letto. Onde i miseri mariti si pensano nel levarsi la mattina haver dormito con le loro moglie, & si trovano haver

Ruscelli agrees that, ‘the worst is that husbands wake up in the morning with their beards caked and discoloured’, warning that such behaviour will not earn a husband’s affections.¹¹⁰

On one hand, these passages convey the distaste for excessive cosmetics that was discussed in the previous chapter as a recurrent theme. However, the disgust expressed at the substance of cosmetics may reflect the fact that many cosmetics did contain toxic and damaging substances, and this was well known at the time. In Alberti’s *Libro della famiglia*, Giannozzo draws his young wife’s attention to their prematurely aged neighbour as an example of the negative consequences of excessive makeup use:

I asked her about a neighbour of mine, woman who had few teeth left in her mouth, and those appeared tarnished with rust. Her eyes were sunken and always inflamed, the rest of her face withered and ashen. All her flesh looked decomposed and disgusting. Her silvery hair was the only thing about her that one might regard without displeasure...Then I assured her of the truth, namely that that neighbour of mine was born less than two years before me and had certainly not yet attained her thirty-second year. Thanks to make-up, however, she had been left in this diseased condition and seemed old before her time.¹¹¹

The inclusion of white lead and mercury in skin products could have exacted a damaging effect on the body not unlike what Alberti describes—lead poisoning gives an

dormito con figure di stucco; & haver basciato maschere Modanese.’ Orologi, *L’Inganno*, 131; Translation from Bell, *How to Do It*, 205.

¹¹⁰ ‘Il peggio è che si veggono la mattina di maniera impiastrate le barbe che par propriamente che venghino da macinar colori.’ Orologi, *L’Inganno*, 131; Translation with amendments from Bell, *How to Do It*, 205.

¹¹¹ ‘Anzi ancora perché ella più mi credesse la domandai d’una mia vicina, la quale tenea pochi denti in bocca, et quelli pareano di busso tarmato, et avea gli occhi al continuo pesti, incavernati, il resto del viso vizzo et cenericcio, per tutto la carne morticcia et in ogni parte sozza: solo in lei poteano alquanto e capelli argentini guardandola non dispiacere. Adunque domandai la donna mia s’ella volesse essere bionda et simile a costei. Oimè no! disse ella O perché? dissi io; ti par ella così vecchia? Di quanta età la stimi tu? Risuosemi vergognosa dicendo che male ne sapeva giudicare, ma che lli [sic] pareo che quella fosse di tanta età quanta era la balia della madra sua. Et io allora li giurai il vero, che quella s’è facta vicina mia non era due anni nata prima di me, né certo agiugneva [sic] ad anni trenta et due, ma cagione de’lisci così era rimasa pesta, et tanto pareo oltre al suo tempo vecchia.’ Alberti, *Della famiglia*, 357-358; Alberti (trans. Watkins), *Family*, 215.

unnatural pallor to the skin and dark lines on the teeth and gums; the effects of mercury poisoning include the loss of teeth and nails, an unusually ruddy nose, peeling skin and rashes.¹¹² Similarly, the majority of the ingredients Boccaccio references, many of them also toxic, all appear multiple times in the cosmetic recipes I looked at (see Appendix C). In recipe books as well, certain herb-based remedies emphasise their benign effects, for instance a recipe using fava flowers and rosewater promises that it will make the face and hands beautiful ‘without any lesions to the skin’, suggesting that skin lesions may have been a known risk of certain other cosmetics.¹¹³

However, it is difficult to tell exactly how closely accounts of cosmetics in fictional literature like the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* or Alberti’s *Libro della famiglia* reflected actual practice; that is, whether a large number of women indeed used cosmetics toxic enough to damage their skin or if the possibility was exaggerated in fiction to suit the authors’ purposes. Since the depiction of female aging and ugliness together with the condemnation of cosmetics were common and longstanding motifs, it is difficult to know which elements reflect reality, and which are largely tropes. In Chapter 4, I looked more closely at the presence of cosmetic ingredients in inventories, but overall, it has not been possible to identify patterns of cosmetic use from these types of sources. Of yet I have not found anything that would solidly suggest what types of cosmetics women used the most—since cosmetic ingredients overlapped with those used in both medicine and art, even when they are present in shop inventories, it remains difficult to tell the exact purpose for which they were being used.¹¹⁴ Looking only at the representation of ingredients in cosmetic recipes, out of 168 recipes for the

¹¹² The poisonous effects of makeup were known and observed at the time, but the pressures to wear makeup seemingly outweighed the potentially damaging effects. Drew-Bear, *Painted Faces*, 22-23. See also: Stellman, ed., *Occupational Health and Safety*, 63.22, 63.28, 63.62.

¹¹³ *Operetta molto piacevolissima*, u. p. (Rx. 1); Pseudo-Galen, *Ricettario di Galieno*, 20^v (Rx. 136).

¹¹⁴ Detailed examples of this overlap are discussed in Chapters 3 and 5.

skin included in the survey done for this dissertation, only 22 contained lead white, or approximately 13% (see Appendix C). That means white lead appears slightly less frequently than lemon derivatives (lemons, lemon juice, or lemon water) which were used in 24 recipes (14%). If the products using litharge of gold and silver, both lead derivatives, are added in, this brings up the total to 31 recipes, or 16%, still less than camphor which appears in 22%, or eggs which are used in 23% of skin recipes. In addition, its appearance is somewhat evenly distributed between recipes for generic beautification and some for skin whiteners so it is not the case, for example, that all skin whiteners contained white lead. Mercury appears in only eight skin treatments (just under 5%). So while it was true that a significant number of cosmetic recipes contained toxic materials, a significant portion also did not. In other words, both Alberti's passage from *Il libro della famiglia* the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* have chosen to highlight potentially toxic effects, and have linked these negative consequences to be caused by particularly excessive use of cosmetics. In this sense, excessive cosmetic use is depicted as leading to a decline in bodily health, or upsetting the humoural balance to result in disease.

Sexual Deceptions

A second significant concern emphasised through the treatment of cosmetics in the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* is that of sexual deception—the 'dangers' of cosmetics, including the threats they pose against health, are consistently framed within a sexual context. In the previous chapter, I introduced a number of examples where cosmetic excess was portrayed as a companion to sexual misbehaviour, and noted how writers including Tertullian habitually linked making up to seduction. This link between cosmetics and female sexuality was frequently reproduced in descriptions of

cosmetic deception. For example, in the *Raffaella*, Alessandro Piccolomini suggests that women use false blushing as one of their many tricks to attract men while appearing modest. In one scene, the knowledgeable Mistress Raffaella suggests that young Margarita should attempt feign an embarrassed flush to maintain an impression of modesty, while all the time contriving to expose key body parts:

...not only must she take care on these occasions, which she must seize in order to do what I have mentioned above, that others be not aware that she has acted on-purpose, but she must blushingly pretend, if she can make her cheeks red at will, or by some other feigned sign of honesty, that she has been displeased such a thing should have happened to her...¹¹⁵

In this passage, the celebrations of blushing as an indication of female modesty, seen in the last chapter, are suspect, as Piccolomini suggests that those may in fact be artfully fabricated products of female craftiness. Pietro Aretino directly associates false blushes with prostitution. In his *Dialoghi*, the prostitute Nanna instructs Pippa to practice ‘artfully blushing,’ as one of the arts of whoredom.¹¹⁶ In addition Laura Cereta characterised makeup as a seductive poison that contaminates the hearts of men, writing, ‘one is ashamed of the irreverence of certain women who redden their milk-white cheeks with purple dye, and who use their furtive little eyes and laughing mouths to pierce the hearts, already poisoned, of those who gaze on them’.¹¹⁷ She suggests that the mere sight of cosmetics is powerful and poisonous, the first blow which weakens men’s hearts before they are fatally pierced that is, seduced, by enticing glances. In these passages, the motivation behind the false blush or cosmetic is seduction—the idea that women will affect an appearance of modest beauty in order to seduce. The authors

¹¹⁵ ‘...non solo ha da guardare ne le occasioni ch’ella ha da pigliare per far quanto ho detto di sopra, che altri non s’accorga ch’ella l’abbia fatto avertitamente, ma ha da fingere con rossore, puo tendo arrossire a sua posta, o con qualche altro finto segno di honesta d’haver havuto dispiacere che tal cosa le sia avvenuta...’ Piccolomini, *Dialogo*, 19^f. Translation with minor amendments from Piccolomini (trans. Nevison), 48.

¹¹⁶ Aretino (trans. Rosenthal), *Dialogues*, 235.

¹¹⁷ Cereta (ed. Robin), *Collected Letters*, 85.

equate a woman's intent to be seen, indicated in part through her application of makeup, with the intent to seduce.¹¹⁸

The treatment of specific cosmetic remedies in the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* corresponds to the framing of cosmetic deceptions as sexual deceptions. Consistently, the cosmetics dealing with exterior appearance and those used to 'fix up' the women's sex parts are treated effectively as varieties of the same evil. There is a clear effort to liken the two to each other, and to demonstrate that they are effectively one and the same thing, joint branches of the prostitutes' deceptive arts. This overlapping is evident, for example, in Zoppino's discussion of perfume. Outside of this dialogue, the seductive perfumes of prostitutes and courtesans were often celebrated, and while Ludovico asserts that the prostitutes he knows taste and smell alluring, Zoppino's aim is to disprove this.¹¹⁹ To counter Ludovico's understanding of perfume as innocuous and pleasant, Zoppino likens it to sexual remedies that fake virginity and hide genital diseases. He first notes that the prostitutes' cosmetic chests do not contain solely perfumes, but also concoctions to tighten up their vaginas: 'They go to their perfumery, and the box where they keep the things they use to tighten it up: with glass, or with braid, or with vitriol, as though it was no more difficult to tighten that than to seal the mouth of the Abyss'.¹²⁰ Continuing the comparison, he suggests that Ludovico has mistaken the aforementioned 'grey and red stains' of pus or discharge with that of musk perfume, again creating close parallels between the two.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 12; Casagrande, 'The Protected Woman', 92-94.

¹¹⁹ Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 74,98; On use of perfume, see: Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics*, 42; Santore, 'Tools of Venus', 181-182.

¹²⁰ vanno a la guarda robba de profumi, & armario de le cose che adoperano per istringere, hor con vetro, hor con galluzza, & hor con vetriolo, come se non fosse cosi difficile a restrignerli quelle, che serrare la bocca dell' Abisso.' Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 75.

¹²¹ 'è quelli stracci con la Marcia bigia è rossa, che di continuo gli colano è ricamano le lor camiscie, di che sanno, di muschio? è se tu sapessi com si mettono dentro ne la natura è poluere è uetro pesto per asciugar quella umidita chev'hanno dentro...' Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 75.

In addition, the ‘pine water’ Zoppino complains about on several occasions as a bath and a hair product is mentioned in other sources not as a hair conditioner but as another vaginal astringent. Pietro Andrea Mattioli’s *Materia medica* lists one remedy to tighten the vagina (an addition added by Mattioli to Dioscorides’ original material): ‘water of fresh non-mature pines, and best of sage, applied inside with rags of cloth’.¹²² The only direct inclusion of pine-water in the recipes surveyed in this thesis is also for tightening the vagina and restoring a youthful appearance.¹²³ The recipe, from the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript, bears a strong resemblance to the remedies described by Zoppino, both in the use of pine water, and in the method of application, where thin strips of cloth are bathed in the solution and put within the vagina to dry it:

To tighten a woman’s vagina and erase wrinkles from the body
 Take a cockerel, cypress nuts, little full green pine cones, chestnut shells, pomegranate shells, 16 of each, 2 [ounces?] of rock alum and all these things crush coarsely and put them to soften in strong vinegar for 8 days then distil all these things and extract the water, adding 3 ounces of pine water, and it is done. Then the woman bathes some bits of thin cloth and puts them in her vagina, and as it is dried, returns to bathe and she does it like this for 4 days, and she will become like she were a maiden and also for those of you who put some of it on the body of someone who has had children, it erases wrinkles and also makes breasts small, and for those who have big ones, bathe some cloths and put them on top.¹²⁴

This recipe is, in effect, an all-purpose rejuvenation formula in the literal sense of the term, aimed at making the entire body regain the appearance of maidenhood, not only

¹²² ‘A stringere la natura. DEL MATTIOLO. Acqua di pine fresche non mature, et massime della salvatiche applicata dentro con pezze di tela.’ Mattioli, *Materia medica* (v. 1), g4^v.

¹²³ In Tessa Storey’s database of a sampling of recipe books from the sixteenth- to eighteenth-centuries, pine water also does not appear in treatments for the hair or in baths. Storey, *Books of Secrets Database*.

¹²⁴ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 193^r. ‘A stringere la natura della donna et cazare le falde dal corpo. Rx galletto nose de cipresso pigne piccole verde capari scorza de castagni scorze di pomi granatj an. ..16. lume de roza an. ii et tutte queste cose rompile a grosso modo et mettile a molle in aceto forte per 8 giorni dapoi lambicha tutte queste cose et cavata l’aqua, agiongeli on. 3 d’aqua de pigne, et e fatta dapuoi la dona bagna delle pezzette sottile et mettasene nella natura, et come e sciuta torna a bagnare et faccia cosi per 4 giorni, venira come se fusse donzella et anche chi se ne mettesse sul corpo a una che havesse fatto filioli caza via le falde et anche fa le tette piccole, et chi l’avesse grande bagna delle peze et ponali sopra.’ See also Corrain, ‘Alcune ricette’, 39-40.

giving the impression of (it is implied) renewed virginity but also erasing wrinkles caused by pregnancy, and returning breasts to the maidenly apple-size considered to be ideal.¹²⁵ While virginity is not overtly stated, making a woman tight ‘like she were a maiden’ (*come se fusse donzella*) is likely to intend not just youth, but also a return to virginity, as the same word is used in another remedy ‘For a corrupted woman to appear a virgin,’ wherein a wash of powdered myrrh and oak gall dissolved in water promises to make one ‘appear like a maiden’ (*parera donzella*).¹²⁶

This overlap is repeated throughout the passage, as the remedies to treat vaginal diseases and methods to restore virginity are conflated. Zoppino refers to glass and vitriol being used to dry up vaginal fluids, however, in other sources, glass and astringent powders feature largely in remedies to tighten the vagina in order to feign virginity. The use of vitriol is paralleled by a recipe in the Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript, which advises ‘to tighten the vagina: powder of oak gall mixed with vitriol and put it in the fire and apply to the place with fat of bat’.¹²⁷ In the Medieval *Trotula* compendium, which was still in circulation in the Cinquecento, a remedy for virginity using powdered glass is ascribed to ‘dirty and corrupt prostitutes who desire to be more than virgins’.¹²⁸ In early versions of this Medieval manuscript the recipe called for powdered natron (*nitrum*) and powdered glass (*vitrum*) to be placed inside the vagina.¹²⁹ Monica Green notes that although the powdered glass was eventually dropped from most versions of the text, the close appearance between the two words meant that the recipe continued to be read and reproduced as calling for either natron or glass

¹²⁵ Bembo, *Asolani*, 158-59. See also Yalom, *History of the Breast*, 54; Bayer, ‘Introduction’, 5; Yavneh, ‘Ambiguity of Beauty’, 138.

¹²⁶ ‘Ut mulier corrupta videat[ur] virgo: Rx Mirra et Gala et pulveriza insieme et buti con acqua et lava la natura dentro et di fuori et parera donzella.’ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 7r.

¹²⁷ ‘A stringere la natura: Polvere di galla mescidata con vedriollo et ponilo nel fuoco et ongi il luoco con songia di vespertilione.’ MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 192^v.

¹²⁸ Green, *Trotula*, 104.

¹²⁹ Green, *Trotula*, 104, 202.

depending on the copyist.¹³⁰ Like the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino*, the *Trotula* finds these remedies harmful, warning that their makers are ‘ill counselled, for they render themselves bloody and they wound the penis of the man’.¹³¹ The *Ricettario di Galieno* recommends two painful sounding remedies ‘to make a woman seem always to be a virgin’, either the application of leeches to the labia in advance of sex, or placing gall powder inside the vulva.¹³²

On one hand, the melding of virginity remedies and astringents may not have been deliberate, in fact, it appears that vaginal astringents and virginity treatments could have often been the same thing. As Kathleen Coyne Kelly has observed, blood at first sexual contact was seen as only one indication of virginity—Gulielmus de Saliceto, for example, described in the thirteenth century, how a ‘closed’ uterus together with a firm and tight vagina were also key indications of virginity.¹³³ Thus the tightening effect of the astringents may have been aiming not just at a more enjoyable experience, but perhaps also replicating the firm, tight texture associated with virginity. However, the loosening of the vagina was also known as a more general effect of aging and childbirth. Zoppino recounts the story of a Roman prostitute who was known for being particularly tight and dry, to the joy of her clients, and effect which, of course, turns out to be a cosmetic trick, which she achieves by stuffing a piece of cloth inside herself.¹³⁴ One time it falls out, and the client recounts that it the effect was like drowning ‘in the middle of a “great sea”, saying also that he ‘felt as if he was pissing out of an open

¹³⁰ Green, *Trotula*, 104, 202.

¹³¹ Green, *Trotula*, 104.

¹³² Pseudo-Galen, *Ricettario di Galieno*, 49 (Rx. 201, ‘A fare che una donna para sempre verzene’).

¹³³ Kelly, *Performing Virginity*, 12, 27-29; Lastique and Lemay, ‘Medieval Physician’s Guide to Virginity’, 61-63, 175.

¹³⁴ Salkeld, ‘Zoppino’, 98-99.

window since he was not touching any of her sides'.¹³⁵ This passage echoes the description of the aged and adulterous wife in Boccaccio's *Corbaccio*, whose vagina is also likened to a sea, whose 'port' is of such size, that the spectre of her former husband claims that 'King Robert's armada all chained together ... could have entered there with the greatest of ease without lowering its sails or raising its rudders'.¹³⁶ Such misogynistic discussion of women's bodies was not limited to these clearly satirical dialogues. For example, after the birth of Eleonora Gonzaga, the Bolognese priest, Floriano Dolfo, wrote to Francesco II Gonzaga, reassuring him that it was a good thing that his first-born was a girl, as it will have prevented his wife, Isabella d'Este, from becoming too stretched out:

'since according to nature, females are smaller than males, not only was it less painful for the Illustrious Madonna Marchesana but it also stretched her quim less, so that you will have the advantage of deriving greater pleasure from your mutual embraces, since [your member] will not find such a large chamber that it would resemble a dried seed in a rattle, or a clapper in a bell'.¹³⁷

It is clear from his continued correspondence with Francesco that the latter was not offended by this commentary on his wife, whose sexuality, as Molly Bourne has noted,

¹³⁵ Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 99; '... pur un di, allargandogli le coscie, gli uscì, è casco interra una tovaglia piegata, tutta molle, è non havendo ancho quel tale fatto il fatto suo, volle dar fine all'opera, è trovossi in un mare magnum, è disse che gli parve pisciare in un horto fuor d'una finestra, non toccando da niuno de lati di modo che piu volte hebbe paura di non si annegare, si che tu intendi.'

¹³⁶ 'L'armata del re Roberto ... tutta insieme concatenata, senza calar velo o tirare in alto temone, a grandissimo agio vi potrebbe essere entrata.' Boccaccio (ed. Erbani), *Corbaccio*, 273; translation, Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 55-56. There are a number of other close similarities between the two passages, including a description of the women's flatulence, which *Corbaccio* likens to thunderclaps and sulphur leading to an unholy death, and *Zoppino* likens to firing artillery, and the clamour of unborn souls. See Boccaccio (ed. Cassell), *Corbaccio*, 56; Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 99.

¹³⁷ '... che-secondo li naturali sempre la femina è piu gracile del maschio- ha porto mancho dolore a la Illustrissima Madonna Marchesana et mancho li ha squarzato la figa, unde ne haveti reportato uno commodo: de pigliar maggior piacere ne li vostri comuni abbraciamenti, per non ritrovare si larga camera, che seria como una balotola in uno sonaglio et lo bataglio in una campana!' Translation with modifications from Bourne, 'Mail Humour', 210. Original in Dolfo, *Lettere ai Gonzaga*, 10. My thanks to Sarah Cockram for bringing this to my attention.

is occasionally joked about between the men, but unsurprisingly never appeared in Floriano's correspondences with Isabella.¹³⁸

However, within the context of the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino*, where the women are clearly known to be prostitutes, there are no positive connotations to the women's use of rejuvenation recipes or vaginal astringents. Zoppino's frequent reference to the women's dripping fluids, as discussed above, suggests that these products amend not only age or lack of virginity, but also disease. That the cosmetic fabrication of youth, moral-sexual status and health was perceived as threatening is emphasised by Zoppino's warning that such products can in fact make men 'damage their cocks'.¹³⁹ This warning seems, on the surface, to be a manifestation of male anxiety, where the moral deception of cosmetic virginity is perceived as leading not just to shame, but physical harm. The motif also appears in the misogynistic *Secrets of Women*, which warns that prostitutes stick iron into the penis, and Bettina Bildhauer has suggested that such concerns reflect a perception that the penis, perceived as the crossroad of all the body's veins, was most vulnerable during sex.¹⁴⁰ Indeed Zoppino repeats the fear of penis damage when he talks about greedy prostitutes having sex while menstruating.¹⁴¹ However, these recipes may have had some parallel in actual practice. The use of vaginal astringents could have suggested not just an attempt to appear younger, but also that the women were attempting to financially swindle their clients with false claims of virginity. In Aretino's Dialogues, Nanna boasts about having sold her virginity multiple times, and elaborates the many tricks she played on men to extract money, stating that whores have 'no feelings for anything but cold

¹³⁸ Bourne, 'Mail Humour', 199-221.

¹³⁹ Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 75.

¹⁴⁰ Bildhauer, 'Secrets of Women', 71.

¹⁴¹ Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 100.

cash'.¹⁴² This practice has parallels in trial evidence. In one case discussed by Tessa Storey in her study of prostitution in Counter-Reformation Rome, a young woman of fourteen stated that her guardian, a former courtesan 'knew the remedies which allow a woman to pass as a virgin three or four times', explaining how 'she took a thread of crimson silk and sewed it to the skin, so that when a woman had intercourse with a man she bled'.¹⁴³ This practice was likely tied to the fact that virgins could be sold at a higher price—as Tessa Storey notes, men in Rome paid up to 100 *scudi* to deflower a virgin—thus such remedies hinted at a potential financial swindling, among other concerns.¹⁴⁴ By closely associating the prostitutes' perfumes and their hair and bath waters with virginity restoration, the Zoppino dialogue emphasises the extent to which they are all part of the same essentially sexual deception.

Witchcraft

Zoppino gives a final affirmation of the cosmetics' threatening deceptive powers, which serves in tandem as further evidence that the prostitutes' diseased bodies are contiguous with their corrupted souls, by intrinsically and extrinsically likening cosmetics to witchcraft. In his narration, cosmetics and witchcraft become the same thing, and he claims the prostitute-witches use all manners of magic to attract their clients.¹⁴⁵ While describing washes for intimate hygiene routines, Zoppino suggests a sinister undertone, by claiming the women enact 'Moorish movements' over a hidden concoction of 'six leaves of sage and rosemary with a little bit of white wine,' before

¹⁴² '... una puttana, che non ha l'animo se non al denaio ...' Aretino, *Ragionamenti*, 128; Aretino (trans. Rosenthal), *Dialogues*, 114-15. For discussion of money and sexuality, see Moulton, 'Whores as Shopkeepers', 71-86.

¹⁴³ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 141.

¹⁴⁴ Storey, *Carnal Commerce*, 142; Camerano, 'Assistenza richiesta ed imposta', 233.

¹⁴⁵ Salkeld, 'Zoppino', 93.

washing themselves with it.¹⁴⁶ In addition, he says they use misappropriated holy-oil as ointment for their bodies and lips: ‘they utter mumbo-jumbo of words...and what’s more, some of them anoint themselves with holy oil. I know some who anoint their lips and as they go, kiss one another, asking what each is up to...’.¹⁴⁷ Finally, in order to ensure their clients continue to pay, Zoppino claims they take part in naked incantations and anthropophagy, feasting on decaying corpses they have exhumed.¹⁴⁸ Zoppino’s reference to stereotypical elements of witchcraft, including cannibalism emphasises that this passage is largely the product of literary exaggeration, serving to underscore his representation of female power as transgressive and threatening. As a socio-cultural construct, witches are an almost ubiquitous cultural figure, serving as embodiments of a society’s fears of death.¹⁴⁹ Traits including cannibalism and unconventional sexual

¹⁴⁶ ‘...mentre che hanno il loro amico nel letto, chi dietro a la cortina, chi dietro al padiglione, ha una pignattella con sei foglie di saluia è rosmarino, con un poco di uin bianco, facendo una moresca con le mani, sciacquando or forte or piano, lauansi quella cosa...’ Salkeld, ‘Zoppino’, 75, 93-95, 99. Robert Jütte suggests that vaginal douches were an extremely common form of birth control. However, his work has been criticised for sparse reference to primary sources, and indeed, this assertion is not well supported by evidence from the time period. The recipe books I look at do not recommend using these specific ingredients for contraception, nor does the *Trotula*, and further investigation was unfortunately outside of the scope of this project. Aside from contraception, the wash could suggest simple herb waters recommended for general cleanliness, or perhaps the herbal wash that Fracastoro recommends as the final cleansing step of syphilis treatment. Jütte, *Contraception*, 47, 71-74, 248; For problems with previous work on birth control, see King, *Hippocrates’ Woman*, 135-138.

¹⁴⁷ ‘... fanno una diceria di parole ... e piu, alcune s’ungano con olio santo, & alcune so che s’ungono i labri, è basciando altrui chiedono l’intento loro ...’ Salkeld, ‘Zoppino’, 71, 94.

¹⁴⁸ Salkeld, ‘Zoppino’, 70-72, 93-94. Salkeld notes similar spells in Aretino’s works, see Aretino (trans. Rosenthal), *Dialogues*, 46, 129.

¹⁴⁹ I am not referring to people who actually used magic here, although love magic seems to have been relatively prevalent in Italy throughout the Renaissance; by ‘witch’, I mean the fantastical conception of demonic witch, such as that depicted in the *Lo Stregozzo* print attributed to Agostino Veneziano. Such demonic imaginings of witches, rather than reflecting actual magical beliefs and behaviours, have been understood by anthropologists to be embodiments of base human fears. On anthropological definitions of witchcraft see: Pattison, ‘Psychosocial Interpretations of Exorcism’, 5-19; Brain, ‘Anthropological Perspective on the Witchcraze’, 258; On *Lo Stregozzo* see: Emison, ‘Truth and Bizzaria’, 623-636; Zika, *Appearance of Witchcraft*, 125-7; Tal, ‘Witches on Top’, 160-214; Hulst, *Witch as Muse*, 39-46; Campbell ‘(Un)divinity of Art’, 602-3; On the common conflation of prostitute, procuress and witch, in Renaissance literature and popular culture see: Bettella, *Ugly Woman*, 66-80, esp. 66-67, 72, 207; Bettella, ‘Marked Body’, 152; Banner, *Full Flower*; examples may be found in Aretino (ed. Squarotti and Forno), 531; Ruggiero, *Binding Passions*, 24-56, 90-94; Duni, *Under the Devil’s Spell*, ix.

behaviour have been observed by social anthropologist Phillips Stevens to be frequently ascribed to witch-figures in a range of cultures, reflecting not only taboos against cannibalism, but also fears of the unknown.¹⁵⁰ Indeed, these are the same characteristics that Matteo Duni noted as typical features in witchcraft accusations, in his study of inquisition trials in Modena.¹⁵¹

I have found little indication so far that incantations were a common part of cosmetic recipes. A number of scholars have noted the use of ingredients in cosmetics recipes that tend towards the bizarre, exotic or disgusting, suggesting they were there to invoke supernatural powers.¹⁵² Problematically, however, not all these studies have thoroughly incorporated Renaissance understandings of substances' properties. As I examined in Chapter 2, even apparently strange or dangerous ingredients were often understood at the time to have strong medicinal benefits. Ingredients including pill bugs, animal blood and lizards were recommended in classical works on medicine. Moreover, the inclusion of these types of ingredients is in no way specific to cosmetics alone. Dioscorides recommended that when salamanders are dissolved in oil, or when their bodies (minus innards, head and feet) are preserved in honey they can be used to remove hair.¹⁵³ Indeed, lizards make several appearances in recipes for the hair, with the suggestion that rubbing the inside of a lizard's skin on the area from which hair has been removed prevents further hair growth.¹⁵⁴ However, Dioscorides also recommends

¹⁵⁰ Stevens, 'Sorcery and Witchcraft', 1225-1232; Stevens, 'Black Magic', 129-133; See also Kieckhefer, 'Avenging the Blood of Children', 91-110, esp. 91-93.

¹⁵¹ Duni, *Devil's Spell*, 17.

¹⁵² For discussion of magical ingredients, see: Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 16; Matthews-Grieco, 'Body, Appearance, Sexuality', 61; Rodocanachi, *Femme italienne*, 109; On magic in Caterina Sforza's *Gli Experimenti*, see: Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 611; Foschi, 'Fantasia e superstizione', 31-36; Guccini, 'L'arte dei Semplici', 134; Turrini, 'Bellezza di ieri', 16; Breisach, *Caterina Sforza*, 136.

¹⁵³ 'Disfatta la salamandra nell'olio fa cascare i peli: & serbasi nel mele, trattegli prima l'interiora, & tagliatale poscia la testa, & piedi, per l'uso medesimo.' Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 383

¹⁵⁴ Hispanus, *Thesoro de Poveri*, 2^v, 3^r, 3^v (Rx. 10, 17, 18, 32); Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, 43, 50 (Rx. 68, 82); *Specchio di virtu*, unpaginated (Rx. 21).

salamanders and Spanish flies for a range of skin diseases, ulcers, calluses and rashes, as they were believed to have consuming and heating properties that could even work against leprosy.¹⁵⁵ In addition, I have not found any cosmetic recipes so far that involve incantations, although other recipes in the same *recettari* I have looked at do involve written or spoken incantations, often in some form of invented or abbreviated Latin.¹⁵⁶

However, Zoppino's suggestion that cosmetics and magic could have been combined does have some parallels in documentary evidence of inquisition trials. Here, makeup and witchcraft frequently cross boundaries—particularly where they can both be used to seduce.¹⁵⁷ Trial evidence from Florence, Venice and Modena suggests that love magic was prevalent in everyday culture, at least in popular imagination if not in everyday practice, and love spells occasionally involve cosmetic-like items.¹⁵⁸ Holy oil is commonly cited in inquisition trials as an item inappropriately used for magic spells. Its use as a magic 'lip gloss' of sorts is not only mentioned in the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino* but also appears in trial confessions from Modena. In 1519, Anastasia 'la Frappona' confessed to rubbing holy oil on her lips, saying it would allow her to secure the affections of whichever person she then kissed.¹⁵⁹ Perfume could be incorporated into spells to snare hearts: for instance the same woman in Modena claimed she applied perfume to a wax effigy of her intended paramour, who was then 'perfumed' with the

¹⁵⁵ 'Le facultà sue sono di mangiare, scaldare, & ulcerare la carne. Mettesi nelle medicine ulcerative, & in quelle della lepra, come vi si mettono le cantarelle: & ripsi nel modo, che si rpongono quelle.' Mattioli, *Materia medica*, 383.

¹⁵⁶ For examples of recipes with incantations see: *Opera nova de ricette e secreti*, unpaginated, 'Receta contra li cimesi' (36th recipe); *Probatum est*, 'A fare che l'omo se svegliara la notte a che hora li piacerà' (u. p., 9th recipe) and 'Recetta contra li cimesi' (30th recipe); *Secreti secretorum*, u. p. 'A fare che li cani non ti possano baiar drieto' (u.p., 23rd recipe), 'A trouare uno furto' (62nd recipe); Castellani, (ed.), *Secreti medicinali*, 57 ('Contra Inimicos tuos).

¹⁵⁷ Matthews-Grieco ('Body, Appearance', 61) also notes the overlap of magic and cosmetics; See also, Duni, *Devil's Spell*, 33.

¹⁵⁸ Duni, *Devil's Spell*, 31-37, 41, 52; Ruggiero, *Binding Passions*, 31; 88-130; Brucker, 'Sorcery in Early Renaissance Florence,' 7-24, esp. 10, 11, 18.

¹⁵⁹ Duni, *Devil's Spell*, 104.

‘spirit of love’ through this act.¹⁶⁰ Objects commonly used for storing and applying cosmetics were also amongst the household items that witches were thought to use: glass bottles to trap and hold demons; mirrors (especially convex mirrors) to trap demons or divine the future.¹⁶¹ It is not significant whether these spells were actually practiced, or if they were mainly the invention of confessors under pressure and authors’ imaginations; either way, they demonstrate that the connection between cosmetics and witchcraft was live and plausible in the popular imagination.¹⁶² In the *Ragionamento dello Zoppino*, both cosmetics and love magic are represented as a threatening exertion of feminine power, an analogous means by which men are tricked and trapped into deceived infatuation, and lured into sin and harm.

The fact that cosmetic deceptions are combined with *maleficium* in the Zoppino passage, above all, reinforces that at the heart of this passage is a deep anxiety about female power. Both witchcraft and cosmetics serve as a representation of this power, and of the perceived threats it posed to the social order. Prostitutes were more subject to these critiques due to their transgressive mores and ways of living that challenged social hierarchies. Even though deception was perceived as a trait inherent to all women, as the first chapter discussed, the passages examined in this chapter show a tendency to ascribe a particularly high degree of deception to prostitutes. These women were also more frequently targeted for witchcraft accusations, a pattern which suggests that their social position raised particular conflicts within society.¹⁶³ As Matteo Duni

¹⁶⁰ For two instances of spells to attract which use perfume, see: Duni, *Devil’s Spell*, 100, 103.

¹⁶¹ Ruggiero (*Binding Passions*, 98) notes the importance of domestic spaces and objects in many spells in Venice; Zika, *Appearance of Witchcraft*, 12, 96; Duni, *Devil’s Spell*, 80-84.

¹⁶² For discussion of the problems using evidence from trials see: Ruggiero, *Binding Passions*, 19, 32.

¹⁶³ Witchcraft accusations have been discussed more broadly in scholarship as a means of indirectly dispelling tensions and addressing social problems, with the lines of accusation frequently highlighting a society’s most problematic relationships. On tendency to accuse prostitutes, see: Ruggiero, *Binding Passions*, 24-56, 90-94; Duni, *Devil’s Spell*, ix. On accusations of women linked to ethnic difference, see: Martin, *Witchcraft and Inquisition*,

observed, while those accused of witchcraft tended to be from the 'lower orders of society', including women who were prostitutes and widows, more importantly, accusations tended to occur when someone had overtly transgressed the bounds of their social group, such as the case of a woman named Baila, who, despite a poor reputation, maintained a relationship with a respectable married man.¹⁶⁴ Thus yet again, cosmetics serve as a medium to discuss awkward relationships, and moreover, women's place in Renaissance society.

231. On accusation of widows and older women, see: Hester, *Lewd Women*; King, *Women of the Renaissance*, 146. On accusations of midwives in context of tensions surrounding fertility in Northern Europe, see: Roper, 'Witchcraft and Fantasy', 19-43; Brain, 'Witchcraze', 260; Harley, 'Historians as Demonologists', 1-25.

¹⁶⁴ Duni, *Devil's Spell*, ix, 53.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has sought to demonstrate that cosmetics played a significant role in daily life in the Italian Renaissance. It has drawn together visual and textual primary sources which have not previously been considered in relation to each other in the first monograph-length study on Italian renaissance cosmetics. Moreover, it has aimed to show that the study of cosmetic practice is a rich avenue for exploration which opens the door for greater understanding of diverse aspects of Renaissance life.

In the first chapter, I introduced the moral discourse surrounding cosmetic use, exploring how the elision of unaffected beauty, truth and goodness present in Christian, humanist and medical discourses frequently led to both a negative casting of cosmetics, and the encouragement of subtle makeup only. These discourses were shown to be more than face-value judgements of makeup use, but rather, arguments which used cosmetics as a metaphor for female nature and women's behaviour, more often than not women's behaviours that were perceived to be problematic or disruptive to institutions of male power.

Chapter Two's shift from the proscriptive discourse on cosmetics to cosmetic recipes uncovered the products and activities that helped a person '*farsi bella*'. Assumptions that have been made in the secondary literature about cosmetics were questioned, as I demonstrated that there is a relationship between poetic beauty standards and cosmetic formulas, and the recipes' curative properties. In response to the observation made in existing scholarship as to the close relationship between cosmetics and medicine, I carried out a close reading of a number of recipes, examining for the first time the significance of common cosmetic ingredients as they were understood to function at the time, according to the understanding of humoral

medicine. These findings suggested that curative effects were at the core of an even wider range of cosmetic recipes than previously thought, and demonstrate that the interest in achieving a healthy natural-looking appearance underpinned both recipe books and moralising literature. Cosmetics were thus as much an integral aspect of body care and upkeep as an ‘ornament’.

The ubiquity of cosmetic recipes is established by the place of *ricettari* in the print market, and suggests a wider audience for the recipes. To do this I drew together a number of previous studies which focused on individual facets of the production and sale of recipes and recipe books, to demonstrate that cosmetic recipes had appeal and relevance to diverse audiences. The collection and exchange of cosmetic recipes was shown first to have played an important role in network formation among the elite, through a case study of Caterina Sforza’s *Gli esperimenti*. In contrast to manuscripts, printed recipe books would have been largely affordable to a large section of society. I therefore contend that the focus in previous studies on literacy as an indication of audience is limiting, instead arguing that even the lower echelons likely had access to some of the books’ contents through verbal advertisements, street performances, and others reading out loud. Throughout, this chapter questioned assumptions about the books’ authors and audience, showing not only that women should be considered in the audience, but also bringing to attention men’s significant role in the dissemination of cosmetic recipes and the perpetuation of makeup culture. In addition, cosmetics were shown to be a popular and wide ranging topic with a prominent place in daily life.

Chapter Four turns from accessibility of cosmetic texts to accessibility of products and beauty itself. Using evidence from a number of household and apothecary inventories, I offer price estimates of a number of cosmetic items. Building on the discussion of street vendors’ sale of cosmetic recipes and remedies in the previous

chapter, I demonstrate that, despite *ricettari*'s appearance as 'do it yourself' manuals, the majority of cosmetic production was unlikely to have been completed within the home, reinforcing the previous chapter's suggestion that itinerant street sellers and apothecaries were therefore integral in the distribution of cosmetics. The basic ingredients and labour required to make simple cosmetics were relatively cheap, with the majority of the cost stemming from the addition of scents through exotic spices and perfumes. While basic cosmetics may have therefore been available to a wide cross-section of urban populations in particular, overall beauty standards were seen to favour those who had the resources to maintain good health and the free time to spend on a beauty routine. However the advertisement of low-cost recipes, and those that could be tailored to the users' capabilities indicated that women were expected to strive for the beauty standard regardless of their means.

The fifth chapter draws together the findings of previous chapters to offer new insight into visual depictions of cosmetic use, the *donne che si fanno belle*. The established corpus of scholarship on these images has, I argue, been asking the wrong questions, as it focuses on the identity of the female figures despite overwhelming evidence that they are intentionally made to be both ambiguous and generic icons of female beauty. Instead, these images should be understood as representations of a large and complex material culture relating to beauty: the mirrors, jars and other cosmetic items shown in these paintings had specific meaning as material objects. While the cosmetic products in these paintings are not identifiable, it is often implied that they are for use on the hair, a fact which, I suggest, allows the paintings to address beautification without invoking the negative moral connotations that could be ascribed to conspicuous use of skin makeup. Despite being celebrations of female beauty, the *donne che si fanno belle* are shown to be generic affirmations of conformity, celebrations of 'Woman' as an ideal rather than individual women.

Turning from idealised beauty to exaggerated disgust, Chapter Six approached negative depiction of makeup use as a companion to disease and sexual depravity through a case study of the anonymously authored dialogue, *Ragionamento dello Zoppino*. Fictional cosmetics portrayed in this dialogue were compared to actual cosmetic and medical recipes, revealing both a degree of exaggeration, and an elision of cosmetics and sexual medicines, demonstrating that here, cosmetic deception is being used as a metaphor for sexual deception. From this, common tropes condemning makeup use among prostitutes were shown above all to express insecurities about the women's unconventional social position, including their comparative social mobility and sexual freedom. In this way the final two chapters bring full circle the arguments introduced in Chapter 1, showing that the regulation of women's behaviour was an ever present concern in cultural representations of cosmetics. Moreover, they reflect another important role of cosmetics in Renaissance life—as a powerful metaphor through which concerns and arguments over the role of women in Italian Renaissance society were expressed.

A number of areas remain open for further research. While the focus of this dissertation has largely been on women, many of the recipes I looked at were gender neutral, and a few specifically mention men. An interesting area for future study would be men's body care and hygiene and its relationship to the celebration of male beauty. In addition, I uncovered a number of recipes addressing breast shape and size, and noted references to weight regulation. Perceptions and regulation of body shape and proportion in this period has yet to be thoroughly investigated, but would be highly relevant to themes in current media, including concerns with obesity and the fashion industry's role in body dysmorphia.

While my discussion of cosmetic prices has necessarily relied on previously published archives, there remains rich territory for future study based on more dedicated archival investigation of apothecary, colour-seller, perfumery and household inventories. Areas of inquiry could include cost comparison of cosmetic items between cities, and closer investigation of individuals' purchases of items such as ceruse ointments. I noted in Chapter 4 that the Torinese and Pavian apothecaries lack a number of perfumes, for example, so future investigations could suggest the relationship between apothecaries and perfume sellers, especially when it appears cosmetics often combined these items. The relationship of itinerant sellers to local markets for raw materials also invites further study—questions as to where they bought supplies and the extent to which they made their own remedies could perhaps be illuminated through closer examination of sale inventories from local apothecaries and suppliers.

Research on the individual cosmetic recipes has much to offer both the history of medicine, and the history of the book. Further comparisons of cosmetic recipes to a broader range of common medical sources suggest new layers of meaning which potentially expand the understanding of early modern popular medicine. In addition, such a comparison would uncover more of the sources from which compilers of *ricettari* derived their material. As well as revealing more about cosmetics, these directions of study highlight the interactions between different spheres of Renaissance society and networks of trade and information flow. So cosmetics are central, not marginal to Renaissance material culture.

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF *RICETTARI*

Ricettari included in database by order of date

- 1300-1500 Castellani, Carlo, (ed.), *Secreti medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia : antidotario inedito del 14.-15. secolo* (Cremona : Athenaeum Cremonense, 1959).
- 1498 Hispanus, Petrus ('Piero Spano'), *Thesoro de poueri* (n. l.: n. p., 1498), Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice (FOAN.G.223).
- 1510 Pseudo-Galen, *Ricettario di Galieno*, translated Maeistro Zuane Saracino (Pesaro: (orig. 1508) Hieronymum Soncinum, 1510).
- 1518 Hispanus, Petrus, ('Piero Spano'), *Qui incomincia il libro chiamato thesoro de poveri: compilato et facto per magistro Piero Spano* (Venice: Georgio Rusconi Milanese, 10 August, 1518) Querini Stampalia, Venice (PIANO.I.C.1627).
- 1500-1520 Guerrini, Olindo, ed., *Ricettario galante del principio del secolo* (Bologna: Presso L'Editore Gaetano Romagnoli, 1883).
- 1525 ca. Caterina Sforza (attributed) and Lucantonio Cuppano. *Gli esperimenti* (MS). Transcribed in Pier Desiderio Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3).
- 1525 *Dificio di ricette* (n.l.: n.p., 1525) FGCV (FOAN TES 407).

- 1526a *Dificio de ricette* (Venice: Giouanniantonio et fratelli da Sabio, 1526)
BNMV (192.D.2). Volume damaged/incomplete.
- 1526b *Dificio de ricette* (Venice: n. p., 1526) BNMV (MISC. 1054) Markings in Spanish
- 1526 Celebrino, Eustachio, *Opera nova Piacevole Laquale insegna di far varie co[m]positioni odorifere per far bella ciascuna dona Et etiam agiontoui molti secreti necessarij alla salute humana como in la tabula se co[n]tiene: Intitulata Venusta* (n. l.: n. p., 1526) Wellcome Institute, London (65175/A).
- 1529 *Probatum Est. (Opera nova excellentissima la quale insegna di far vari secreti e gentileze sperimentate sopra diversi effetti come i ditta opera si contiene. Intitulata: Probatum est.)* ([Venice]: n. p., 1529) Wellcome Institute, London (4630/B, no. 2).
- *Opera nova de Ricette e secreti che insengna apparecchiar vna Mensa a vno convito. Et è a tagliar in tavola de ogni sorte carne e dar li cibi secondo lordine che vsano li scalchi e seguita il modo de inclamar ogni sorte frutti e conseruar quelli con altre gentilezze* (n. l.: n .p., ca. 1510) Wellcome Institute, London (4630/B, no. 1).
- *Specchio di virtu, (Fascicolo de molte cose meritevole de ogni laude si in arte di medicina e per riparatione di molte infirmita: como in magisterio di molte getilezze, & per dare spasso alle me[n]te de faticati populi da molti homini, dignissimi per ricreatione de da[n]ni Composto & ridotto in questa operetta nouissimamente venuta in luce meritamente. Intiulata*

- Specchio di virtu* (n. 1.: Paulo Danza) Wellcome Institute, London (4630/B, no. 3).
- *Secreti secretorum (Opera nova chiamata secreti Secretorum in laquale poterai conseguire molti piaceri e utilidade: con molte cose ridiculose stampate novamente)* (Venice: Bernardino Benalio) Wellcome Institute, London (4630/B, no. 4).
- *Questa sie una operetta molto piacevollissima & da ridere de arte manuale & e utilissima a molte infirmitade & exprimentada [sic] da molti excellentissimi homini & sono aprobate per mi Nicholo dicto el Zopino* (Venice: Nicolo dicto el Zopino) Wellcome Institute, London (4630/B, no. 6).
- 1530 *Dificio de ricette* (Venice: Francesco Bindoni & Mapheo Pasini, 1539) BNMV (192.D.276)
- 1531 *Dificio de ricette* (Venice: Ioanantonio e fratelli da Sabbio, Sept. 1531). FGCV (FOAN TES 410).
- 1532 *Dificio de ricette. (Opera nova intitolata dificio de ricette, nella quale si contengono tre utilissimi Ricettari, Nel primo si tratta di molte & diuerse uirtu Nel secondo se insegna a comporre uarie sorti de suauì & utili odori, Nel terzo & ultimo si tratta di alcuni rime di secreti medicinali necessari in risanar li corpi humani, come nella tauola qui seguente si puo uedere)* (Venice: Giouanantonio et i Fratelli da Sabio, June 1532) British Library, London (D-7953.f.32).
- 1532 *Dificio de ricette* (Venice: Giovanantonio et i Fratelli da Sabio, June). Querini Stampalia, Venice (PIANO. I.H.2210).

- 1534 Eustachio Celebrino, *Opera nova piacevole* (Venice: Franc. di Alessandro Bindoni e Mapheo Pasini, 1534) WL (4630/B, no. 5).
- after 1535 MS Pseudo-Savonarola, 15th-16th c. (Ferrara Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, ms.Cl.II.147).

Summary of Ricettari

What follows is a description of each of the recipe books in this study, in order of date, with details of a book's size, location, a summary of contents, and other known information about the text. Frontispiece imagery is analysed in Chapter 3. The manuscripts and a number of the printed texts do not have a specific creation date, so a strict chronology is meaningless. Often it is clear that one text and another share copied material, it is not possible to say which text came first – so I have made a note of similarities and given a rough estimate of date. Undated printed books are listed after the printed books with publication dates for ease of comparison, and to avoid a false chronology.

Six of the books I looked at were subsequently bound together into a collection of eighteen small texts and pamphlets, dating from around 1511- 1618, now held at the Wellcome Institute, London. These include *Opera nova de ricette e secreti che insegna apparecchiare una mensa a uno convito*, *Probatum est* (1529), *Specchio di virtu*, *Secreti secretorum*, *Opera nova piacevole* (1534), and the *Operetta molto piacevolissima*. As they are now part of the same volume, they all have the same call number, so I have added a number (i.e. no. 1) to indicate the order in which they appear in the collection.

Assessing the accuracy of the manuscripts' dates was beyond the scope of this study, however, as most of the dating in previous scholarship was based on a *terminus post quem* from names and dates mentioned in the texts, their dating might benefit from re-assessment in the future. While inputting them into my database, I noticed the appearance in these manuscripts of a number of ingredients that do not appear in the printed texts, or the *Trotula*, and their long format corresponds more closely to the printed recipe books appearing around 1550. Future consideration of these manuscripts' content and ingredient profiles in comparison with later printed texts

would be interesting and perhaps fruitful in better establishing a timeline of these books and to further map the growing interest in cosmetics.

1

SECRETI MEDICINALI

DI MAGISTRO GUASPARINO DA VIENEXIA

Carlo Castellani (ed.), *Secreti medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia : antidotario inedito del 14.-15. secolo* (Cremona : Athenaeum Cremonense, 1959).

Recipes: 354

Cosmetics: 19

The ‘Secreti medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia’ was transcribed by Carlo Castellani in 1959, and the original manuscript is in the Biblioteca Governativa e Civica di Cremona, Ms. AA. 1.98.¹ I referred to the Castellani transcription. The manuscript is written in several different hands corresponding to dates throughout the 14th and 15th centuries.² Two specific names are mentioned in the text, ‘Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia, medico in cirogia, abita in Verona in Castel de San Felice’ and a ‘Donato’, neither of whom have been specifically identified otherwise.³ The first half of the text, which is written in the hand self-identified to be Guasparino’s, contains no remedies or reference to plague, leading Casetellani to place it in the first half of the fourteenth century.⁴ The second half of the work, by contrast, does contain recipes against plague and pestilence, which, along with the later hand with which it was written, leads Castellani to place it in the second half of the fifteenth century.⁵ This

¹ Castellani (ed), *Secreti medicinali*, xiii.

² Castellani (ed), *Secreti medicinali*, xv-xvii, xix.

³ Castellani (ed), *Secreti medicinali*, xv.

⁴ Castellani (ed), *Secreti medicinali*, xix.

⁵ Castellani (ed), *Secreti medicinali*, xix.

second part also contains the recipes purportedly tested by ‘Donato’.⁶ The language used in the work reflects the vernacular from the Lombardo-Veneto region.⁷ The manuscript contains 354 recipes. Most are in vernacular, although a number in the latter section of the book are in Latin.

The work begins with eight recipes: (a) to cure worms (b) so that body hair does not re-grow (c) to staunch blood flow (d) for those who have lost their memory (e) for fistulas (f) for ‘falling sickness’ i.e. epilepsy (g) for gilding armour, and one final recipe which is illegible.⁸ Following this there are 41 recipes for poultices, a chapter on unguents (Rx 42-98); powders (Rx 99-133), Oils (Rx 133-191); waters (Rx 192-199); pills (Rx200-222)(although at this point there are also some waters and unguents); and veins and taking blood (Rx 223-258). From here the recipes are less organized, and it is in this final portion that the greater portion of cosmetic recipes for beautifying the face and hair are found. There is not a great amount of recipe overlap between cosmetics in this source and in other sources that I have looked at, but Tessa Storey notes that a number of the recipes in this text are derived from previous works by Taddeo Alderotti and Anselmo da Incisa.⁹

⁶ Castellani (ed), *Secreti medicinali*, xix.

⁷ Castellani (ed), *Secreti medicinali*, xix.

⁸ ‘(a) a sanar li vermi, (b) ut pili non renascantur (c) ad restringendum sanguinem, (d) ad eos qui memoriam perdunt, (e) ad fistulas, (f) ad morbum caducum, (g) per dorare armadure, (h) lunga ricetta illeggibile’. Castellani (ed), *Secreti medicinali*, 4.

⁹ Storey, ‘Health, Beauty, Hygiene’, 378 (n. 6).

THESORO DE POVERI

Petrus Hispanus, ('Piero Spano'), *Thesoro de poueri* (n. l.: n. p., 1498)

Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice (FOAN.G.223).

Recipes: 60 chapters

Cosmetics: 2 chapters (32 Recipes)

Format: 82 leaves (1498); 60 leaves, 4° (1518).

As discussed in the text of this thesis, this is a vernacular printed version of the *Thesaurus pauperum* ('treasury of the poor') by Petrus Hispanus (Pope Giovanni XXI), originally written in the thirteenth-century in Latin.¹⁰ I looked at two printed vernacular versions from my time period, a 1498 edition at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice (FOAN.G.223) and a 1518 version at the Querini Stampalia, Venice (PIANO.I.C.1627). Both editions were printed in Venice and, excepting minor variations in spelling, are identical in content.

The 1498 edition is the first edition in Italian. It is 82 folios long in a roman typeface, 27 lines per page. It has writing on it in several different hands – on the verso of the first page 'Del' Volpi' is written, and on the recto of the second page, 'questo libro e di Antonio Farcilli'. There is a woodcut on the first page that shows surgeons treating patients for a head wound and a leg ulcer (Figure 13). The 1518 edition is 60 folios long, in quarto format.

¹⁰ Turrini, 'Bellezza di ieri', 5, 15.

3

RICETTARIO DI GALIENO

Pseudo-Galen, *Recettario di Galieno a tutte le i[n]firmitade che acadeno ali corpi hu[m]ani, cosi de[n]tro como di fora*, translated Maestro Zuane Saracino (Pesaro: Hiernymum Soncinu[m], 1510).

Recipes: 309

Cosmetics: 7

Format: 73 leaves (plus index)

The *Ricettario di Galieno* is 73 folios long, not including the index, and contains 309 recipes, all of which deal primarily with conditions of the human body. The attribution to Galen is false - the text is not based on any of Galen's works, and it first appeared in 1508.¹¹ I am referring to the 1510 edition, which was the earliest edition available to me. The book was reprinted consistently throughout the sixteenth century, and occasionally in the seventeenth century, with a final print in 1671.¹² A section of recipes from pages 20-21 in the 1510 *Ricettario di Galieno* reappear in the same order in the *Operetta molto Piacevolissima* by Nicholo el Zopino.¹³

The text begins with the rules of the months, then covers a broad range of ailments, which appear grouped by subject (although not overtly labelled), and finishes with preparations for numerous oils.

¹¹ Durling, 'Chronological Census', 280.

¹² Durling, 'Chronological Census', 280.

¹³ Pseudo-Galen, *Ricettario di Galieno*, 20-21; *Operetta molto piacevolissima*, 1v.

RICETTARIO GALANTE

Transcribed by Carlo Castellani. *Secreti medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia : antidotario inedito del 14.-15. Secolo*. (Cremona: Athenaeum cremonense, 1959).

Recipes: 212

Cosmetics: 128

Format: 64 leaves, 238 x 183 mm.

I am referring to Olindo Guerrini's transcription; the original is at the Biblioteca dell'Università di Bologna.¹⁴ According to Guerrini, the original is bound in leather, with an emblem of a 'serpent with legs, a basilisk' killing an ivy plant, and bears the motto 'DI BON SEME MAL FRVTTO', a line taken from Petrarch's *Canzoniere*.¹⁵ Guerrini dates the manuscript to the first two decades of the cinquecento, based on both the written script, and the mention of several years and names of known public figures in the text.¹⁶ Due to mixed dialects of the vocabulary present, he suggests that it was likely to have been a re-copying of a compilation, potentially by a Romagnole compiler.¹⁷

The manuscript is 64 leaves long, measuring 238 x 183 mm, and is written in an early sixteenth-century cursive script, with 23 lines per page.¹⁸ The initial letters are written in red ink. The manuscript begins with a poem in *ottava rime* (minus a final couplet) describing the cosmetic recipes. A comparable poem is in *Opera nova*

¹⁴ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario Galante*, iii.

¹⁵ Guerrini, *Ricettario Galante*, iii. Petrarca (ed. Musa and Manfredi), *Canzoniere*, 502 (poem 360).

¹⁶ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario Galante*, iv-v.

¹⁷ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario Galante*, vi-vii.

¹⁸ Guerrini (ed.), *Ricettario galante*, iv.

piacevole, and both are discussed in Chapter 3 and 4. The *Ricettario galante* is divided into sections by topic, each of which are labelled, which, as I note in the text of this thesis, is an unusual feature.

GLI EXPERIMENTI

Attributed to Caterina Sforza. Transcribed in Pier Desiderio Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza*, vol. 3 (Roma: Edizioni Letterarie Artistiche, 1968).

Recipes: 454

Cosmetics: 199

Format: 554 pages (277 leaves), 8°

Gli esperimenti is a manuscript recipe collection attributed to Caterina Sforza (1463-1509), apparently posthumously compiled around 1525 by Lucantonio Cuppano, a colonel under Giovane dalle Bande Nere, son of Caterina and Giovanni de' Medici ('il Popolano').¹⁹ Pier Desiderio Pasolini produced a transcription of the manuscript in the third volume his 1896 biography of Sforza, stating its location at the Pasolini Archive in Ravenna (Co. cartaceo, sec. XVI), but it is unclear whether or not it is still in this location. Subsequent scholars, including myself, have primarily relied on Pasolini's transcription. According to Pasolini, Cuppano's manuscript is 554 pages long, not counting the index, and in ottavo format.

There is no surviving manuscript of 'esperimenti' written in Caterina Sforza's hand, and Cuppano's manuscript is written by at least two copyists, with a third having written the index. Pasolini notes that one of the previous owners Cuppano's manuscript also had a record of another manuscript titled 'A far bella', with Caterina Sforza's name 'vigorously written' on the first page.²⁰ This text recorded to be a large book in 16° format, written in a fifteenth-century script, with one recipe per page, and

¹⁹ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 609.

²⁰ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 614.

Pasolini suggests changes in the writing indicate that it was compiled over a long period of time. However, in Pasolini's time this text and any record of it further whereabouts had been lost, so it is unknown what it contained, if it was genuine, and whether or not Cuppano's compilation is based on it.²¹ Pasolini notes that a number of errors in the manuscript, including repeated words and amendments which indicate places where the copyist was clearly copying from another text, for example, at one point he initial wrote 'bon stagni', but then corrected it to '60 stagni'.²²

²¹ Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 614-15.

²² Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 611.

DIFICIO DE RICETTE

Opera nova intitolata dificio de ricette, nella quale si contengono tre utilissimi Ricettari, Nel primo si tratta di molte & diuerse uirtu Nel secondo se insegna a comporre uarie sorti de suauu & utili odori, Nel terzo & ultimo si tratta di alcuni rime di secreti medicinali necessari in risanar li corpi humani, come nella tauola qui seguente si puo uedere

(Venice: Giouanantonio et i Fratelli da Sabio, June 1532)

British Library, London (D-7953.f.32).

Recipes: 186

Cosmetics: 24

Format: 30 leaves (old editions); 18 leaves (new editions), 4°

The first known printing of *Dificio di Ricette* was made in 1525. It appears to have been relatively popular, and was printed numerous times up until 1554. Eamon mentions this text in his *Science and Secrets of Nature*, listing printings of it up until 1550, and I have found an additional later edition printed in 1554 at Milan.²³ It was also translated into Dutch and French, where copies appeared into the early eighteenth century.²⁴ I have compared seven different editions of this book, detailed below, and

²³ Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 361. This same year as *Opera Nova Piacevole*. The 1554 edition is currently at the Biblioteca comunale Aurelio Saffi, Forlì, the long title as follows: *Dificio di ricette ridotto di nuouo in tre ricettarii. Nel primo si tratta di molte, et diuerse virtù, nel secondo s'insegna a comporre uarie sorte de souauu [sic], et utili odori. Nel terzo, et ultimo si tratta di alcuni rimedii secreti medicinali, necessarii in risanare li corpi humani.* (Milan : Io. Antonio da Borgo, habitante a mezo il corso di Porta Tosa, ali XIII di nouembrio 1554).

²⁴ See two copies held in the Wellcome library: *Le Batiments de Receptes*; call numbers 12559/A and 12560/A, from the years 1726 and 1728, respectively. Eamon mentions

the one included in my database is the 1532 edition housed at the Wellcome Library, which was the earliest and most complete version of the text available to me at the time.

Later editions of the book have several additional recipes added to the beginning of the text and table for a total of 186 recipes, this change occurs somewhere between 1526 and 1530 (in the editions I had access to, it first appeared in the 1530 edition). The 1525 edition is 30 leaves long, while the later editions are 18 leaves long, both in quarto format. The difference in length is mainly due to the fact that the recipes in the earlier edition have more space between them, both editions are written in the same Italic typeface, with roman capitals heading the sections.

The recipes in *Dificio de Ricette* are extremely similar and in many cases identical to recipes *Opera nova excellentissima*, and Eustachio Celebrino's *Opera Nova Piacevole*.²⁵ While none of the editions I have come across have had an author listed, this has led some scholars to attribute it to Eustachio Celebrino, as I discuss in Chapter 3.²⁶

Notes on individual copies:

1)1525. Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice. (FOAN TES 407). *Opera nuoua intitolata Dificio di ricette*, Unpaginated, Signatures, a-g4 h2.

- a) Minor printing error in the last part of the *primo ricettario* (following a brief author's interlude addressed to the 'discretto lettore'), noted in Chapter 3. Only half the page is printed, leaving a few recipes incomplete/omitted (see Figures).

printings in French into the seventeenth century, and a 1549 print in Dutch. Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 130.

²⁵ Stanley Morison also attributes *Probatum est* to Celebrino, although his evidence is unclear. Morison, *Eustachio Celebino*, 23-24.

²⁶ See Ray, in 'Experiments with Alchemy', 127-129; Morison, *Eustachio Celebino*, 23-24. Comelli, *Ricettario di bellezza*.

b) Images: Knot-work border on frontispiece recto; image of astronomers (discussed in Chapter 3) on Verso. Knot-work border on the opening to the ‘Tertio Recettario’, with inset of a shield decorated with the image of a hand holding what is identified as a palm branch in the FGCV catalogue description (also resembles a quill pen). Verso of this page has a half-page inset showing distillation. Text in Italic Script. (see Figures 14 and 15)

c) Markings - None

2) 1526 (incomplete) – Biblioteca Marciana (D 192.D.276) *Opera nuoua intitolata Dificio di ricette* (Venice: Giouanniantonio et fratelli da Sabio, 1526).

a) This book is incomplete, it is missing the first 5 recipes (folio ai), and the beginning layout differs from later versions of the ricettario (a number of recipes are missing either in the text or table of contents). The book is in poor repair, and sections of the book are detached. There is a two-bifolia (4 page) gathering with signature ‘A’ containing the frontispiece and table of contents, after which should appear three four-leaf/eight-page bifolia with letters a, b, and c (with signatures a, aii, aiii, aiiii etc.), followed by a two-leaf/four-page ‘d’ bifolio. However, ‘a’ book is missing the first leaf, thus the first five recipes. In addition the last leaf of the ‘a’ book (which would have been the other half of the missing ai bifolio) has been reattached in the wrong place, at the front of the book, and with the recto-verso switched. The pages of the entire edition have handwritten numbers at the top, which were numbered with the ‘a’ book placed in between books ‘c’ and ‘d’. No other pages are missing, however.

b) Images—the surviving illustrations in this text are the same as in the 1525 FC edition (above)

c) Markings—handwritten page numbers, as noted above. A number of recipes are demarcated with dashes of ink, no other markings.

3) 1526b – Biblioteca Marciana (MISC 1054.010) *Opera nuoua intitolata Edificio di Ricette* (Venice, no printer) 1526.

a) this book is in roman rather than italic lettering, with Gothic capitals on titles.

b) Images, same as 1526a.

c) Markings—A number of recipes titles and/or text are translated into Spanish.

4) 1530 – Biblioteca Marciana (192.D.276) *Opera noua intitolata Dificio de ricette* (Venice : Francesco Bindoni, & Mapheo Pasini, compagni).

- a) contains additional recipes in *tavola* and texts that are not present in earlier editions, beginning with ‘rimedio contra ogni puzzor di bocca’.²⁷
- b) Illustrations—unlike the above texts, this edition contains only one image, the distillation scene inset at the start of the *terzo ricettario* (as in the other texts, except the image slightly overlaps its border). While all the other books have a knotwork pattern bordering the text on title pages etc., this edition does not.
- c) Markings—none

5)1531 – Fondazione Cini (FOAN TES 410) *Opera noua intitolata Dificio de ricette* (Venice : Ioanantonio e fratelli da Sabbio, 1531 del mese di settembre).

- a)Table of contents starts with ‘rimedio contra ogni puzzor di bocca’ (as in the 1530 edition above).
- b) Different imagery from earlier editions. Verso of frontispiece shows a Franciscan monk and assistant (Figure 17). Distillation scene appears as in other versions

6)1532 – Querini Stampalia, Venice (PIANO. I.H.2210) *Opera noua intitolata dificio de ricette* (Venice: Giouanantonio et i Fratelli da Sabio, June 1532).

- a) Table of contents begins with ‘ogni puzzor di bocca’
- b) Imagery of Franciscan monk as in 1531 edition, above. Otherwise has no title page for the second and third ‘*ricettari*’, which are announced simply with larger typeface.
- b) Markings—two ‘+’ crosses drawn by recipe on f.17v ‘A far andar uia in un subito la doglia di testa’ (it is also marked with a ‘+’ in the table of contents). These are the only deliberate seeming markings. Otherwise there is a large smear of ink on f.4v over ‘A conossere se uno ouer una è uvergine, dico se l’ha sparso il suo seme’, which looks accidental; there is what appears to be a large burn hole on f.11r through the recipe ‘A pigliar le galine & colombi & ogni altro uccello con la mano.’

7) 1532 – British Library (1651/4). *Opera noua Intitolata Dificio di Ricette* (Venice: Giouanantonio et i Fratelli da Sabio, June 1532)

- a)This book appears to be identical to the 1532 edition at Querini Stampalia (above), and is presumably from the same June printing.
- b)Same illustrations as Fondazione Cini 1532 edition above
- c)A number of markings throughout the text, recipes are marked with dashes.

²⁷ These recipes are present in some earlier editions at random places throughout the text, but not listed in the tables.

VENUSTA

Eustachio Celebrino, *Opera nova Piacevole Laquale insegna di far varie co[m]positioni odorifere per far bella ciascuna dona Et etiam agiontoui molti secreti necessarij alla salute humana como in la tabula se co[n]tiene: Intitulata Venusta* (Venice: F. di A.

Bindoni & M. Pasini, 1526)

Wellcome Institute, London (65175/A).

Recipes: 118

Cosmetics: 59

Format: 16 leaves, 8°

Opera Nova Piacevole, or *Venusta* by Eustachio Celebrino, first appeared in 1525 or 1526.²⁸ Records of 1525 editions are at the British Library (although this copy is now listed as missing) and the Staatliche Bibliothek in Neuburg an der Donau, Germany. As noted in the text, the short title *Venusta*, means ‘pretty’ or ‘charming’ in Latin, but is also refers to the verb ‘venustare’, which means ‘to beautify’. There do not seem to be very many copies in existence. I looked at a 1526 and a 1534 edition held in the Wellcome Library, London, and both of these tend to have been left out of previous scholarship on the work—most Italian sources cite only the 1551 copy in the Biblioteca Comunale in Udine.²⁹ Surviving copies date from 1525, 1526, 1534, 1545, 1550 and 1551.

²⁸ The earliest surviving copies are from 1526, although the British Library lists a 1525 copy in their records which is no longer extant. The last printing seems to be around 1551. Eamon notes a 1550 copy. Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 361-65.

²⁹ Comelli, *Ricettario di bellezza*, 14; Morison, *Eustachio Celebino*, 24; Brunello, ‘Profumeria e cosmesi’, 9; Torresi, *Ricettario Bardi*, 15. Storey, ‘Books of Secrets Database: Study Documentation’, 2.

Neither of the editions I looked at had illustrations in the text. Comelli includes an image from a 1551 version of the text is a relatively coarse woodcut, depicting a voluptuous woman seated on a two-headed wooly beast, similar but not identical to the image on *Opera nova de ricette e secreti che insegna apparecchiare una mensa a uno convito*.³⁰ On the side right of the there a lamb's head, and on the left, a poorly rendered head of a creature that is probably a lion, but might also be a ram. The woman wears a crown and holds a long sword in her right hand and scales in her left hand.³¹ The book opens with a poem in *ottava rime* form that introduces the cosmetics in the text, which is very similar to the one in the *Ricettario galante*, both are reproduced in Chapter 2.

³⁰ Comelli, *Ricettario di bellezza*, 19

³¹ Comelli, *Ricettario di bellezza*, 19.

8

PROBATUM EST

Opera nova excellentissima la quale insegna di far vari secreti e gentileze sperimentate sopra diversi effetti come i ditta opera si contiene. Intiulata: Probatum est. (written in another ink 'Del. Mirabolano') (Venice: n.p., 1529) Wellcome Library (4630/B, no. 2).

Recipes: 36

Cosmetics: 7

Format: 4 leaves, 8°

Although this specific edition has no author, Stanley Morison lists it among Celebrino's works, citing a 1527 edition.³² It again has many recipes identical to Celebrino's *Opera nova piacevole*. The work is 4 leaves long in octavo format and contains only 36 recipes, 7 of which I have included in my database. The frontispiece is bordered with grotesque style decoration. On the edition at the Wellcome Library under the title 'Probatum Est', the words 'Del Mirabolano' are written in pen, in a gothic script mirroring that used in the book's title (Figure 19).

³² Morison, *Eustachio Celebrino*, 21-22. 'Opera noua excelentissima La quale insegna di far Vari secreti e ge[n] tileze esperiem[n]tate...intitulata Probatu[s] (sic) est. Venice 1527.'

OPERA NOVA DE RICETTE E SECRETI CHE INSEGNA

APPARECCHIAR UNA MENSA A UNO CONVITO

[Eustachio Celebrino] *Opera nova de Ricette e secreti che insengna apparecchiare vna Mensa a vno convito. Et è a tagliar in tavola de ogni sorte carne e dar li cibi secondo lordine che vsano li scalchi e seguita il modo de inclamar ogni sorte frutti e conseruar quelli con altre gentilezze* (n. l.: n .p.) Wellcome Institute, London (4630/B, no. 1).

Recipes: 39

Cosmetics: 1

Format: 8 leaves, 8°

This short book is the first in the collection of 18 similar books/pamphlets in the Wellcome library, and one of several works that Stanley Morison attributes to Eustachio Celebrino, although no surviving prints seem to have his name printed on it.³³ Other editions of the text have slight variations in the wording of the long title. A 1526 Venetian version in the John Rylands Library at Manchester University, for example, forgoes the reference to ‘ricette e secreti’ in the long title states that it is called *Refettorio*.³⁴ The only other dated edition I have found record of is a 1532 edition at the Biblioteca Panizzi in Reggio Emilia.³⁵ It is similar to *Specchio di Virtu* and *Opera Nova Excellentissima* in length, 8 leaves (16 pages) long octavo format, with 39 total recipes and pieces of advice. This book is not a cosmetic text, but does include one cosmetic recipe to dye the beard black, which I have included mainly because it

³³ Morison, *Eustachio Celebrino*, 23.

³⁴ *Opera nova che insegna apparecchiare una mensa a uno convito : ed etiam a tagliar in tavola di ogni sorte carne e dar li cibi secondo lordine che usano gli scalchi per far honore a forestieri intitulata Refettorio* (Venice, n.p.: 1526), University of Manchester, John Rylands Library (22109.1).

³⁵ Found using the Edit16 database.

demonstrates the variety of texts in which cosmetic recipes appear. As indicated in the title, the text focuses on rules and tips for preparing a meal, including rules for meals in specific seasons, carving meat, preserving and preparing various foods, with a few eclectic recipes at the end, including three to get rid of fleas and bedbugs. These last recipes are in a different order in the text than in the table of contents. A number of these recipes are the same as in *Opera Nova Excellentissima*.

The frontispiece is illustrated with a scene of a figure labeled as Venus riding on a ram (Figure 8). The same illustration is copied into the beginning of the British Library's edition of *Dificio de ricette*, although it does not appear to have been printed with *Dificio de ricette*, but added as a much later edition, judging by the appearance of the paper and ink. The table of contents does not entirely reflect the text present, as a number of recipes are listed out of order.

SPECCHIO DI VIRTU

Fascicolo de molte cose meritevole de ogni laude si in arte di medicina e per riparatione di molte infirmita: como in magisterio di molte getilezze, & per dare spasso alle me[n]te de faticati populi da molti homini, dignissimi per ricreatione de da[n]ni Composto & ridotto in questa operetta nouissimamente venuta in luce meritamente. Intitulata Specchio di virtu) (n.l.: Paulo Danza) Wellcome Institute, London (4630/B, no. 3).

Recipes: 40

Cosmetics: 4

Format: 4 leaves, 8°

Specchio di virtu is four leaves long, in octavo format. The frontispiece is illustrated with border and a small inset of a man and woman facing each other (Figure 24). There is no table of contents, author, or publication date. The printer, Paulo Danza, was active in Venice from 1511-1542.³⁶ It contains 40 recipes, mainly domestic, including preparation of wines, inks, and getting rid of pests. I know of no publications on this text.

³⁶ Publisher information on Edit16.

OPERETTA MOLTO PIACEVOLLISSIMA

*Questa sie una operetta molto piacevöllissima & da ridere de arte manuale & e
utilissima a molte infirmitade & exprimentada [sic] da molti
excellentissimi homini & sono aprobate per mi Nicholo dicto el Zopino
(Venice: Nicolo dicto el Zopino) Wellcome Institute, London (4630/B,
no. 6).*

Recipes: 45

Cosmetics: 9

Format: 8 leaves, 8°

This book I refer to throughout the text of the thesis as the *Operetta molto piacevöllissima*, as it has no short title. Two copies are held at the Wellcome Institute, London, one of which is now available in their online collections. Niccolò Zoppino was a printer and typographer active in Venice from 1508-1544, and it appears that he compiled as well as printed this text. Zoppino was one of the printers with particularly close ties the mountebanks and itinerant sellers who marketed remedies and cheap print on the streets of Venice, as I discuss in Chapter 4. Like several other of the other printed *ricettari*, this one is 8 leaves, in octavo format, and contains 45 recipes. The frontispiece is illustrated with scene of a scholar and assistant harvesting plants (Figure 18).

SECRETI SECRETORUM

Opera nova chiamata secreti Secretorum in laquale poterai conseguire molti piaceri e utilidade: con molte cose ridiculose stampate novamente (Venice: Bernardino

Benalio) Wellcome Institute, London (4630/B, no. 4).

Recipes: 73

Cosmetics: 3

Format: 8 leaves, 8°

Secreti secretorum has no author or publication date, but the printer, Bernardino Benali was active in Venice from 1482-1543.³⁷ It is not related to the medieval *Secreti secretorum* by Kitāb Sīr al-Asrār, but 37 out of its 73 recipes are identical to those in *Dificio de ricette* (1525).³⁸ The book is 8 folios long, in octavo format. *Secreti secretorum* has an illustrated frontispiece showing a woman with a unicorn (Figure 20).

³⁷ Publisher information from Edit16.

³⁸ Eamon, *Science and Secrets*, 45-53.

MS PSEUDO-SAVONAROLA

15th-16th c. (Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, Ferrara, ms.Cl.II.147).

Recipes: 197 folios (no recipe count taken)

Cosmetics: 11 folios (67 recipes)

Format: 198 folio

The Pseudo-Savonarola manuscript is a 198 folio long text on treatments for the human body, falsely attributed to the physician Michele Savonarola (ca. 1384-1468). It is currently located in the Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea (ms.Cl.II.147), where I referred to the microfilm. Several scholars have previously discussed parts of this manuscript, including its dating and attribution.³⁹ Its association with Michele Savonarola is due to the fact that the first page of the table of contents has 'Michele Savonarola 1466' written on it, along with a stamp at the top which says 'M. Savonarola'.⁴⁰ However, the text itself is written in three different hands. One hand deals mainly with the sections on gynaecology, alchemy and food preparation.⁴¹ A second hand has written the table of contents, and the second section of the text, whose contents are summarised by Cesare Menini as containing 'magical formulas' and 'proverbs' as well as recipes against parasites and curing horses.⁴² It is in this handwriting in which 'M. Savonarola 1466' has been written atop the table of contexts, and the same person also signed a number of recipes with 'M. S.'⁴³ The final section, which is almost entirely on

³⁹ Menini, 'Ricettario', 55-85; Torresi, *A far lettere de oro*; Corrain, 'Alcune ricette', 19-40.

⁴⁰ Michele Savonarola (1384-1468) was a Padovan physician, who worked in Ferrara from 1440, writing medical tracts on a number of topics, none of which directly reflect this manuscript. See Menini, 'Ricettario', 55, 68

⁴¹ Menini, 'Ricettario', 56.

⁴² Menini, 'Ricettario', 56.

⁴³ Menini, 'Ricettario', 56. An example of this is visible on folio 14 of the manuscript.

cosmetics, is written in yet a third hand, and appears to be the latest addition to the manuscript.⁴⁴ Menini has dated the book between the end of the 15th century and the first half of the 16th century, based on both the handwriting, and the fact that the dates 1535 and 1483 appear in the recipes.⁴⁵ His final conclusion is that the recipe book was compiled sometime in the first half of the sixteenth century but after 1535, by a Genovese physician, but with no portion likely to have been written by Michele Savonarola himself.⁴⁶

The text has as 198 leaves in total, numbered on the recto. Folios 1-14 are for gynaecology; 15-49 are culinary (soups, meats, sweets); 50-52 are antidotes against poisons; 53-68 are more culinary recipes (which Antonio Torresi has noted to be mainly Florentine and Neopolitan); 69-70 are for removing stains from cloth; 71-72 are remedies against pests and one oil against plague; 73-82 are methods to obtain verdegris; 83-90 deal with wines; 91-182 are chemical and alchemical, including sections on refining lapis lazuli (102-110 and 127-135) and inks (111-113).⁴⁷ Finally, folios 183-194 contain 67 cosmetic recipes.

⁴⁴ Menini, 'Ricettario', 56.

⁴⁵ Menini, 'Ricettario', 57. The date '1483' has been written with the 2nd hand, and appears on folio 72. He also notes also the appearance of the date '1535' on folio 10, although I have not been able to locate it in the microfilm.

⁴⁶ Menini, 'Ricettario', 67-69. He suggests an alternative 'M.S.' Could be a Maurelio Santi who appears in some Ferrarese documents in 1533, but notes that documentation is scarce.

⁴⁷ Torresi, *Littere de oro*, 13.

APPENDIX B
RECIPE PURPOSES

Table A: Recipes for the skin

Body Part/Object	Purpose	Number of Recipes
(Face) Belletto	Good	1
(Skin)		1
(Skin)	(Skin)-coloured	1
(Skin)	Beautiful	2
(Skin)	Beautiful, lustrous	1
(Skin)	Beautiful, white	1
(Skin)	Coloured	1
(Skin)	Remove marks	1
(Skin)	Remove marks, bruises	1
(Skin)	Remove marks, scars	2
(Skin)	Rossetto	5
(Skin)	White	8
(Skin)	White, clean	1
(Skin)	White, fragrant	2
(Skin)	White, lustrous	1
(Skin) Belletto	Red	1
(Skin) Belletto	White	1
(Various)		1
Belletto	Coloured	2
Belletto, Face	Lustrous	1
Breasts	Small	1
Breasts	Small, firm	1
Brown Woman		1
Eyelashes	Eyelashes	1
Face		15
Face	Beautiful	17

Appendix B: Recipe Purposes

Face	Beautiful, red, white	1
Face	Clean, beautiful, clear	1
Face	Coloured	4
Face	Coloured, beautiful	1
Face	Face	2
Face	Face-coloured	1
Face	Fresh	1
Face	Lustrous	1
Face	Red	1
Face	Remove freckles	4
Face	Remove freckles, warts	2
Face	Remove marks	11
Face	Remove marks, white, coloured, anti-aging	1
Face	Remove sunburn	1
Face	Strengthen, Cure	1
Face	White	5
Face	White, Lustrous	2
Face, breast	White, low cost	1
Face, Breath	Beautiful, Fragrant	2
Face, Hands	Beautiful	3
Face, Hands	Fair	1
Face, Hands	White	3
Face, Nose	Remove freckles, moles	1
Flesh	Beautiful	3
Flesh	Beautiful, clear	1

Flesh	Beautiful, remove dandruff, remove wrinkles	1
Flesh	Beautiful, White	1
Flesh	Coloured	2
Flesh	Firm	1
Flesh	Lustrous	1
Flesh	Lustrous, beautiful	1
Flesh	Lustrous, thin	1
Flesh	White	6
Hands		4
Hands	Beautiful	8
Hands	Cracked	1
Hands	Crust	1
Hands	Rough	1
Hands	Soft, smooth	1
Hands	White	4
Hands	White, remove marks, sunburn	1
Hands, Face	White	1
Hands, Face	White, remove marks, sunburn	1
Hands, skin	Soft, smooth, tighten	1
Skin	Beautiful	3
Skin	Belleto, lustrous	1
Skin	Coloured	1
Skin	Remove marks	1
Skin	Tattoo	1
Skin	Wrinkle	1
Vagina	Tighten	1
Vagina, skin	Tighten vagina, erase wrinkles	1
TOTAL		175

Appendix B: Recipe Purposes

Total blemish Removal	27
Total Skin Texture	10
Total red/ coloured	22
Total white	40

Table B: Recipes for the hair

Body Part/Object	Purpose	Number of Recipes
Beard	Black	3
Beard	Grow	1
Beard, Hair	Grow	1
Body Hair	Grow	3
Body Hair	Remove	11
Hair	Beautiful	4
Hair	Beautiful, good scalp	1
Hair	Black	10
Hair	Black, Clean	3
Hair	Blond, grow	1
Hair	Blonde	13
Hair	Blonde, Grow	1
Hair	Blonde, long	1
Hair	Curly	1
Hair	Frizzy	1
Hair	Grow	16
Hair	Grow back	1
Hair	Grow, long, kinky, full	1
Hair	Long	2
Hair	Long, soft	2
Hair	Long, strong	2
Hair	Lustrous	1
Hair	Lye	1
Hair	Not fall	22
Hair	Not white	4
Hair	Remove	31
Hair	Ringworm	1
Hair	Scabies	2
Hair	Strong	1
Hair	White	2
Hair	White, (Blonde), Long	1
Hair, Beard	Black	3
Hair, Body Hair	Grow back	2
Hair, Body Hair	Remove	2
Hair, Skin	Remove hair, clear skin, thin skin	1
Hair, Skin	Remove hair, thin skin, good colour, remove marks	1

TOTAL**153**

Table C: Recipes for the teeth

Teeth		1
Teeth	Clean	2
Teeth	Clean, fragrant	1
Teeth	Fill	1
Teeth	Preserve	1
Teeth	Strong	1
Teeth	Tighten	1
Teeth	White	7
Teeth	White, clean	3
Teeth, gums	Rotten	2

TOTAL

20

APPENDIX C

INGREDIENTS USED IN COSMETIC RECIPES

Ingredient Name	Total Uses
acanthus	1
agrimony	3
algonia?	1
alkanet	1
almond flour	1
almond juice	1
almond milk	1
almond, bitter, juice	1
almonds	3
almonds, bitter	2
almonds, bitter, oil	3
almonds, sweet	2
almonds, sweet, oil	10
aloe	5
aloe, epaticum	1
alum	1
alum of dregs	6
alum, feather	7
alum, gentle	1
alum, jamenum	3
alum, rock	32
alum, rock, burned	2
alum, rock, calcinated	1
alum, rock, white	1
alum, scaly	14
alum, sugared	28
amber	3
ambergris	2
ammonia	1
ant eggs	9
apple	1
apple water	1
apple, green	1

Appendix C: Ingredients

ash	1
Ash (tree), ashes	1
asparagus root	1
barbarisco?	1
barley	1
barley bread	2
barley flour	5
barley water	1
bat blood	5
bat fat	1
bat, Noctule, blood	2
bay berries / laurel berries	2
bay leaf	1
bay oil	1
beans	1
beans, white	1
bear fat	7
beehive	1
bees	6
bees, honeybees	3
benzoin oil	4
benzoin resin	2
berry water	1
betony water	1
bilberry	1
bilberry shell	1
birth water	1
blackberry leaf	1
borage flower	1
borage flower water	2
borage powder	2
borax	30
borax flower	1
borax in stone	1
borax water?	1
borax, burned	3
borax, precious	1
boxwood	2
bran	6
bran flour	1
bran water	1

brandy	7
bread	1
bread crumbs	8
bread, white	1
broom flower	2
bryony, white, roots	4
butter	4
cabbage	2
cabbage root	1
cabbage, peels?	1
caggiuolo roots?	1
calamint	1
calf, shin marrow	1
camphor	40
cane root	2
canestrella flower?	1
capers, alexandrian	1
capo di latte	3
capon	1
cardamom	1
carta bergamina	2
castoreum	1
cat dung	1
caterina water	1
celandine root	1
celidonia, roots	2
centarne?	1
centaury	1
chalcedony root	1
chamomile oil	3
charcoal	1
cheese, fresh	1
cherries	1
cherries, white, flour	1
chestnut shell	1
chick pea flour	1
chicken	1
chive juice	1
chrystal	1
cinnamon	5
citron	1

Appendix C: Ingredients

citron leaf juice, wild	1
civet musk	4
clover leaves	1
clover?	1
cloves	11
cochineal	1
cockerel	1
colophony	1
colt's tooth seeds	1
coltsfoot root	1
coporice seed?	1
coral	3
coral, white	2
coriander	1
corti cilj	1
coscalle seeds?	1
cotton	2
crystal glass, ground	1
crystal, fine, ground	1
cubeb	1
cumin	3
cumin oil	1
cuttlefish	1
cypress nuts	3
Cyprus powder	2
Cytinus	1
daisy powder	1
date stones	4
deer ash	1
deer meat	1
dew	1
dialthea	1
dill flower	1
dittany, white	4
dittany, white, roots	3
dittany, white, water	5
dock (plant)	1
dock (plant), acute	1
dog milk	4

dog urine	3
dogs, small	1
donkey milk	4
donkey spine	1
dove, white	2
dracunculus	1
dragon's blood	8
dregs	1
dregs, burned	1
duck feather	1
dung	3
earthworm	1
eel	2
eel gall	1
egg oil	1
egg shells	4
egg white	22
egg white water	1
egg whites, distilled water of	1
egg yolk	1
egg yolk oil	1
eggs	19
elderflower	1
elderflower oil	2
elderflower water	2
elm bark, middle	1
erba sana juice?	1
fat	1
fava bark water	1
fava beans	5
fava decoction	1
fava flour	2
fava flower	1
fava flower water	4
fava flowers	9
fennel	2
fenugreek	2
ferrette di spagna?	1
Fieldfare thrush, cossa	3

fig	2
fig branch	1
fig leaf powder	3
fig, white	1
fig, white, dried	1
figs, dried	1
figs, dried, water	1
fior di pietra?	3
flour	1
flour, superfine	1
flower of ash	1
flower of crystal	1
fox skin	1
frankincense	1
frankincense, white	1
frog	1
frog blood	2
frog, burned, powder	3
frog, small	1
galangal	3
galbanum	1
gall, arabic	1
gall, istrian	1
gall, water of distilled gall	1
galosa?	1
ginger	5
glass, ground	2
glopiā bia biancha?	1
goat dung	2
goat gall	1
goat hoof	2
goat kid abdomen	1
goat kid fat	5
goat milk	4
goat suet	1
goat, red, milk	2
gold	4
grains of paradise	1
grapevine	2

grapevine bark	1
grapevine water	1
grass, hulled	1
ground ivy, wood	1
gum ammoniac	1
gum arabic	5
gum of wine	1
halite	13
hare gall	1
hazelnuts	4
hedgehog	1
hemlock juice	4
hen fat	3
hen feather	1
hen gall	1
hen, white	5
hen, white and fat	1
henbane	1
henbane seed juice	1
henbane, white, juice	1
holm oak?	1
honey	12
honey, raw	1
honey, rose	2
honey, white	3
horse, mane of a white horse, fat	2
horseradish	1
human feces	2
human hair	2
human milk	1
human semen	1
jasmine oil	2
kermes	6
labdanum	2
lac	2
larch resin	1
lard	1
lard, white, old	1
lead	1
lead cover	1

Appendix C: Ingredients

lead shavings	1
leech	2
lemon juice	11
lemon water	4
lemonbalm	1
lemonbalm leaf	1
lemons	9
lentils	1
lettuce	1
lettuce root	1
lily water	1
lily, white	2
lily, white, bulbs	5
lily, white, leaves	1
lily, white, roots	3
lily, white, water	2
lily, wild, roots	1
lily-of-the-valley	1
linseed/ flaxseed	2
litharge	6
litharge of gold	3
litharge of silver	8
litharge, white	1
lizard	2
lizard oil	1
lizard, eft	3
lizard, green	4
lizard, green, lips	1
lupini bean flour	3
lupini beans	3
lye	15
lye of grapevine ash	1
lye, sweet	1
mace	2
madder	1
maidenhair fern	2
mallow flower	2
mallow root	2
mallow water	1
marble, burned	1
marble, white	2

marrubium?	1
marshmallow roots	3
masennetto shell?	1
mastic	14
mastic, ground	2
medlar	1
medlar, mediteranean	2
melon seed	1
mercury	8
milk	6
mint	1
morcelli?	1
mouse, baby	1
mucilage	1
musk	8
musk, fine	3
mustard	1
myrrh	4
myrrh oil	1
myrtle	1
myrtle water	2
nettle	2
nettle flower	1
nettle leaves	1
nettle roots	1
nettle seeds	1
nutmeg	2
oak branch	1
oak gall	3
oak gall flour	1
oak gall water	1
oak sapwood	1
oil	17
oil of tartar	9
oil, common	7
olive branches	1
olive oil	7
olive pits	1
onion	1
opium	2
orange juice	1
orange, bitter, oil	2

Appendix C: Ingredients

oranges	3
orchid?	1
orpiment	14
ostrich, left cossa of male	1
ox gall	5
oyster powder?	1
pannacciuoli water	1
parsely seeds	2
parsely, leaves	1
parsely, roots	1
peach leaf water	1
peach leaves	1
peach stone	2
peach stone marrow	1
pear, wild, green	1
pearls	4
pheasant blood	1
pig blood	1
pig ear	1
pig feet	2
pig knees	1
pig lard	3
pig lard, male, red	1
pig lard, male, unsalted	1
pig lard, rancid	1
pigeon	1
pigeon dung	4
pigeon feathers	2
pigeon, domestic	4
pigeon, domestic, small	1
pigeon, domestic, white	1
pigeon, white, water	1
pillbugs	3
pine cones, green, full	1

pine nuts	3
pine water	1
pitch	1
plantain	1
plantain leaf	1
plantain seed oil	2
plantain tendrils	1
plantain water	2
plum, sour	1
pomegranate flower	1
pomegranate shell	1
poppy juice	1
poppy oil	1
poppy, black	1
poppy, white, seeds	1
privet flower	1
psyllium	1
puine?	1
pulverina lavorata?	1
pumice	2
pumpkin	1
pumpkin leaf	1
pumpkin seed	1
pumpkin seed oil	3
pumpkin, wild	1
pyrethrum	1
pyrethrum powder	1
quicklime	10
quicklime, white	1
rabbit lung	1
ram feet	1
raspberry, wild	1
resin	2
rice	4
rooster gall	1
rose	5
rose oil	5
rose root	1
rose, musk, oil	1
rosemary	2

Appendix C: Ingredients

rosemary flowers	3
rosemary leaf	1
rosewater	31
rosewater of musk rose	1
rosewater, gummed?	1
rowan berry	1
rue	1
rust	1
rye flour	1
saffron	2
sage	2
sage juice	1
sage leaf	1
sal alkali	1
sal ammoniac	2
saliva	3
salt	4
salt, white	2
saltpetre	3
sandalwood	1
sandalwood, red	2
sandalwood, white	1
sanza	1
sappanwood	8
sappanwood, yellow	1
scabious	1
scale, oxide	1
schist/marl	1
sea snails	1
seeds, common	1
sete di cagna?	1
sheep fat	1
shell	1
shoe dye	1
silver	3
silver sublimate	11
silver, fine	1
smearwort root	1
snail water	3
snails	1

snails, fat of	1
snake	1
snake fat	1
soap	3
soap, black	2
soap, cured	1
soap, guadato	1
soap, gypsy	1
soap, Levantine	1
soap, silk	2
soap, tender	1
soap, white	5
soaping water	3
sofferbio?	1
soil	2
soil, raw	1
Spanish fly	2
spikenard	5
spikenard, celtic	1
spurge	3
squid bone	1
squill	1
stag bone ash	1
stag horn	1
stag horn marrow	1
stag leg marrow	1
stag marrow	1
stag, marrow oil, from leg	2
starch	2
starch, whitest	1
sticados?	1
storax	4
storax oil of spikenard	1
sublimate	7
sugar	3
sugar, white	2
sulphate	1
sulphur	2
sulphur, black	1
swallow dung	1
sweet flag	1
tarragon	4
tarragon roots	4

tartar powder	1
tartar water	2
tartar, white	2
tears of argemone	1
toad, big, blood	1
tortoise	2
tortoise blood	1
tragacanth	5
turnip, red	1
turpentine	6
urine	2
urine of children	1
urine, one's own	1
verbena	1
verdigris	2
veronica water	1
vine, white	1
vine, white, ashes	2
vinegar	17
vinegar, distilled	7
vinegar, strong	4
vinegar, strong, distilled	1
vinegar, strong, twice distilled	1
vinegar, very strong	4
vinegar, white	4
vinegar, white, strong	4
vinegar, white, very strong	3
violet oil	2
violet, roots	1
violet, woodland, oil	1
vitriol	2
vitriol, roman	2
walnut root sap	1
walnut roots	2
walnut shells	1
walnuts	3
water	12

water for washing	1
water, cistern	2
water, clear	9
water, clear, cistern	1
water, clear, fresh	1
water, cold	1
water, distilled	1
water, distilled, scented	1
water, fresh	7
water, hot	2
water, lampha?	2
water, rain	3
water, river	4
water, running	1
water, soapy	1
water, tepid	1
water, well	2
wax	2
wax, white	10
wax, white, new	2
wether marrow	2
wether, shin marrow	1
wheat shafts	1
white lead	17
white lead, drezza	1
white lead, flower of	2
white lead, venetian	3
willow leaves	1
willow roots	1
wine	7
wine gum	1
wine, good	1
wine, malmsey	4
wine, malmsey, sour	1
wine, red	1
wine, trebbiano	1
wine, white	19

wine, white, perfumed	1
wormwood	1
wormwood, southern	1
yew oil	4
zedoary	2

Total individual ingredient entries: 592

APPENDIX D

ORGANISATION BY TOPIC OF CONTENTS OF *OPERA NOVA PIACEVOLE*

Note: This organization by topic is done alphabetically, based on the body part or object that the recipe is intended to be used upon according to the recipe. When body part is not specified, or the treatment is to cure a specific medical condition, I have categorized it under ‘cure’. This is based largely on the topic stated in the title of each recipe, and if the title is not clear, on the recipe’s content.

Table 1:

Contents by topic of <i>Opera Nova Piacevole</i> (Based on 1532 BL edition)		
Body Part/Subject	Total	Effect Name
Belletto		
	1	Belletto
	1	Belletto, colorito
	Total	2
Breasts		
	1	Breast inflammation
	1	Breast milk
	2	Breast pain
	1	Breast, restrict growth
Total	5	
Cure		
	1	Colera
	1	Goso, throat
	1	Gossi
	2	Head scurf
	1	Kidney stones
	1	Mal di ponte
	2	Pedicello
	1	Rosegoni (Hair, scalp)
	2	Scabies
	1	Smallpox
	1	Volatica
1	Warts	

Appendix D: Opera nova piacevole Contents

	Total	15	
Eyelashes			
	Total	1	Eyelashes, scent
Fabric			
	Total	2	Fabric, Remove spots
Face			
	1		Face, beautiful
	4		Face, bella
	4		Face, colorito
	1		Face, cure
	2		Face, lustrous
	4		Face, remove marks
	1		Face, strengthen
	4		Face, white
	Total	21	
Feet			
	Total	1	Calluses, feet
Flesh			
	3		Flesh, bella
	1		Flesh, colorito
	1		Flesh, lustrous
	1		Flesh, white
Total	6		
Hair			
	1		Beard, black
	1		Beard, grow
	1		Body hair, grow
	1		Body hair, remove
	3		Hair, black
	2		Hair, blonde
	1		Hair, clean
	1		Hair, curly
	1		Hair, frizzy
	3		Hair, grow
	1		Hair, lye
	2		Hair, long
	1		Hair, not fall
	1		Hair, not white
	1		Hair, shapely
	1		Hair, white (prob. Blonde)
Total	22		

Hands			
	1	Hands, bella	
	1	Hands, clean	
	1	Hands, cracking	
	1	Hands, crust	
	1	Hands, fragrant	
	1	Hands, remove marks	
	1	Hands, smooth	
	2	Hands, soft	
Total	9		
Health, general			
Total	2	Health, general	
Make & Preserve			
	1	Kill animals	
	1	Kill hens	
	1	Make fake balsam	
	1	Make rosemary oil	
	1	Make strong vinegar	
	2	Make wine	
	2	Preserve wine	
Total	9		
Mouth			
	2	Breath, fragrant	
	1	Gums, cure rotten	
	1	Gums, seal	
	1	Lips, cracking	
	2	Teeth, clean	
	3	Teeth, white	
Total	10		
Pests			
	1	Bedbugs, remove	
	1	Fleas, remove	
	1	Flies, remove	
	1	Headlice, remove	
	1	Lice, remove	
Total	5		
Scent			
	Gloves	1	Gloves, scent
	Pomade	1	Pomade
	General	4	Scent/Perfume (general)
	Fabric	2	Scent fabric
	Room	1	Scent room

Appendix D: *Opera nova piacevole* Contents

Breath	1	(see also Mouth: Breath, Fragrant)	
		(see also Soap, scented)	
	Total	10	
Skin			
	1	Cure sunburn	
	1	Skin, anti-wrinkle	
	1	Skin, tighten	
Total	3		
Sleep			
	1	Cause Awakening	
	1	Cause Sleep	
Total	2		
Soap			
	1	Soap	
	1	Soap, remove spots	
	2	Soap, scented	
Total	4		
Virginit			
	Total	1 Virginit, discern	
Women's Reproduction			
	Childbirth		
		2	Childbirth, ease pain after
		1	Childbirth, free woman from
		3	Childbirth, provoke
		1	Childbirth, purge during
		1	Childbirth, remove dead fetus
		1	Childbirth, safe
	Menses	1	Menses, provoke
		1	Menses, restrain
	Pregnancy		
		1	Pregnancy, cause
	Wombs		
		1	Wandering womb
	Total	13	
TOTAL RECIPES	131		

APPENDIX E

RECIPE BOOKS: INGREDIENT PROFILES

Table A: Ingredients in *Opera Nova Piacevole* (1526)

Ingredient Name	Number of Occurrences
almonds	1
almonds, bitter, oil	3
almonds, sweet	1
almonds, sweet, oil	5
aloe	1
alum of dregs	1
alum, rock	4
alum, scaly	1
alum, sugared	3
amber	1
Ash (tree), ashes	1
barley bread	1
barley flour	1
bay berries / laurel berries	1
bear fat	2
beehive	1
bees, honeybees	1
bilberry	1
borax	5
borax in stone	1
borax, burned	3
brandy	1
bread crumbs	1
butter	1
cabbage, peels?	1
calf, shin marrow	1
camphor	8
capo di latte	2
carta bergamina	2
chamomile oil	1
cherries, white, flour	1
clover leaves	1
cloves	1
dittany, white	2
dog milk	1

Appendix E: Ingredient Profiles
Opera nova piacevole

dogs, small	1
dove, white	2
dregs	1
dung	2
eel	1
egg shells	1
egg white	5
egg whites, distilled water of	1
egg yolk oil	1
elderflower oil	1
fava flowers	1
fenugreek	1
fig branch	1
fig leaf powder	1
frankincense	1
gall, water of distilled gall	1
goat gall	1
goat kid fat	4
halite	1
hazelnuts	1
hemlock juice	1
hen, white	1
honey	1
honey, raw	1
horse, mane of a white	2
horse, fat	
horseradish	1
incense, white	1
kermes	3
lemon juice	2
lemons	1
lily, white, bulbs	3
litharge	1
litharge of silver	2
lizard, eft	2
lupini bean flour	2
lupini beans	1
lye	4
marshmallow roots	2
mastic	2
mastic, ground	2
mercury	1
milk	1
musk	1
musk, fine	1

myrrh	1
myrrh oil	1
nettle	1
nettle leaves	1
nettle roots	1
oil	1
oil of tartar	3
onion, dried	1
orpiment	1
parsely, leaves	1
parsely, roots	1
pig lard	1
pig lard, male, red	1
pigeon feathers	1
plantain seed oil	2
plantain tendrils	1
<i>puine</i>	1
pumpkin seed oil	3
quicklime	1
rose	1
rosemary	1
rosemary flowers	1
rosewater	7
sage	1
salt	2
sandalwood, red	1
<i>sanza</i>	1
sappanwood	2
snails, fat of	1
snake	1
soap	1
stag leg marrow	1
stag marrow	1
stag, marrow oil, from leg	2
starch, whitest	1
storax	1
sublimate	1
sugar, white	1
tarragon	1
tarragon roots	2
tartar, white	1
turpentine	2
urine	1
veronica water	1
vine, white, ashes	2
vinegar	3

Appendix E: Ingredient Profiles
Opera nova piacevole

vinegar, distilled	2
violet, roots	1
water	1
water, clear	1
water, distilled	1
water, distilled, scented	1
water, fresh	1
water, rain	1
water, river	1
water, running	1
wax, white	5
wax, white, new	1
wether marrow	2
wether, shin marrow	1
white lead	2
willow roots	1
wine gum	1
wine, malmsey	1
wine, malmsey, sour	1
wine, white	4
wine, white, perfumed	1
wormwood	1
yew oil	1

Total Ingredients: 149

Table B: Ingredients in *Thesoro dei Poveri* (1498)

Ingredient Name	Number of Occurrences
alum	1
ant eggs	3
barley bread	1
bat blood	2
bay berries / laurel berries	1
bay oil	1
bear fat	3
bees	1
cabbage	1
daisy powder	1
deer ash	1
dog urine	1
donkey spine	1
egg oil	1
egg yolk	1
elm bark, middle	1
fat	1
fava flour	1
fox skin	1
frog, burned, powder	1
frog, small	1
goat dung	2
goat hoof	2
grapevine	1
grass, hulled	1
hazelnuts	2
hemlock juice	1
henbane	1
henbane seed juice	1
honey	1
ivy gum	2
labdanum	1
lead	1
leech	1
litharge	1
lizard oil	1
lizard, green	2
lizard, green, lips	1
lupini bean flour	1
maidenhair fern	1
marshmallow roots	1

Appendix E: Ingredient Profiles
Thesoro dei poveri

mastic	1
mucilage	1
oak branch	1
oak sapwood	1
oil	2
oil, common	1
opium	1
orpiment	2
oyster powder?	1
pig blood	1
pigeon dung	1
poppy, black	1
psyllium	1
rabbit lung	1
salt	1
shell	1
Spanish fly	1
spurge	1
stag horn marrow	1
toad, big, blood	1
tortoise	2
urine of children	1
vinegar	3
vinegar, strong	1
walnuts	1
water	3
water, cold	1
white lead	1
wine	3
wine, white	1
wormwood, southern	1

Total Ingredients: 72

APPENDIX F

RECIPE BOOK TABLES OF CONTENTS

Notes

Below are the tables of contents of select *ricettari*, included for ease of reference to those that were unpaginated, and for indication of similarity between texts. Numbers have been added for ease of reference and are not present in the original texts. Recipes with ink annotations highlighting them in the sources have been marked with an asterix (*). *Ricettario galante* and *Gli esperimenti* have not been included.

Secreti Medicinali di Magistro Guasparino da Vienexia¹

- a) sanar li vermi
- b) ut pili non renascantur
- c) ad restringendum sanguinem
- d) ad eos qui memoriam perdunt
- e) ad fistulas
- f) ad morbum caducum
- g) per dorare armadure
- h) ['long illeggibile recipe']
- 1) Emplastro amaturativo e dispositivo in ogni apostiema calda
- 2) Emplastro in matheria troppo calda
- 3) Emplastro per le morene
- 4) Per il male de le tette e goldoni
- 5) Emplastro quando la postema aproxima a roptura
- 6) Emplastro bono a postema flematicha
- 7) Emplastro che se pò metere dove sia piaga o roptura

¹ Numbering as in Castellani's transcription for ease of reference.

- 8) Emplastro utile e convenevole a male de testicoli o a duricia e dove sia mala complexione.
- 9) Emplastro simile matheria
- 10) Emplastro overe diaquillon experto da maturare, da risolvere ogni duricia o infladura
- 11) Emplastro da maturare carboni
- 12) Emplastro resolutivo e parte percussivo
- 13) Emplastro amaturativo e molificativo
- 14) Emplastro a quello intesso
- 15) Emplastro che mitiga dolori et humilia luochi enfiadi e matura ecc.
- 16) Emplastro simile
- 17) Emplastro contro pustole rosse de la faza
- 18) Emplastro a dolore de nervi
- 18 bis) Emplastro che molifica le nodositade di nervi
- 19) Emplastro utilissimo a la postema de le marode siando pesto le sansuge
- 20) Emplastro a podagra calda
- 21) Emplastro bono a maturare carboni:
- 22) Emplastro a doleore de zonture
- 23) Emplastro con(tro) ogni infladura de membri
- 24) Emplastro a tute nascentie et a sapere che fim debia fare el male et s'el deba risolvere:
- 25) Emplastro contra infladura de testicoli e per roti et altre cosse calde passione .
Tuoy suco de solatro, de salvia e de eboli; de ruda e farina de fava e de orzo et olio de camomilla, de anedo e de roxe e mucilage de psilio (sic), de fem grigo e de malvanischio cocte e tute queste cosse redule ad inpiastro e mitti suxo caldeto.
- 26) Emplastro contro enfladura de piaga
- 27) Emplastro bono ad humiliare
- 28) Emplastro che avre ogni piaga
- 29) Emplastro a testa percossa
- 30) Emplastro che sara l'osso roto in le coste

- 31) Emplastro che mitiga ogni dolore
- 32) Emplastro che avre ogni piaga ed è contra le scrovole
- 33) Emplastro a tute dolori de membri:
- 34) Emplastro da madurare bene:
- 35) [the first part of the recipe and title are missing]
- 36) Emplastro a podagra freda
- 37) Emplastro a dolore de stomacho
- 38) Emplastro reolutivo
- 39) Emplastro ad ogni passione enfiada che tu vidi che non para
- 40) Emplastro ad osso offeso seenza rotura:
- 41) Emplastro che avre el carbonchulo

CAPITOLLO DE UNGUENTI

- 42) Unguento de calze ch'è utile ad ulcere che fosse per cotura de fuoco ecc.
- 43) Unguento bono a roxegadura de gambe
- 44) Unguento fino per gambe e tute ferite
- 45) Unguento bono per saldare ogni feita
- 46) Unguento da gambe e da tute piage
- 47) Unguento per testa rota et altre piage
- 48) Unguento rosso per saldare ogni ferita et ogni nascimento purgato
- 49) Unguento corosivo
- 50) Unguento optimo a generare carne
- 51) Unguento contra durezza in le gambe ecc.
- 52) Unguento nobellissimo a zenerare carne e a saldare piage
- 53) Unguento negro
- 54) Unguento che rompe
- 55) Unguento da piage vecchie
- 56) Unguento che conforta e refrigera piage calde in li membri genitali et altroe

- 57) Unguento utile e universale che salda piage e trazi ossi roti e ferri fiti et ha molte virtù
- 58) Per fare unguento da saldare piage dure
- 59) A fare saldare gambe et altre piage
- 60) Per fare unguento che mondifica e traze bem (sic)
- 61) Per gambe e traze e salda
- 62) Unguento a simile passione
- 63) Unguento molificativo incarnativo e saldativo e metese de dentro e de fuora
- 64) Unguento che fa nascere la bella pelle
- 65) Unguento da remove la caliditate
- 66) Unguento da remove la umiditate
- 67) Per rimuovere la umedetà de le piage
- 68) Per inzenerare carne et a saldare
- 69) Per trare e per saldare
- 70) Per zascuna grave ferita
- 71) Contra tute passione de nervi e de piage
- 72) Per molificare li nervi
- 73) Unguento rosso corosivo
- 74) Unguento bono per bervi debille
- 75) Unguento da nervi
- 76) Unguento per piage e zonture
- 77) Unguento fino per tute infirmitade et contro morso de cane ecc.
- 78) Unguento perfecto a tute passione de spalle e speciale mente de muscholi e de zenochi e zova a paralitici
- 79) Contra male de milza
- 80) Contra carboni
- 81) (Recipe with no title or indication of function)
- 82) Per molificare ogni nazimento e purgare zoe feronculi

- 83) Per tutti i mali che possa venire
- 84) Unguento per che fosse recassado in lo pecto
- 85) Unguento per ogni frachadura
- 86) Unguento rosso desechativo de tuta carne in ogne piage
- 87) Unguento apostolicon fino a fistole et a cancri
- 88) Contra gotte frede e passione de nervi
- 89) Contra fleuma salsa
- 90) per tute piage mondare sanare e saldare
- 91) unguento da osso roto o percosso et è da bono per piage
- 92) Unguento bono per roгна ecc.
- 93) Unguento agrippa di zudeo et è bon a tutte piage et indignatione de nervi
- 94) Unguento perfecto a sanare tute piage et osse rotte
- 95) Per piage e dolori
- 96) per tute ferite e piage
- 97) per rodere la mala carne
- 98) Unguento alabastro ecc.
- 99) Polvere bonissimo per bom stomego
- 100) Polvere che zenera carne e salda bene
- 101) Polvere rosso simelle a questo
- 102) Polvere a clarificare la vista
- 103) Polvere che fa bom colore e conforta la digestion e clarifica la vista
- 104) Polvere contra male de pietra
- 105) Contra la indigestione e reuma e oppilatione del figato:
- 106) Contra la emingrana e dolore de testa:
- 107) Polvere lassativo per dilicate persone
- 108) Contra el dolore de la testa et indigestione
- 109) Polvere che conforta la virtù digestiva

- 110) Contra la replecion de stomaco e malanconia
- 111) Contra li lumbrisi di li fantolini
- 112) Polvere lassativo da tore a tucte hore
- 113) Per fare schare una piaga
- 114) Contra stomacho freddo e contra vomito
- 115) A simille et a stomaco turbato e contaminato
- 116) Per confortare el cuore
- 117) Contra la frigidità del stomacho
- 118) Contra infladura e rosegamento de zenzive
- 119) Polvere lassativo
- 120) A simille
- 121) Polvere per fare bom colore
- 122) Polvere lassativo bono
- 123) Polvere lassativo
- 124) Polvere lassativo
- 125) Contra fluxo de sangue
- 126) Contra fredo e dolore de testa
- 127) Contra stomacho pieno de malanchonia
- 128) Contra male de pietra
- 129) A simille passione
- 130) polvere de frazuane da Chioza fra menor a conservare la bona sanitate
- 131) Per fare polvere regale lassativo
- 132) Contra cancro e fistole

CAPITULLO PER FARE LI OLIJ, PRIMA L'OLIO ROXADO (recipes 133-191)

- 133) Olio roxado
- 134) Per fare olio de Camomilla
- 135) Per fare oio de viole
- 136) per fare oio d'aneto

- 137) Per fare oio de aneto
- 138) per fare olio de lilio
- 139) Per fare l'olio de codogne
- 140) Per fare l'olio de le pome mandragore
- 141) Per fare olio de l'enulla
- 142) Per fare olio de mastici
- 143) Per fare l'olio de storaze finissimo
- 144) Per fare oio de costo
- 145) Per fare olio de mandole amare²
- 146) Per fare olio de mandole amare
- 147) Per fare olio laurino
- 148) Contra dolori artetici
- 149) Contra la madre
- 150) Contra infladure e passione de zonture
- 151) Contra paralitici
- 152) Contro scotatura de fuocho e aqua buliente
- 153) Contro el dolor de la testa
- 154) contra el dolore de l'orechie
- 155) Contra tutte passione e infiadure e durtia
- 156) Cotnra el dolore artetico e da nervi
- 157) Collirio finissimo a l'albula de i ochi
- 158) A simille passione
- 159) Al dicto mlale
- 160) A strenzere le lacrime di gli ochi
- 161) Al dicto male
- 162) Al dicto male

² Castellani notes that this recipe actual discusses sweet almond oil, so the title was mis-copied by the renaissance copiest.

- 163) Per tuore el purito overe la piza de li occhi
- 164) Per simelle caxone
- 165) Al dicto male
- 166) Collirio provato al dolore e la caligene di gli occhi
- 167) Collirio a simille azo
- 168) Collirio a questo instesso male
- 169) Collirio a la caligene di gli ochi e li palebrei grossi fa sottile
- 170) Collirio a simille
- 171) Collirio assimille
- 172) A la caligene di gli ochi
- 173) Ad idem
- 174) Ad idem
- 175) A la dicta passione
- 176) A la dicta passione
- 177) Per tuore le catarate di gli ochi
- 178) Collirio a la nebulla di gli ochi
- 179) A quello intesso provato
- 180) Per guarire gli ochi nebulosi
- 181) Al dicto male finissimo
- 182) A la vista perduta
- 183) Ad idem
- 184) Ad idem
- 185) A clarificare la vista
- 186) Al dicto male
- 187) Per fare la vista chiarissima et durevole
- 188) Al dicto male
- 189) A simille passione
- 190) A simille passione

191) A fare la vista chiara

CAPITULLO PER FARE AQUE NOBELLISIME A TUTE PASSIONE

192) Aqua Nobillissima e perfecta a tutte passione e schiara la vista

193) A fare aqua nobellissima a tute passione de occhij

194) Aqua che lieva zascuna tella di gli occhi

195) Aqua che lieva la tella aranea di gli occhi

196) Al male de la pietra e rompilla in le rene

197) Aqua perfectissima per conzare ogni stomacho freddo et al cataro

198) Aqua da ochi fina

199) Aqua a consolidare tute piage

CAPITOULO PER FARE PIROLE LE QUALE SONO FINE A LA VISTA

200) Pirole senza le quali non voyo essere; sono fine a la vista ecc.

201) Pirole che conforta la digestione

202) Pirole finissime contra el puzore de la bocha

203) A fare pirole storaze

204) A fare uno electuario solempnissimo [sic]

205) Per guarire la fievra quartana

206) A guarire lo male de la milza

207) Electuario catholicon

208) Ad uno che spudasse tropo

209) Ad impazare che non vegna male de fianchi

210) E se tale male te asalisse avanti subito soccoriti con tale rimedio

211) Per contrastare uno subito fluxo de corpo

212) Ceroto contro li vicie del stomaco

213) A fare uno ceroto alexandrino finissimo

214) A stagnare el sangue del naso

215) A recuperare el viso

216) Al fetore de la bocha et al dolor del dente

- 217) A cavare el dente senza molestia
- 218) A tore la scabia del capo
- 219) Al disenterio del corpo
- 220) Aqua ad albandum dentes .
- 221) A fare unguento per focho
- 222) Ad clarificandum et contra omnes maculas oculorum

QUESTE SONO LE VENE DA TORE EL SANGUE, IN CHE MODO E LO
REMEDIO SE ALGUNA COSA INCORESSE

- 223) Vena in fronte
- 224) La vena ch'è drito a la urechia
- 225) La vena chè in te le tempie
- 226) le doe vene che sono dentro da le orecchie
- 227) La vena ch'è de drito a le orecchie
- 228) La vena ch'è suxo la summità del naso
- 229) La vena ch'è in te li calcagnoli di gli ochi
- 230) La vena ch'è dentro de la bocha
- 231) La vena ch'è sotto la lingua
- 232) La vena ch'è sotto el mento
- 233) La vena cephalica
- 234) De la vena mediana per lo pulmone
- 235) De la vena epaticha per lo stomaco
- 236) De la necessità del cavare sangue
- 237) Questi sono li zorni li quali niuno no se dovemo minuere sangue
- 238) in che muodo se deve considerare quando se tolle sangue
- 239) In che etate se de tuore sangue
- 240) A conoscere la mutacione del sangue
- 241) A reparatione quando el se muove la colera
- 242) A sovegnire s'el se inflasse la vena

- 243) A zudicare l'omo secondo lo colore del sangue
 - 244) Del zudicio del sangue
 - 245) La vena del pollice et indice
 - 246) La vena ch'è sopra la ma al dito minuello
 - 247) La vena ch'è sopra el dito minuello a la man dextra
 - 248) La vena ch'è sopra el dorso
 - 249) la vena super priapum
 - 250) La vena senuss
 - 251) La vena ch'è sopra el preputio
 - 252) La vena ch'è sopra la cossa e le gambe
 - 253) La vena ch'è sopra la cavichiella de fuora
 - 254) La vena ch'è sopra el polzo del pè
 - 255) La vena ch'è sopra el dito pizulo del pè
 - 256) La dieta che se de fare quando l'è tolto el sangue
 - 257) De la utilità di occhi
 - 258) De la virtù del cavare sangue
 - 259) Elenco di malattie
 - 260) Questa si è una perfecta compositione per uno amalato
 - 261) Questi sono li insonij de sancto Gregorio
 - (262) A fare andare via le lentigene
 - (263) A fare la facia candida vel splendida
 - (264) A fare la roxeta (Ad faciendum roseam)
 - (265) A fare la faza colorita e bella
 - 266) A fare el viso acuto
 - 267) Nota quod vene dextere et sinistre manus post comestione debet extraere sanguinem et non ante inter policem et indicem equali modo sit
 - 268) Contra Inimicos tuos domus quibus nostris audivimus
- Against your enemies so that they will not be able to hear in your house

- 269) Ut homo non dormiat
- 270) Ad solvendum hominem ligato
- 271) Ad hominem qui non potest agere cum uxore
- 217 bis) (sic...) Ut cum aliquid pungat et non cedat ccribe hec nomina....
- 272) a sanar la Jmpetigine e le lentigene
- 273) Nota quod vene frontis post comistione incidende sunt vena sub mento ante et
vene aurium et pedum post comistionem et vene utriusque brachij ante
comestionem de bone minuere
- 274) A fare li capilli canuti biondi
- 275) A fare che non casca li capilli
- 276) A guarire la tigna
- 277) Item ad idem
- 278) a tore el male de la scabia
- 279) A fare unguento per li occhi infermi
- 280) Item lardum bonum...
- 281) A fare onzione per defendere che le done non desperda
- 282) Ad idem uno ceroto per la schina de le done gravide
- 283) ad idem
- 284) Al mal de peste
- 285) Item melius....
- 286) Iterum
- 287) A conosere la piera
- 288) Item ad idem
- 289) Al dicto male de peste et è provato
- 290) Al male de le volatiche
- 291) A guarire le bianchure che viene a le done (Guarire le bianchure che viene a le
done per tropo mestruo)
- 292) Item lavare lo dicto male con aqua de vita et è opyimo
- 293) al male de le maroele extracte da Magistor sumel zudio.

- 294) A fare oio da stomego
- 295) Ad malem febrem tercianam tamen simplice
- 296) Ad febrem expertum efficac
- 297) De la virtù del diptamo
- 298) Ad deliberandum unum crepatum
- 299) Ad delierandum ad partum mulieris
- 300) Ad stagnandum sanguine.
- 301) ad deplendum tosicum
- 302) ad febres cottidianas et omnes febres
- 303) Item ungule manus dextere...
- 304) item pilli ursi subfumigati omnem febrem...
- 305) Ad febrem tercianam duplicem
- 306) Ad capillos denigrandos
- 307) Si vis deliberare unam feminam habentum filium mortuum in corpore
- 308) Ad vermes
- 309) Si vir habet odium ad suam mulierem sive mulier ad suum maritum
- 310) Ut canis non latet te
- 311) Ad mortificandum carbonem vel deliberandum
- 312) Si vis deliberare unum surdum
- 313) Si vis quod nullus homo vel canis te noceat
- 314) Ad ponendum pacem inter virum et uxorem
- 315) [The properties of the signs of the zodiac]
- 316) Nota quinque luna fiunt in prima...
- 317) A fare andare via le lentizene (A fare andare via le lentigene de la vaza)
- 318) Per fare rotorio
- 319) A fare unguento per una fistula
- 320) A fare polvere da ogni piaga
- 321) Per fare uno solicello

- 322) Per fare unguento nigro
- 323) Per fare onzione per ogni piaga
- 324) Per fare uno solicello comune
- 325) Per fare bella faccia omane
- 326) A cazare via li pelli
- 327) Item ad idem
- 328) A fare belli capilli
- 329) Item ad idem
- 330) A fare bianco el volto omane
- 331) Item a fare bella pelle
- 332) A fare bello collore.
- 333) Unguento de magistro Tadio da bologna
- 334) A male de le matrice
- 335) A chi avesse panne suxo la faza
- 336) A deliberare uno imbriago
- 337) A consumare li vermi del corpo
- 338) A conservare li pani che non se guasti
- 339) A chi avesse perso l'apetito
- 340) A dolore e cruciamento del stomaco
- 341) Impiastro de Magistro anzelmo da zenoa senza tagliare et è fino a tute piage et a ferite del capo
- 342) A fare unguento basilico da trare e da saldare³
- 343) A fare unguento per li cavedeli de le tete
- 344) Bevanda in piage e fistolle tute...
- 345) Rp. armoniago pimpinella
- 346) Oleum regis

³ followed by an unmarked illegible recipe, according to the transcriber

Thesoro de poveri

(Order of Chapters)

1. De capelli che caggiono
2. A cio che li capelli non naschino mai
3. A guarire delle pustole del capo
4. Asanare il litargico
5. Contra alla doglia del capo
6. Contro al non dormire
7. A guarire della epile[p]sia cioe male caduco
8. A guarire delo dolore delli occhi
9. Aguarire del dolore delli orecchi
10. Co[n]tra alla nausea & singiozo di stomaco
11. Centra al male di pulmone
12. Afar andar a sambra
13. A restringere la scorenza del corpo
14. Co[n]tro al male di colico & di fianco
15. A guarire dela gotta tosata
16. A guarire lo male de denti
17. A ristagnare lo sangue del naso
18. Ciontra la parlasia della lingua
19. Contra lo male della squinantia
20. Contra la malatia dicta sincoin
21. Contra reūa & cataro tosse & mal di peto
22. Contra il mal di tenasmōe cioe mal di pōdi
23. Ad uccider di bachi o uero lumbrichi o uero contra il male de uermini

24. Contra alli morici
25. Contra luscir delle minugie di sotto
26. Contra alla opilatione di figato
27. Contra al male di milza
28. Al male gyterico
29. Al male della pietra
30. Al male distra[n]gurià cioe di no[n] potere ori[n]ar[e]
31. Co[n]tra ala p[er]dura d[e]e la uerga & de la uesica
32. Contra non potere usare con do[n]na
33. Contra lo male et demoni cioe fature
34. Aripimere & tore la libidine & la uoluntoa de luxuria
35. Contra lo male di matrice
36. A prouare lo tempo delle do[n]ne
37. A restringere lo tempo delle do[n]ne qua[n]do fusse oltra misura
38. Co[n]tra lenfiatio[n]e delle poppe delle do[n]ne
39. Contra la suffocatione della matrice
40. Contra allo disertare delle do[n]ne
41. Contra la difficulta del parturire
42. Contra doppo il parturire
43. Co[n]tra la gotta podagra & arthetica
44. Contra li crepati
45. Contra lantrace cioe male di benedecti o pestile[n]tia
46. Co[n]tra li forchöi delle mane o de piedi
47. Contra la fistola et cancro
48. Contra roгна: male morto & lebbra
49. Contra le scrofe e glandule

50. A guarire le ueruche
51. Co[n]tra larsura di fuoco & acqua calda
52. Atrar sp̄e & cose simiglia[n]te d[e]lla carne
53. Contra lo male di bestie
54. Segni de morte & de uita alli infermi
55. A prouocare lo sudore
56. Contra alla febre effimera
57. Contra la febre continua
58. Contra alla febre continua uera
59. Contra alla quartana
60. Contra alla febre cottidiana [sic]

Ricettario di Galieno

Et prima di segni de le urine

1. Rezimento di tutti li mesi
2. Quali sono li boni di sallassare de tutti li mesi
3. Quali sono li di mortali di salassare lhomo con le uene
4. La tabula de Salomone per ritrouate qua[n]ti zorni ha la luna
5. Per che modo e uia se inzenera le posteme in li corpi di ho[min]i
6. La praticha de sanare & curare le piaghe de li corpi di homini
7. Impaster p[er] mitigare dolori e per far renascere marza presto
8. Per fare maturare uno male e fare nascere la marza in la postema & angi
9. Impiastro per uarire angio o altro infirmitade
10. Impiaster per risoluere angi e per fare uegnire a capo e madurare mali
11. A far rompere la piagha senza fero e saldare
12. A risoluere postema e scrophole
13. A la infilatione di ossi damnati in la persona
14. Per ciaschaduna doglia sia perche casone se uoglia
15. Impiastro da doglie
16. Medicina da doglie del pecto: del stomacho e de le spalle &c.
17. Per la infiatione di occhii e doglia di testa
18. Contra a la doglia di testa
19. Per guarire occhii searpelatie rossi con le palpebre di fuora uolta te
20. Per guarire le ifirmitade [sic] e mali de occhii
21. Per guarire una machia o signo che sia in li occhii

22. Aqua mirabile da medegare ochi & ad ogni dolore de ochii e per tuore uia le lachryme: e per medicare el cancaro.
23. Per li ochii lachrymosi
24. Per sanare li ochii lachrymosi
25. Per guarire e sanar el mal di ochii o uoi caracte &c.
26. Ad uno occhi che auesse ca[n]cro
27. Per asmorciare e molificare el carbonciello
28. Ad amazare ciachaduno carbone
29. Per nerui retratti per ferita (fenta?) e per ogni altra casone
30. Per nerui tagliati ungue[n]to p[ro]uato
31. Per neui retracti prouato
32. Per neruia attracti per fredura gra[n]dissima
33. Per fistule e cancri i[m]piastro p[er]fecto
34. Per descaciare la goma di li zenochi o altro membro
35. Per fare diffare la grosseza e durreza in li zenochi e brazzi
36. A la infiatione de zenochii
37. A la infiadura di testicoli: o per amachaduta o per botta.
38. A la infiadura di testicoli
39. A la gratadura di testicoli
40. Per descaciare le doglie
41. Per far scoprire uno mal nesce[?]te o postema
42. A ro[m]pere ouuno mal nascente
43. Per fare rompere e uegni a capo uno male
44. A una uena rotta perche casone se uogli a
45. Ad nna [sic: una] uena tagliata per saldarla
46. Per una uena rotta in lo pecto

47. Per dis fare la durezza de le tette quando le sono da taiare e quando sono tagliate
prouato
48. A guarire li infiatore de le tette cosi de homini como de le donne & e prouato
49. Per saldare e curare le tette rotte Et e prouata a fistule e cancri
50. Per mollificare il lacte in la tette e farlo uegnire fuora
51. Per medicare la schilencia
52. Per far cei[n]i[n]are? la schile[n]cia carnosa
53. Per la i[n]fiatione de de[n]tro e di fuora da la gola
54. Per descaciare la grosseza che uiene in la gola de dentro
55. Impiastro p[er] amaciare uno bastardelio
56. Per le morene: & e prouato
57. Al dicto male & guariralo
58. Al dicto male Al p[re]dicto male
59. A stre[n]zer[e] il sa[n]gue d[i] le morene
60. Per una gamba de ho[mo] o de donna che fusse i[n]riata p[er] una gratadura e che
menasse ueneno e homori.
61. A la i[n]fiatione de ga[m]be & e p[ro]uato
62. Per le porcelane siano in qual locho uogliono
63. Per cauare fuora spino o uedrio de la carne
64. Per fare madurare ogni angia e a postematione
65. Per fare disfare la infiatione dela gola
66. Per le gotte frede
67. Contra siatiche e gotte
68. A gotte de che condition se siano
69. Aqua mirabile per ogni siatica
70. Per cauare uno anello fuora del dedo che fusse infiato forte

71. Per resolvere le scrofole & e prouato
72. Per guarire le scrofole & e p[ro]uato
73. Per curare e sanare ogni piaga de gambe puzolenta
74. Per guarire ogni gamba infiata e rotta
75. Per guarire le i[n]fiatione de le gambe con rosseza & c.
76. A la infiatione de le gambe
77. A la infiatione de ga[m]be & in ogni altre locho
78. Lauanda per gambe guaste

Tauole de rottorii

79. Per fare rottorio temp[er]ato e forte
80. Per far[e] u[n]o rottorio molto forte
81. Per fare uno rottorio fortissimo e mirabile
82. A fare rottorio per far disfare la preda in la uesicha & c.
83. Per rompere una postematione in hore uintequatro co[n] rottorio semplice

Tauola de le ricette de ungue[n]ti mirabili

84. Vngue[n]to de gr[?]a dei da piaghe noue e uecchie molificatiuo e attractiuo e gñatiuo de bona carne.
85. Per saldare una piaga noua in hore uintiquatro
86. Vnguento per saldare ogni piaga in dodese di
87. Vnguento de miio da saldare ogni piaga
88. Sel fusse alchuna persona che fusse ferito con cortello o uero con altra arma per qualunque modo uolesse o fusse: se la piaga e fresca de una hora a saldarla i[n] uno di o doi
89. Per saldare piaghe
90. Vnguento da piaga per tutta la p[er]sona

91. Vnguento [con]tra ogni piagha e pu[n]ctura
92. A guarire li scotati
93. Per uno scotato e al fuocho saluatico
94. Per guarire uno che sia schotato dal fuocho o in olio o in aqua o in qualuncha altro modo sia. Et e prouato e senza ungue[n]to e i[m]piastro guarira in q[ua]ttro di.
95. Sel fosse alchuna persona che fusse schotata da fuocho o da ferro o uero per qualche altro modo se sia
96. Per deschaciare la roгна e stiza a homini e ad altri animali ungue[n]to regale senza alchuno periculo.
97. Aqua per descaciare roгна e uolatiche e per piaghe
98. Per descaciare le uolatiche
99. A chaciare le uolatiche in tre di
100. Per oconsolidare e fare sechare la carne catiua e per saldare
101. A curareuna piagha che hauesse carne catiua
102. Vnguento da fare renascere la carne in la piaga e saldare
103. A chi non potesse urinare
104. Per fare urinare a chi non potesse
105. Per fare urinare o homo o donna
106. A homo o donna che no[n] potesse tegnire la urina
107. Per el fluxo d[el] corpo e se lo andasse sangue o schiuma e anche se glie andasse gioso il budello
108. Ad ogni fluxo de corpo pilole: se lo i[n] fermo fusse in caso de morte
109. Vnguento posto sopra lo umbiculo fa andare del corpo: e posto suso la bocha del stomacho fa uomitare & e prouato
110. Per fare andare del corpo a li stiti chi senza pericolo
111. A far stagnare il corpo

112. A far fumo a la di[n?]scorentia del corpo
113. A ciascaduna piaga i[n]fistulata
114. Aqua per fistole e posteme
115. A guarire uno callo
116. Vnguento bia[n]cho da saldar ogni piaga
117. Vnguento da saldare e fare uegnire bella pelle
118. A piaghe da gambe: da piedi: e da ogni altra parte de la persona
119. A tuore uia il dolore duna punctura o de una piaga che risolue e mena
120. Per fare cessare ogni infiatura e ogni doglia che non sia rotta
121. A tuore uia il dolore de una piaga.
122. Vngue[n]to per testa per brazi e per gambi
123. Vnguento per guarire la natura de la donna
124. Per guarire la natura de la donna de dentro
125. A la donna che habia male in la natura
126. A li dolori de la uerga de lhomo e de la natura de la donna
127. Per guarire la uerga de lhomo in ogni male
128. Poluere per fare i[n]carnare in la uerga
129. A guarire la uerga de lhomo per taroli e ogni infirmita
130. A stagnare el sangue de naso & e prouato

Tauola de le ricette de fare le pillole de Galieno e da quale operatione siano

131. Pillole da la reuma de la testa e co[n]tra idolori: e contra li uermi che nascono in li corpi di homini
132. Pillole per purgare la flegma del stomacho
133. Pillole per purgare il stomacho da ogni humore grosso
134. Pillole mirabile contra la tosse e che mondificano el pulmone e il pecto

135. Per discaciare la rognà senza unto e senza unguento
136. A fare bella faccia e le mane oltra modo senza lesione alcuna de la pelle⁴
137. Per fare candida la faccia o uoi lemane
138. A mal de le buganze
139. A fare li denti bianchi
140. Per fare crescere li capelli in ogni loco
141. A far renascere li capelli e li peli
142. Se li capelli te cadessino del capo per fare che no[n] cadino
143. A mandare uia li capelli e peli che no[n] tornanano piu
144. Per discaciare li uermi e li dolori de le orecchie
145. A cauare aqua fuora dele orecchie
146. A la frigidita de le orecchie
147. A uentosita e sonamento de orecchie
148. Per guarire quelli che pareno hauere tamburi in le orecchie o che non oldino bene
149. A persone che non oldisseno bene
150. Medicina marauiosa a chi fusse sordo
151. A la dicta sordita
152. Per fare uomitare
153. Per fare uno perfectissimo seruitia le o sia crestiero
154. Per fare desfare una codesella sia doue uoglia
155. Recetta mirabile contra la pestil[n]tia per guarire uno amorbato
156. Rimedio ad ogni doglia de de[n]ti
157. A dolore de denti
158. A guarire el morso del can rabioso
159. Per guarire uno assiderato d nouo

⁴ These recipes (136-143) are identical to the first eight in *Questa sie vna operetta molto Piacevollissima*.

160. A la febre quartana
161. Bagno per la febre
162. Ad ogni febre
163. A la febre freda
164. A la febre
165. A quella medema
166. A quella medema
167. A la febre quotidiana
168. Impiastro per la febre di puti piccoli
169. Per guarire la donna che ha mal de matrice
170. A cadere de la matrice
171. A la suffocatione de la matrice
172. Al dolore de la matrice
173. Al a donna a chi uegnisse gioso la matrice: e a ciascaduno ho[mo] a chi uegnesse
gioso il budello
174. Per fare la matrice ben siposta a ingrauedare
175. Al male caducho
176. A sopradicto male caducho: & e prouato
177. Al dicto male
178. Per fare disfare e pissare la preda che e in la vesicha
179. Per fare dis fare e pissare la preda che e in la uesicha Et e uno di secreti de
Galieno & e prouato
180. Al dicto male
181. A rompere la preda
182. A mal del cuore
183. Al mal de prenutii

184. Per ritornare la fauella perduta de nouo
185. A guarire el mal de punta
186. Al male del pondo
187. A prouedere al fredo de piedi
188. Per discaciare le lентechie giu de la faza
189. Per sanare il latume che uiene suso la testa a li puti
190. Pratica perfectissima per guarire la tigna & e prouata
191. Ad idem
192. Per guarire li labri de la boca fessi E a chi pissano insonio
193. Praticha regale a leuare la lunella
194. Ad idem
195. Ad idem malum
196. A dolori de fianchi: de corpo: de galoni: e per le rene
197. A li choffi o sia taroli che uengano in la faccia
198. Per guarire ogni insiatura che sia uenuta per una botta
199. A guarir[e] il brusore del sedere sia p[er]che colera se uoi?a: o per altra casone
Ad idem malum
200. A dolore de piedi sia perche caso ne se uoglia
201. A fare che una donna para sempre uerzene
202. A fare che le tette non uengano troppo grande a le pute
203. Per tore uia la puza da la boca o di de[n]ti sia p[er] difecto del stomaco
204. Per prouocare e fare uegnire el mestruo a le donne
205. A fare cessare el fluxo d[e]l mestuo a le donne
206. A fare cessare el corso e fluxo de sangue a la donna
207. Per cognoscere se la femina che e gruida parturira maschio o femina

208. Per fare cessare el ueneno a chi fusse piccato da madrasso o datochel fosse al homo per altra maniera
209. Al brusore de la uerga e chi pisasse sangue
210. Per guarire de subino uno che fusse imbriago
211. A la doglia de la milza
212. A sanare il mal del figato e p[ro]uato
213. Per li taroli che uengono ala uerga del homo
214. A guarire li creuati & e prouato a zoueneti senza taglio
215. A li crauati electuario
216. A fare parturire la creatura morta in corpo a la donna
217. A secorrere a chi douentasse paralitico
218. Per sanare ogni afredasone di stomacho
219. A cognoscere se una do[n]na po portare figlioli o non
220. Al fredo de la testa
221. Al dolore de la testa per fredura
222. A la reuma de la testa
223. A gran doglia di testa
224. Ad idem
225. Ad idem
226. A la doglia de la testa che retornasse al pecto
227. Ad idem
228. Sel fosse roto la tela del ceruello
229. A far rompere una fistola senza taglio
230. Ad un membro che trema
231. A chi hauesse fistula de dentro dal corpo o sia di fuora
232. A uno puto o puta che auesse uermi in corpo

- 233. Contra uermi
- 234. A far olio da uermi
- 235. A male de uermi
- 236. Per guarire angonaie
- 237. Al dicto male
- 238. A chi non potesse tegnire la urina
- 239. Al dicto male
- 240. A fare urinare a chi non po
- 241. Al dicto male
- 242. A chaciare uia li porri siano doue se uogliono
- 243. A calli e a li porri
- 244. A chi fusse ferito di uno ferro atossegato
- 245. A guarire che fusse morsegato da uno cane rabioso o non rabioso
- 246. A guarire uno che fosse morsegato da un oserpente
- 247. A chi hauesse p[er]so arsenico o rixagallo o altro ueneno materiale
- 248. A male di costa
- 249. A conseruare el corpo sano nel te[m]po de la peste
- 250. A l dolore del corpo
- 251. A la toi?tion de del corpopo e ala infiatione del corpo
- 252. A recuperare e conseruare la uista
- 253. A tuore il dolore de la piagha
- 254. A stagnare il sangue dele piaghe
- 255. A una do[n]na chi hauesse perduto il lacte
- 256. A li dolori che uengono a le donne drieto al parto
- 257. Aqua dal male del figato e de renella e a doglia di testa
- 258. Aqua de pupini bo[n]a ad ogni mal di corp & c.

- 259. Vnguento optimo e perfecto da saldare e da sugare gambe
- 260. A chi squassasse i denti per infirmita o per altro
- 261. A fare uno ceroto
- 262. Per fare uno sparadrappo mirabile
- 263. A fare unaltro sparadrappo perfectissimo
- 264. Recetta de Gulfredo di Me[...] l di per far unguento negro che pare che habia piu uirto diuina che humana

Tauola de li olii

- 265. A far olio per el spasemo
- 266. A far olio musolio bono ad ogni male de orecchie
- 267. De olio uiolato
- 268. olio de polezolo
- 269. Olio de mandole amare
- 270. Olio de senaura
- 271. Olio de mastexe
- 272. Olio de assenzo
- 273. Del olio rosato
- 274. Olio de camamilla
- 275. Olio martagon: cioe balsamino

Tauola de le herbe

- 276. Dela herba lambruna
- 277. Dela herba dragontea
- 278. Dela herba calamo
- 279. Del ditamo bianco

- 280. Dela herba carlina
- 281. Dela herba tania
- 282. Del uidriolo
- 283. Dela herba marobio
- 284. Dela scabiosa
- 285. De lherba bardena
- 286. De lherba rosmari[n]o e sue uirtude
- 287. Dela menta e sue uirtu
- 288. Del aneto
- 289. Dela ruda
- 290. De lartemisia madre dogni herba
- 291. Del abrotano
- 292. Del assenzo
- 293. Dela salvia
- 294. Dela nepida
- 295. Del polezolo
- 296. Del fenochio
- 297. Dele uirtu del scordion: ouero aglio saluaticho
- 298. Del piantazine
- 299. Dela saturegia
- 300. Dela buglosa
- 301. Dela inola
- 302. Dela celidonia
- 303. Del cardo bñdecto [benedecto] e sue uirtu
- 304. Le uirtu de lherba che se chiama mozomordica ouero uiticella
- 305. De le uirtu de laqua de uita
- 362

306. A far disinfiare la uerga d[el] lho[mo]
307. Laua[n]da de la uerga de lhomo che fusse impiagata
308. A far uno caldello per tuore uia il spasemo
309. Recetta da far pillole contra peste prouate
310. Confectione stomaticha temperata e cordiale contra la peste.

Dificio de Ricette

Primo Ricettario

1. Rimedio contra ongni puzzor di bocca, ouer cattiuo fiato per cagion di stomaco ouer di altra causa
2. A uoler saper per chi manca a ingruedar o per l'huomo o per la donna (A uoler saper per chi manca a ingrauidar, o per lhuomo, ouer per la dona in caso che longamente ha usato con la donna)
3. a far bona memoria
4. A far bona uoce per rengare o cantar ovuer disputar o legger in carega
5. A far poluere che fa li denti bianchi et guarisse il dolor del dente ('A far una poluere che falli denti bianchissimi & netti & purifica li cattari & guarisse la doglia del dente & ferma li denti che scantinano usando detta poluere) *
6. A far luva & li pomi granati si mantenera[n]no tutto l'anno
7. A far una poluere che mette[n]dola su la carta & fregarla con le ditta & poi scriuer con acqua la lettera diue[n]tera nigrissima*
8. A ueder le stelle da mezzo giorno
9. A conoscer se uno ouer una e uerzene dico se l'ha sparso il seme
10. A far arder uno fazzoletto & dapoi lhara fornito di arder no[n] sara brusato & non hara danno niuno
11. A tor la misura de uno piede de huomo donna senza misurar lo piede⁵
12. A far che una candela in tuola si smorzera con gran strepito & potrai robar le uiua[n]de ouer basar la tua innamorata⁶
13. A metter dentro in una ingrestara uno ouo di galina

⁵ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 1.

⁶ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 2.

14. A far che li capelli non diuentino canuti *
15. A far ritornar ogni panno di lana in suo colore⁷
16. A lauar uno scarlatto et tor uia le machie ^{8*}
17. A refrescar lo cendado che parera nuouo
18. A tornar uno panno di seta in suo colore
19. Anchora a doglia di denti che non torneranno piu*
20. A far che li peli cascheranno doue tu uuoi ne la persona
21. A far acqua che indurisse il ferro & taglio l'altro ferro come legno.
22. A far nascer la barba ouer li capelli (A far nascer la barba ouer peli calli)
23. A far una carta negra per scriuer senza inchiostro
24. A far esca per far uenir gran numero de columbi inla tua columbara⁹
25. Acqua per far bianchi li denti *
26. A saldar ogni lauor di uetro ouer di christallo
27. A fare una fenestra che parera di uetro & rendera maggior lume che lo uetro
28. A far che uno uino prendera lo moscatello benissimo
29. A far che uno uino prendera lo moscatello in altro modo
30. A far che uno raspo duua sara fresca et perfetta da mangiare al tempo di natale
come se la cogliesti al tempo di settembrio
31. A far sauon per cauar ogni macchia *
32. A co[n]seruar le rose fresche tutto lo tempo de l'anno
33. A cauar una macchia de uno panno ouer de ueludo, & d'ogni altra sorte di panni
di seta che non si smarrira di colore niente benissimo
34. A cauar macchie doglio che fusse suso una carta bergamina o bambasina
35. A tirar fora una macchia de una carta come è oglio e grasso

⁷ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 3.

⁸ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 4.

⁹ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 6.

36. A tirar uia ogni macchia d'inchostro che sia spanto su libri
37. A far una carta di capretto azurra o de altro colore
38. A masenar loro ouer argento per scriuer ouer dar col penello
39. A scriuer lettere doro ouer dargento in ogni carta
40. A scriuer lettere doro & depinzer che parera oro senza oro
41. A scriuer lettere dargento in altro modo et potrai depinzer col penello
42. A scriuer in carta ouer in tela che non parera scritto & poi scaldala al foco & uigneranno lettere negrissime¹⁰
43. A far oro musico
44. A far una acqua che sia posta nel uetro faccia ueder la notte
45. A far uerzin bellissimo per scriuer in colore rosato puonazzo & violato¹¹
46. Regula general in capelli negri
47. A far li capelli bellissimi
48. A far crescer li capelli
49. A cazzar li risigoni di capelli (A cazar li rosigoni che rosega li capilli)
50. A far li capelli negri*
51. A cauar li peli che non renasceranno piu nela persona (A cauar li peli doue che tu uoi che piu non nasceranno)
52. A no[n] lassar renascer li peli in altro modo (A non lassar renascer piu li peli in un'altro modo)
53. A far di una barba bianca negra *
54. A far la fazza bella a le donne
55. A far rosso per lo uiso dele donne (A far uno rosso per lo uiso per donne)
56. A far bello uiso
57. A far bello il uiso in altro modo

¹⁰ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 35.

¹¹ Ink marked by this one in the index.

58. A far bella la faccia
59. A far andar uia le panne/A far andar uia le pane & far bella la pelle
60. A far acqua che imbianchisse el uolto benissimo
61. A far bello uiso in altro modo
62. A far produer el suo tempo a una donna che lo uariasse o perdesse (A far produer el suo tempo ad una donna che lo hauesse perduto ouer uariasse el tempo)¹²
63. A far restrenzer el corso natural de una donna se abbondasse (A far restrenzer el corso natural de una donna se el suo fior l'abbondasse troppo)¹³
64. A lentigine del uolto
65. A larogna grassa
66. A far andar uia la uolatica del uolto & in quella parte de la persona doue la fusse
67. A far far andar uia li pedeselli
68. A far uno sapone odorifero contra la rognia perfetto
69. A far una acqua che cazara uia ogni tentura & macchia dele mane alli artesani et fa le mane bia[n]chissime, & anchora la ditta acqua fa le man& et il uolto a quelli che sono cotti dal sole
70. A far andar uia un porro *
71. A far che le cimesi no[n] ti nosera[n]no la notte *
72. A far unguento per amazzar li cimesi in la lettera *
73. A far che no[n] sara[n]no pulesi in una camera *
74. Anchora à far unguento da mazzar li cimesi & piatole in altro modo *
75. Per amazzar pedocchi & giendine *
76. A far inchiostro comun uenderesco, nota che quelli che fanno lo inchiostro per le botteghe lo fanno solo di acqua piouana con tre cose *
77. A far inchiostro crudo di acqua di cisterna in unaltro modo *

¹² Cf. *Opera nova piacevole*, Rx. 82; and *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 63.

¹³ Cf. *Opera nova piacevole*, Rx. 83; and *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 64

78. A far inchiostro perfetto & finissimo in un altro modo *
79. A camozar una caprina cruda
80. A dar color uerde ad una pelle camozara ouer alli cartoni
81. A tenzer pelle in altro modo
82. A far uno bello Zalo in pelle ouero in cartoni benissimo
83. Recetta per le donne a tenzer le sue ace in piu colori (Recetta per le donne che quando hanno filato le ace le sapiano tenzer in piu colori, e prima a tenzer ace negre)¹⁴
84. A tenzer ace beretine
85. A far ace ruzene
86. A far che in una possessiõ ouer in uno giardino nascera una pella spineda in breue tempo
87. A far che in una possession ouer giardino nascera gran quantita di sparasi de che sorte che vorai
88. Secreto dignissimo per li uecchi & gioueni a ueder benissimo la notte
89. A mollificar el crestallo che de molti pezzi ne farai uno solo*
90. A far che quando uno cauallo non potesse urinar che subito urinera
91. A cazzar uia le mosche de uno loco
92. A ritrouar uno pauero che mai si consumera nela lume ne etia[n] nel foco e de questo presto ne porai far esperie[n]tia espressa.
93. Cosa perfetta per incolar ogni cosa che tu uoi benissimo
94. A uno che si pisasse sotto i[n] letto dorme[n]do¹⁵
95. A saper sel mosto ha dentro acqua o no, & è cosa prouata
96. A far una cola che no[n] teme foco ne acqua

¹⁴ This and the following two recipes are to dye threads. (ace – accia). See Battaglia, *Grande dizionario della lingua Italiana* (v. 1): 80; also mentioned in Lotto (ed. Grimaldi and Sordi), *Spese diverse* (v. 1): 227.

¹⁵ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 22.

97. a far una uernice eccelle[n]te di acqua chiara a dar col penello e subito si secca & odorifera a dar i[n] carta i[n] legni i[n] altro loco
98. A pigliar ogni uccello con le mani
99. A pigliar le galline & columbi & ogni altro uccello con la mano *
100. A far una esca da far morir li pesci ne lacqua subito *
101. A far morir li pesci in uno altro modo benissimo *
102. A tenzer sete & code de cauallo
103. A tenere le arme nette & starano lucidissime sempre *
104. a far foco subito al improuisa benissimo co[n] grande artificio
105. A far ingrauedar le donne
106. Co[n]fettio[n]e da ma[n]zar co[n] la detta ricetta
107. A sapere se la donna poi hauer figliuoli ouero no¹⁶
108. A saper quanti figliuoli debbe hauer una donna ueduto lo primo parto (A saper conoscere quanti figliuoli debbe hauer qual femina tu voi hauendo ueduto lo primo parto)¹⁷
109. A far verde uno cauallo¹⁸
110. A far uno candelotto ouer doppiero de neue che ardera
111. A far che una ca[n]dela ardera sotto acqua
112. A fra che una ca[n]dela con fiato non si smorcera
113. A far un ca[n]delotto de giaza che ardera
114. A far saltar uno anello per casa
115. A cuocer li oui senza foco
116. A far parer che la carne cotta fia cruda
117. A far che la carne cotta parera in tauola uermigiata¹⁹

¹⁶ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 44.

¹⁷ Evelyn Welch notes that betting on the sex and number of children a woman would have was a popular activity in shops, including apothecaries. Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 161.

¹⁸ Recipes 109-115 appear in *Secreti xcretorum*, Rx.41-50

118. A far che pareranno raspi duua in una camera
119. A far una piaceuolezza che uno mai potra dormir la notte.²⁰
120. A far parer che in una camera sara una cacciason
121. A far uno braccio ouer altro membro dela persona peloso
122. A far composta di meloni²¹
123. A far li meloni ouer pipone dolci
124. A far li scorci de naranze confetti le quali se po far dogni tempo
125. A conciar le nose (noce) confettate²²
126. A conciar la zucca
127. A conciar pere moscatelle
128. A conciar le marasche
129. A molificar & far romper ogni qualita di ferro per grosso che sia^{23*}
130. A far andar uia lo goso

SECONDO RECET

TARIO DA SAPER COMPONERE

diuerse sorti de soauissimi et utili odori

131. A conciar le rose in una casa de drappamenti che sapranno da buono²⁴
132. A conciar li guanti (gloves) che saperanno de soaue odore da signore
133. A far perfumi fini
134. A far sapone con rose odorifere da metter in albarelli²⁵
135. A far sapone con garofali
136. A far pasta di ambra fina

¹⁹ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 51.

²⁰ Recipes 119-121 in *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 52-54.

²¹ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 65.

²² Rx. 125-128 in *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 66-69

²³ This marked by pen in the table of contents

²⁴ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 70.

²⁵ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 71.

137. A far offeletti di cipro
138. a far pomata
139. A conciar uno oglio che a onzer le mani le fa molesine & lisse*
140. A far acqua odorifera fina
141. A far sapone buono da barbieri con poca spesa²⁶ *
142. A far profumi odoriferi buoni
143. A far una pasta di pater nostri fini & odorissimi²⁷
144. A far uno profumo in poluere

TERZO RECETARIO DALCVNI SECRETI MEDICI

nali per guarir li corpi himani che uagliano piu che ogni thesoro, & se non
fosse li secreti breue saria la uita nostra

145. A far loglio rosato e ciascun altro oglio cioè de herbe & farlo con arte
146. A far acqua di herbazzo di fior & di radice de ogni ragione.
147. A purificar il sangue laqual purification è contra la maggior parte dele infirmita et
massime contra li mali franciosi & rogne leurose (A purificar el sangue, laqual
purificatione è contra la maggior parte de ogni infirmita, et massime contra li mali
franzosi, & per quelli che ha[n]no alcune rogne leurose che per oncion no[n]
uoleno andar uia)
148. Ad ogni doglia o sia del mal franzoso, ouer delle gote & de ogni altra sorte²⁸ *
149. Remedio a sospetto di peste (Remedio dignissimo quando andasti in loco
suspettoso di peste)
150. A far una balla odorifera contra ogni sospetto di morbo *

²⁶ This recipe is also marked in the 1526 edition at the Biblioteca Marciana.

²⁷ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx.72.

²⁸ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 73.

151. Remedio ad adiutar uno infermo abandonato da li medici²⁹
152. A far stilato per detto infermo
153. A far che uno che uoglia morir & habbia persa la fauella poscia parlar tatno che ordini li fatt suoi³⁰
154. Acqua preciosa a mal de occhi
155. Remedio a guarire li occhi rossi per cagione de rescaldatione (Remedio e secreto a guarire quelli che hanno li occhi rossi per cagione di qualche rescaldation ouer per non dormir la notte ouer per altra causa)
156. A far ogli preciosissimo che salda ogni ferita in uintiquattro hore *
157. Medicina per le gote
158. A guarir q[ue]lli c'ha[n]no il mal dela pietra *
159. A conoscer sel tuo puto ha il mal di uermi (A conoscer sel tuo figliuol a mal de uermi)
160. A far urinar la ranella³¹
161. Remedio contra li uermi che uiene a li puti se ben stesseno al ponte de la morte e saranno liberati³² *
162. Remedio a mal di scorentia *
163. a guarir li caroli
164. A guarir la febre quartana
165. Remedio a doglia di testa
166. A saldar piaghe di gambe (A saldar piaghe de le gambe schincate) *
167. A guarir il mal delatogna
168. A guarir li gossi del uiso
169. contra li gossi in altro modo

²⁹ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 55.

³⁰ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 56.

³¹ This recipe and the one that follows are in the opposite order in the text as in the table of contents.

³² Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 57.

170. a stagnar el sangue de ferite *
171. A dolor de denti (A dolor de denti e ZenZeiuè desdegnate) *
172. A scotatura di acqua *
173. A scotatura di foco *
174. Remedio contra la strettura del petto & la tosse *
175. Remedio a dolor di corpo di premiti et de flusso
176. a guarir le maroelle *
177. A guarir le scrouole
178. A far buona uista per li uecchi et per li gioueni *
179. A far andar uia li segni dele ferite ouer del nascimento
180. A guarir le zenziue marcie
181. A guarir rottura di naso per cagion di qualche humore
182. Vnguento da cauar le lentigine & gospi che uien sul naso
183. A sorditate & dolor di orecchie
184. A cauar uno ferro di uereton di frizza ouer una spina senza ferro (recipe marked)
185. A far acqua mirabile a destruger gosi ch[e] vie[n] contra natura ali huomini et a le do[n]ne.
186. A far che la p[er]sona stara sana tutto la[n]no³³ *

³³ Cf. *Secreti secretorum*, Rx. 60.

Opera Nova Piacevole

1. Unguento de viso qual vsaua la regina de vngaria cosa eccellente
2. Unguento per mantener la faccia bella
3. A fare vnguento da far la carne bella
4. Unguento bianco per la faccchia preciosissimo
5. Unguento per onger le mani & farle bellissime
6. Unguento per consolidar & conzar il volto
7. Unguento che la pelle non si arippi
8. Unguento per fare lo volto colorito
9. Unguento per fare colorito il volto in altro modo
10. Beletto finissimo
11. A far la carne bella & bianca
12. A fare la carne lustra
13. A far conseruar la carne bella
14. Acqua da far bianco e lustro' il viso
15. Acqua per far il volto colorito
16. Acqua per far lustro il viso
17. Acqua per far bella la faccia
18. Acqua per far bianche le man el viso
19. Lauanda per le mane e per il viso che fa bianchissimo
20. Acqua de viso bellissima
21. A far bel colore in viso
22. Beletto perfettissimo colorito
23. A fare la carne colorita
24. A cauare le macchie del volto
25. A cazar le coture del sole
26. A cazar via le voladeghe

27. A cazar via le panne del volto
28. A guarir li gossi de ogne forte
29. A leuar via vna colera per la persona
30. A cazar le lentigine del viso
31. A far smarrir le macchie del viso
32. A far bella la faccia & il fiato odorifero
33. A guarir porri
34. A guarire il goso della gola alla donna ovoi huomo.
35. A guarir li calli delli piedi
36. A far che non creppi le mani e la bocca
37. Acqua da saldar zenziue e far bianchi li denti
38. A guarir le zenziue guaste
39. A far acqua da far bianchi li denti
40. A far poluer da denti
41. A far polver da far netti li denti in altro modo
42. A far crescer li capilli e farli biondi
43. Secreto mirabile per li capilli
44. A far che li capilli venirano lo[n]ghe e bia[n]chi
45. A far lissia per capelli
46. A fare che li capilli veniranno rizzi
47. A far che li peli nasceranno
48. A cazar li peli che non vi nascano piu
49. A far che li capilli non deunteranno canuti
50. A far nascer la barba a vn giouene auanti il tempo
51. A tenir netti li capilli negri
52. A cacciar via li rosegoni de li capilli
53. A fare li capilli nigrissimi
54. A far capilli & barba bianca negrissimi

55. A far nascer capelli longhi: crespi: & formosi
56. A far nascer capelli doue non sono
57. A guarir le tignole
58. A far che li capelli non caschino
59. A guarir la tegna
60. Unto da guanti per tenere le mane pastose & odorifere
61. A conciar vn olio da far le mane morbide & lisce & restringere la pelle
62. Chi hauesse le croste nelle palme delle man.
63. A far vnacqua che imbianchisse le man de ogni macchia & negritudine per gli artesani
64. A far sapone odorifero contra rognia & fave ma[ni] nette
65. A far pomata finissima
66. A far sapone da barbieri de poca spesa
67. A far saponetti da cauar macchie
68. A far saponetti muschiati finissimi
69. A cauar macchie de inchiostro o altra sporcia de pan[ni] bianchi: & de colore de lana:& de lino
70. A cauar vna macchia de veludo o scarlatto che non si smarrira di colore
71. A dar suauissimo odore a drapamenti con le rose
72. A far acqua odorifera finissima
73. A far odor per drappi
74. Poluer da perfumar la camera
75. A far perfumigo fino
76. A far pasta da far pater nostri odoriferi
77. Modo de redur la ambra: & la canfora in olio per vngersi li cigli: & le altre parti della persona
78. A far moscardini da teni in bocca per far bon fiato
79. A cognoscer se vno maschio o femina e verzene si o no
80. A far produr il fior a vna donna

81. A far restringer il superchio corso natural ala do[n]na
82. A far restringer la natura a vna donna
83. A far ingrauedar vna donna
84. Ad altro modo
85. A liberar vna donna del parto
86. A far parturir vna donna senza pericolo
87. A far infir le creature morte del ventre
88. A far parturir
89. A far parturir vn altro modo
90. A far parturire in altro modo
91. A far purgar la donna nel parto
92. Alli dolori che hanno le donne dopo il parto
93. In altro modo probatum est
94. Al mal de le tette che vien alle donne
95. Unaltro remedio
96. Al mal di madre
97. A far tornar il latte a vna donna
98. A guarir li pedixelli³⁴
99. Alla rognna grassa
100. A far che la persona stara sana tutto lanno
101. A cacciar li pulixi de la camera
102. A far vnguento per amazar li cimesi
103. A congregar tutti li pedocchij de dosso in vn luoco
104. Contra pedocchij de capo & pedicelli
105. A cacciar via le mosche
106. A far che le mosche non entrino in casa tua
107. A far morir forzi galine: o altri animali

³⁴From Storey 2008, 'Study Documentation'. Could also be pimples.

108. A mal di renella
109. A far aceto forte perfettissimo
110. A far vn pomo che odora[n]dolo fara dormire hore.xv.
111. A far olio de mal di ponte: & de premiti probatissimo e vero
112. A guarir le varole delli puttini
113. A far vino mirabilissimo contra ogni infirmita
114. A far olio de osmarino somegliante al balsamo
115. A conseruar li vini che non si guastino
116. A cauar la muffa del vino
117. A far tornar lo aceto in vino
118. A far che lhuomo se suegliara la notte a che hora gli piacera

Probatum Est

- 1) A fare pomata finissima
- 2) A fare che li capilli non caschino
- 3) A fare che li peli nascerano dove no[n] sono
- 4) A fare cader li peli che no[n] nascera[n]no piu
- 5) A fare che li capilli no[n] diuentino canuti
- 6) A fare venire negri li capilli bianchi
- 7) A cauare vna machia de ogni pan[n]o di lana
- 8) A cauare vna machia di pego la del panno
- 9) A fare che lhomo se suegliara la notte a che hora li piacera³⁵
- 10) A cacciar li pulese de la camera³⁶
- 11) A cacciar via le mosche³⁷
- 12) A far morire sorzi senza veneno³⁸
- 13) A cauare la muffa del vino³⁹
- 14) A conseruare li vini che no[n] si guastino⁴⁰
- 15) A indulcir lo azale che si tagliara col coltello
- 16) A temperare ferro de ogni forte
- 17) A onzer arme che no[n] diuenti ruggine
- 18) A fare cola marauigliosa da saldar ved:christali sassi: & pietre de anelli sopra christallo: & ferro sopra pietra: o voi legno⁴¹
- 19) A fare cola che non teme ne acqua ne fuoco⁴²
- 20) A fare laxedo⁴³

³⁵ This one has been censored at some point in the book's history, presumably because it involves an incantation in Latin. The incantation has been inked out, but is now legible as the ink has faded.

³⁶ 'piuse' written in ink next to this recipe.

³⁷ 'mosche' written in ink next to this recipe.

³⁸ 'sorgi o portichi' written in ink next to this recipe.

³⁹ finger drawn in the margin pointing to this recipe

⁴⁰ another finger drawn in the margin pointing to this recipe.

⁴¹ 'cola' written next to this recipe

⁴² 'cola' also written next to this recipe

⁴³ 'aceto' written next to this recipe

- 21) A conseruare la carne
- 22) A leuare el superchio sale de la pignata
- 23) A cauare el fumo del riso o dal tra menestra
- 24) A conseruare li pomi granati
- 25) A conseruare pomi codogni & persiche
- 26) Recetta per fare morire le Cimese ⁴⁴
- 27) A fare de lacqua vernaza & de vernaza fare vino vermiglio chel parera naturale vino
- 28) Modo da incalmare frutti de piu forte
- 29) A fare la barba negra
- 30) Recetta contra li cimesi che non te poteranno nocere quando andarai a letto ⁴⁵
- 31) A remediare a vno che fusse imbraco a farlo ritornare in se
- 32) A fare diue[n]tare verde vno cavallo ouer vno cane⁴⁶
- 33) A far a[n]dare via li segni de le ferite ouer del nasime[n]to
- 34) A fare acqua che indurisse a tempera el ferro che taglia laltro ferto come legn
- 35) A cacciare i porri e i calli
- 36) A fare vnguento da rognà cosa vera

⁴⁴ A finger is drawn in the margin pointing to this recipe.

⁴⁵ This recipe has a Latin incantation which has been inked out.

⁴⁶ A recipe to dye horses and dogs also appears in *Gli esperimenti*. See Pasolini, *Caterina Sforza* (v. 3), 626.

Opera Nova de Ricette e Secreti che Insegna Apparecchiar una Mensa a uno

Convito

- 1) A fare de lacqua vernaza & de vernaza far vino vermiglio e chel parera naturale vino⁴⁷
- 2) Modo de apparecchiare vn Mensa sumptuose
- 3) Lo ordine de vn disnar dinuerno
- 4) Lo ordine della cena in ditto tempo
- 5) Ordine de vn disnar in di de quadragesima
- 6) Ordine per vn disnar in te[m]po de frutti
- 7) Ordine per vn disnar a vn amico
- 8) Ordine per la cena allo amico.
- 9) Ordine per vn disinar di quaresima a vn amico
- 10) Ordine per la cena a vno amico di quaresima
- 11) Parlamento vniuersale
- 12) A tagliar vn capon in tauola
- 13) Dello taglio delle pernice:e piuioni
- 14) Il taglio della carne
- 15) A conseruar la carne vinstate che non si guasti.
- 16) A conseruar vcellami grandi & piccoli & similme[n]te de ogni sorte animali de carne: & spesci.
- 17) A conseruar la carne in altro modo
- 18) A cocere la carne la notte senza fuoco
- 19) A cocere la carne presto & bene
- 20) A levare il superchio sale della pignata

⁴⁷ These are ordered as they appear in the text. Although the work also as a table of contents printed in it, there are a number of discrepancies with the actual order of recipes that appear.

- 21) A cavar el fumo del riso o altra menestra
- 22) A conseruar susini, pomi, cirese, e peri.
- 23) A conseruar li pomigranati.
- 24) A conseruar pomi codogni & persiche
- 25) A conseruar le oliue verde.
- 26) A conseruar la vua verde
- 27) A far che vna ma[n]dola o persico o simile fructo nasca con littere scritte
- 28) Recetta da fa morir li cimesi
- 29) Recetta da fare asedo forte
- 30) A conseruare el vino la estade che non si guasti
- 31) Modo ad incalmare frutti de piu forte
- 32) Se voi che li toi inimici non posano fauelare o tradi te
- 33) A fare congregare tutte le pulece in sieme
- 34) A fare lacte
- 35) A fare la barba negra
- 36) Recetta contra le cimese che non te poterano nocere quando andarai a letto
- 37) A remediare ha vno che susse imbragio a farlo retornare in se'
- 38) A scriuere littere in ferro o in azzaro
- 39) A fare litre in drapiselo ho in su la carne

Specchio di Virtu⁴⁸

- 1) Ad piantare ouer insitare vite: ouer arbori che dureranno & faranno molto piu fructo che li altri che non seranno in questo ordine
- 2) Ad conseruare la vua in perfectione
- 3) Ad fare de vino aceto incontinenti per vna gentilezza ouero per disasio
- 4) Ad fare aceto forte chel durara, & per vtile de la casa
- 5) A far tornar vino forte, muffo & turbido i la sua p[er]fectio[n]e.
- 6) Ad far stordire ogni vcello de qual se sia forte
- 7) Ad far stordire pesci, & ad fare che quelli vegniranno sopra aqua cosi storditi
- 8) Ad saldare ogni vaso de qual se sia pasta terra , o vedro, & de qual se sia altra simile materia
- 9) Ad fare che frega[n]do vna pezza de lino sopra qual se sia ferro de quel ferro accenderassi il fuoco
- 10) Ad far littere che pareranno doro
- 11) Ad far littere che pareranno dargento
- 12) A far l[ette]re che no[n] se pora[n]no leger fi no[n] ale tenebre de la notte
- 13) Ad far littere che non si potra[n]no leggere si non al fuoco
- 14) Se volesse scriuere il nome de Iesu, o de la gloriosa vergiue, o di qualche santo, ouero de qualche tua fauorita, sopra vno tuo braccio, o in qual se sia altra parte de la persona tua.
- 15) Ad fare vna littera che non la legera se non colui alquale tu drizzarai la littera.
- 16) Ad fare de olio palsamo perfetto in termine de vno anno
- 17) Se tu voi hauer de co[n]tinuo denari, & viuer splendidame[n]te
- 18) Ad cauare ogni macchia de qual se sia panno de lana

⁴⁸ Recipes as they appear in the text. There is not table of contents in this book, and numbers are added for ease of reference.

- 19) Ad cauar ogni machia, de raso & e veluto, & altra'seta
- 20) Ad fare che quanto pesce sera in bono spatio de acqua mettendo la mano in lacqua ta[n]to ne verra intorno la mano.
- 21) Ad fare in vn tracto biondo & longo el capello & che mai non verra canuto
- 22) Ad fare il capello nigrissimo
- 23) Ad fare che le mosche non concorreranno: & no[n] si fermeranno in casa tua
- 24) Ad fare congregare tutti li pulise de la casa in vn suo loco
- 25) Ad fare [con]regare tutte le cimese de la case de[n]tro vn circolo
- 26) Ad leuare il sale superchio de vna pignatta o lauezo,
- 27) A fare trare molte coreze
- 28) Quiui sintende vn bel documento de medicina: Ad liberare bna persona da qual se sia dolore di testa
- 29) Ad leuare via ogni rossore de occhi
- 30) Ad cacciare ogni dolore di dente
- 31) A far andar via ogni segno de ogni taglio over botta che fusse in qual se sia parte de la p[er]sona
- 32) Ad guarire ogni volatica
- 33) Ad eradicare porri & calli
- 34) Ad liberare ogni dolore colico
- 35) Ad guarire qual se sia etiam crudelissima stincata
- 36) Ad guarire ogni spasimo che fusse in qual se sia osso ouer in giontura de la persona
- 37) ad guarire la rognia
- 38) Ad fare de acqua vino in colore
- 39) Ad cacciare via tutti li ratti de casa tua
- 40) Ad conseruare il frumento & farina che per quatro ouer sei anni no se guastera.

Secreti Secretorum

- 1) A voler tor la misura de vno pede de lhomo o vero donna senza mesurar lo pede fa cosi⁴⁹
- 2) A far che vna candela in tauola si smorcera co[n] gra[n] strepito et fara paura a do[n]ne et altri et potrai far il tuo disegno o vero rubar le uiua[n]de, ouer basar la tua innamorata.⁵⁰
- 3) A far ritornar ogni panno de lana o di seta che non tenga grana in suo colore.⁵¹
- 4) A far vna candela che con fiato non si stuera.⁵²
- 5) A far acqua che indurisse & tempera el ferro che taglia laltro ferro come legno⁵³
- 6) El' modo de far escha per far venir gran numero di colombi in la tua colombara⁵⁴
- 7) A far chevno te dica quel che ha mai fatto insogno
- 8) A congoscere se il moto ha dentro acqua mesedata
- 9) A getar vno fazoletto nel foco & no[n] potra bruciare
- 10) A fare andar le cimese i vno circolo intorno a vno cotello
- 11) A leuare vno mortale de pietra con vno bichiero
- 12) A fare aceto allhora allhora
- 13) A fare che uno anello ballera su per vna tauola
- 14) A fare che le ciriege nasceranno senza lossio
- 15) A fare vna lastra di ferro che accendera el lume ne lacqua
- 16) A leuare il iuperchio sale de la pignatta
- 17) A conseruar li pomi granati
- 18) A far che una mandola o persico o simile frutto nasca con lettere scritte

⁴⁹ This recipe is the same as *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 11.

⁵⁰ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 12.

⁵¹ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 15.

⁵² Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 112.

⁵³ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 21.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 24.

- 19) Se voi che li toi inimici non possano fauellare co[n]tra di te.
- 20) A fare co[n]gregare tutti li pulesi i[n]sieme
- 21) A saldare ogni lauor di uetro ouer di christallo
- 22) A uno che si pisasse sotto in letto dormendo⁵⁵
- 23) A fare che li cani non ti possano baiare drieto: ne mordere quando uai per la uia: o in altro luogo.⁵⁶
- 24) A depingere un coruo che cantara
- 25) somnifero da far adormenzar subito chiunq[ue] uoi
- 26) A far pasta da pigliar pesci e ucelli
- 27) A coser una galina senza fuocho
- 28) A lauare uno scarlatto & tor uia le macchie.⁵⁷
- 29) A far che un uino prendera lo sapore di moschatello
- 30) A cuare macchie de uno panno de color e cosi bianco o de lana o de lino
- 31) A cauare macchie de oglio che fosse suso charta bergami na o bambasina e scritte.
- 32) A tirar fora vna macchia de una carta cõe e oglio e grasso
- 33) A far uno candelotto de giaza che ardera⁵⁸
- 34) A tirar via ogni macchia de ingiostro che sia spa[n]to su i libri
- 35) A scriuer in carto over in tela che non parera scritto & poi scalda al foco & deuentaranno lettere negre.⁵⁹
- 36) A scriuer lettere che non se vederà mai se non de notte o vero de di al scuro
- 37) A far vna acqua che sia posta nel vetro faza veder de notte
- 38) Regula general in capelli negri⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 94.

⁵⁶ This is has a quasi-Latin incantation that has been censored with ink, but is still legible. It reads 'Dirai queste parole tre uolte. In chamo & freno maxillas corum constringe: qui non approximant ad me.'

⁵⁷ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 16

⁵⁸ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 113.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 42.

- 39) A cauar li peli doue che to voi che piu no[n] renasceranno⁶¹
- 40) A far che non sara pulesi in vna camera
- 41) A far ingiostro co[m]mun uenderexco et sapi che q[ue]lli che fano lo ingiostro per le botege lo fanno solo de acqua piouana contrecose
- 42) A far un esca da far morir li pesci in aqua subito
- 43) A tegnir le arme nette
- 44) nota se uoi sapere se la donna possa hauer fioli o no⁶²
- 45) A saper conoscere quanti figlioli die hauer qual femina to voi hauendo ueduto lo primo parto
- 46) A far diuentar uerde uno cauallo ouero uno cane⁶³
- 47) a far vn candelotto ouero dopiero de neue che ardera⁶⁴
- 48) a far arder una candela sotto aqua⁶⁵
- 49) A far saltar uno anelo per la casa⁶⁶
- 50) A coser dele oue senza foco⁶⁷
- 51) A far che la carne cotta parera in tuola vermizata⁶⁸
- 52) A far una piceuoleza che uno mai potra dormir la notte⁶⁹
- 53) A far parer che in vna camera hara dentro una cazason⁷⁰
- 54) A far vn bracio ouer altro me[m]bro dela persona peloso⁷¹
- 55) Rimedio de aiutar uno infermo abandonato da li medici per esser stato tanto tempo alla dieta⁷²

⁶⁰ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 46.

⁶¹ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 51.

⁶² Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 107.

⁶³ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 109.

⁶⁴ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 110.

⁶⁵ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 111.

⁶⁶ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 114.

⁶⁷ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 115.

⁶⁸ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 117.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 119.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 120.

⁷¹ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 121.

- 56) A far che uno che voglia morir & habia perso la fauela possa parlar tanto che ordini li fatti suoi⁷³
- 57) Rimedio contra li vermi che uengano a li puti se ben stesseno al ponte dela morte subito saranno liberati⁷⁴
- 58) A far andar uia in un subito la doglia di testa
- 59) A guarire le maroele
- 60) A fare che la persona stara sana tutto lanno⁷⁵
- 61) A cacciar uia le mosche de uno loco
- 62) a truare vno furto & cosa prouata⁷⁶
- 63) A far produr el suo te[m]po a una do[n]n ache lo hauesse perduto ouer uariasse el tempo⁷⁷
- 64) A far restringere el cor[s]o naturale de una donna chel suo fior li abondasse troppo⁷⁸
- 65) A far composta de meloni perfetta⁷⁹
- 66) A conzar le nose confetade⁸⁰
- 67) A conzar la zuccha⁸¹
- 68) A conzar le pere moscatelle⁸²
- 69) A conzar le marasche⁸³
- 70) A conzar le rose ch in una cassa li drapamenti saperanno di vno soauissimo et confortatiuo odore⁸⁴

⁷² Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 151.

⁷³ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 153.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 161.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 186.

⁷⁶ Two lines of a Latin incantation in this one have been censored with ink.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 62; and *Opera nova piacevole*, Rx. 82.

⁷⁸ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 63; and *Opera nova piacevole*, Rx. 83.

⁷⁹ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 122.

⁸⁰ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 125.

⁸¹ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 126.

⁸² Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 127.

⁸³ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 128.

- 71) A fare sapone con rose odorifere da meter in albarelli⁸⁵
- 72) A far una pasta di pater nostri fini & odoriferi⁸⁶
- 73) Ad ogni doglia o sia del mal franzolo ouero delle gotte & de ogni altra forte⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 131.

⁸⁵ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 134.

⁸⁶ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 143.

⁸⁷ Cf. *Dificio di ricette*, Rx. 148.

Operetta Molto Piacevollissima

Contents as they appear in the text

1. A fare bella la faza e le ma[n]e ultra modo senza lesione alchuna de la pelle⁸⁸
2. Per fare candida faza o uoi le mane.
3. Al male de le buganze
4. A fare li denti bianchi
5. Per far crescere li capilli in ogni loco.
6. A fare renascere li capilli e li pili.
7. Se li capilli te cadissent del capo per fare che non cadino
8. A mandare uia li capilli e pili e che non tornano piu
9. Medecina maraviosia a chi fusse sordo.
10. A dolore di denti
11. A tuarire i morso del cane rabioso
12. A prouedere al fredo di piedi
13. Per deschaciare le lентechie gioso de la faza.
14. Per sanare il latume che uiene suso la testa a i puti
15. Pratica regale e leuare la lunella
16. A li chossi o sia caroli che vengano in la faccia⁸⁹
17. Per Tuore uia la puzza de la boccha o di denti sia per difecto del stomacho
18. A li crevati electuario
19. A cognoscere se una donna portare fioli o non.
20. Al dolore de la testa per fredura
21. A calli e a li porri
22. A chi squasasse identi per infirmita o p[er] altro.
23. A fare uno caldello per tuore uia il spasemo

⁸⁸ The first eight recipes are also in *Ricettario di Galieno*

⁸⁹ This is the same as Rx. 197 in *Ricettario di Galieno*.

24. Per fare andare uia li peli e non tornarano
25. Receta da fare pilole co[n]tra la peste prouata
26. A coser un pan di botiro in un spedo
27. A far che li peli casca[n]o e ch[e] no[n] tornera[n]no piu
28. A uolere che no[n] rinaschino piu
29. A guarire una uolatica.
30. A fare che uno arrosto qua[n]do glie cotto che sara tutto sangue.
31. A cacciare uia una doglia duna giuntura
32. Ricetta da far latte maraviglioso
33. Recetta contra cimese aprobata
34. Item chi uolesse fare una lettera in su un brazo o in su una gamba a uno o a una:
laquale sipora portare Vinti o uintichinq[ue] miglia che mai non si leggera infin
che lhomo uorra
35. Ricetta a far di uin marzo aseto forte pur che sia puro
36. A far saltar un polastro o capo[n]e cotto i[n] tauola
37. A fare che uno huomo o do[n]na non si drizera mai per tutta una nocte
38. A fare tirar il neruo a una p[er]sona p[er] spacio de dodece hore
39. A far trar coreze in gra[n] q[uan]titade a una persona
40. A fare stra[n]udare una p[er]sona mirabilissimam[en]te
41. A fare carta da scriuere senza pena e i[n]chiostro
42. Et ancora a fare carta rossa
43. Afare pomata muschiata in tutta p[er]fectione
44. Ascriuer una lettera insu una carta...
45. Ricetta da cazare uia le pulexe

Operetta molto piacevolissima: ‘Tavola dela presente opera’

This table of contents appears in the back of the *Operetta*, but the first 29 recipes do not appear in the text, suggesting it is from a different book.

1. Riceta contra peste:
2. A cauar la doglia di testa
3. A cauar la doglia di denti
4. afaire stagnare il sangue
5. afaire che una sala parera piena di uua
6. afaire che dua teste depinte incarta che luna Spegnera una candela & laltra accendera
7. afaire lettere doro di che colore tu uuoi
8. afaire lettere che faran doro
9. Acazare uia un callo
10. Acacciare uia li porri
11. Aguarir il mal del figato
12. Aguarir il fluxo del sangue
13. Acacciar uia le uolatiche
14. Ameter una poliza inun uouo senza ro[m]p[er]lo
15. Ameter. oui in una i[n]gistara senza romp[er]li
16. Aguarir[e] gli ochi achi li auessi rossi o li lacri[m]asse
17. Afar li capelli rossi sendo canuti
18. Accacciar le lentigine del uolto
19. Astri[n]ger le lachr[m]e a un che lachri[m]asse liocchi
20. Aguarir il fredore a un ch[e] no[n] potesse parlare
21. Afar poluere da stringer il sangue
22. A sanare una stortura di piedi o di brazo

23. A fare du[n] barile daceto tornare i[n] sua p[er]fectio[n]e
24. A far arder il foco nellacqua o in uino
25. A far arder il foco nellacqua o in uino [sic- this entry occurs twice]
26. A fare che una i[n]gistara pie[n]a di uino ataca[n]dola. al solaro e da[n]doli du[n] bastro[ne] il uin rimara atacato
27. A far chu[n] pesce sara cotto i[n]tre modi aun t[em]po
28. A fare lacqua per cazare uia il mal franzoso
29. A fare andare uia li cimese che no[n] tornarano
30. A fare che ipeli cascano e che no[n] tornarano
31. A uolere che ipeli no[n] tinaschino piu
32. A far che un arosto qua[n]do le cotto il sara tutto Sanguie.
33. A caciare uia una doglia duna giunura
34. A fare latte mirabilmente
35. A fare una letra i[n] su un braccio che no[n] se possa lezere se non quando tu uorai.
36. A fare de uino marza senza aqua asito forte
37. A far saltare un polastro o capo[ne] cotto i[n] tauola
38. A fare che lho[mo] o do[nn]a n[on] si dricera p[er] una nocte
39. A far tirar il neruo a una p[er]sona p[er] dodice hore
40. A fare trare gran quantitate de correzze
41. A fare cento stranudi a una persona
42. A fare pomata in tutta perfectione
43. Ascriuer una lettera i[n]suna carta & brusar la carta e de quella cener fregarte il brazo rimara la scritta
44. A far carta nera& rossa da scriuer senza penna & inchiostro
45. A fare andare uia li pulese che no[n]tornarano

Appendix F: Recipe Book Tables of Contents

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Note: In cases where the spelling of a historical author's name varies from source to source, I have listed it by the standard spelling used in library catalogues, followed, in parentheses, by the name as it appears on the text.

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IMAGES



Figure 1. Tiziano Vecellio. *Portrait of Isabella d'Este*. 1534. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.



Figure 2. Piero del Pollaiuolo. *Portrait of a Young Woman*. ca.1470-80.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 3a. Makeover of model with titanium dioxide (ceruse substitute) skin whitener and red sandalwood rouge, and egg white glaze. At 'Making up the Renaissance' workshop, 18 March 2010, National Galleries Scotland. Photographs © Carolyn Henry photography.



Figure 3b. Finished renaissance makeover compared with detail from Paris Bordone's *Venetian Women at Their Toilet*. ca. 1545. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland. Photograph © Carolyn Henry photography.



Figure 4. Nettle skin whitener. At 'Making up the Renaissance' workshop, 18 March 2010, National Galleries Scotland. © Carolyn Henry photography.



Figure 5. Makeover of model with egg white base coat, titanium dioxide skin whitener and red sandalwood rouge (on lips). At 'Making up the Renaissance' workshop, 18 March 2010, National Galleries Scotland. © Carolyn Henry photography.

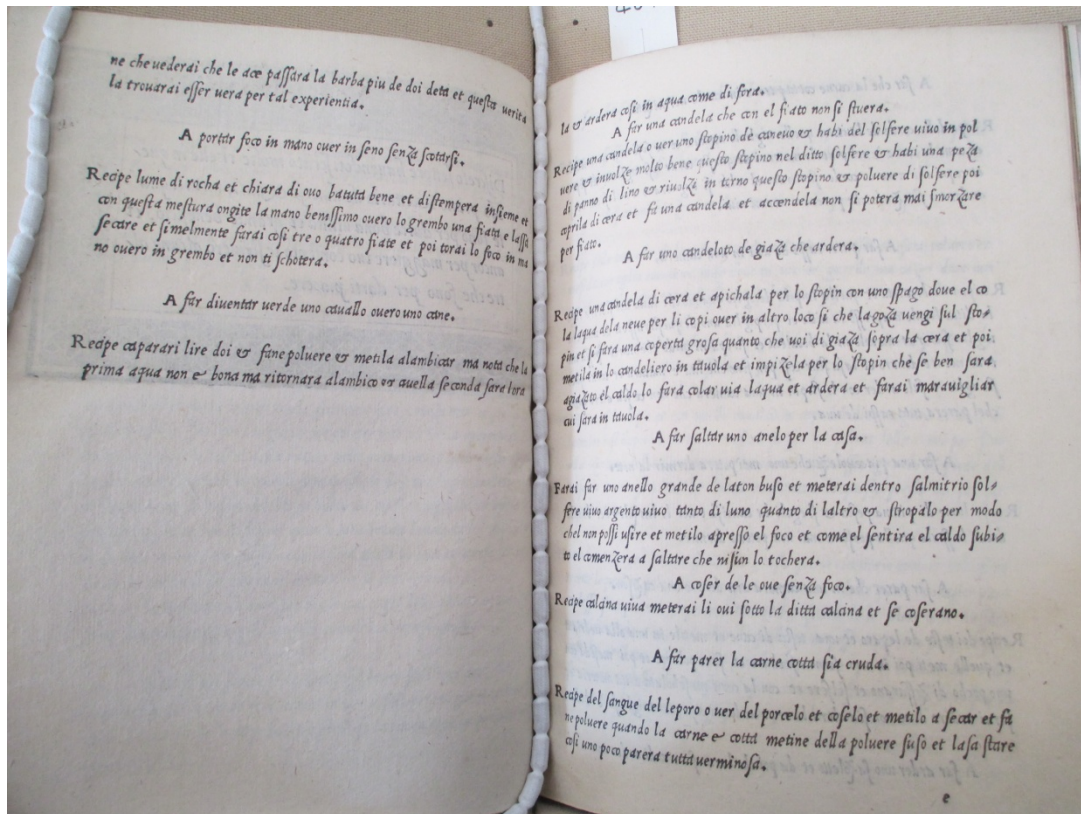


Figure 6. View of misprint, missing text at end of Chapter 1 of *Dificio de ricette*. (unpaginated) 1525. Fondazione Giorgio Cini. (FOAN TES 407).

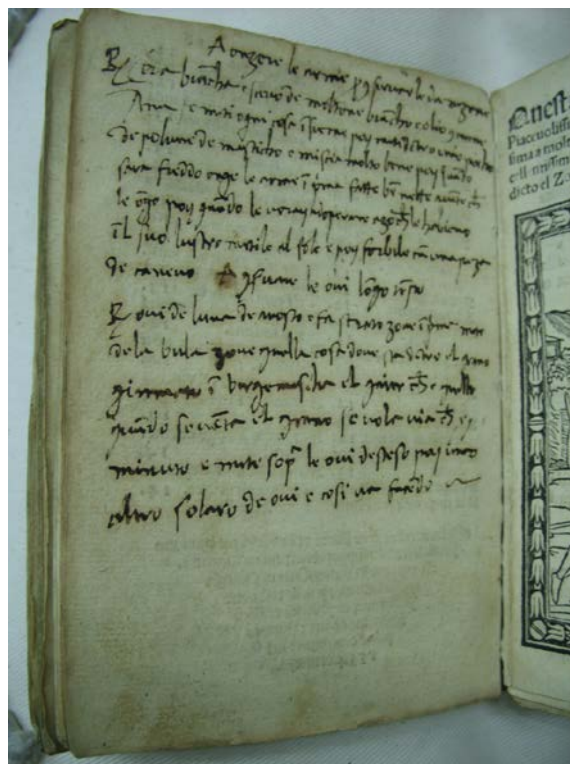


Figure 7. Eustachio Celebrino (Author). Handwritten recipe on final page of 1534 edition of *Opera nova piacevole*. 16^v. 1534. (Venice: Franc. di Alessandro Bindoni e Mapheo Pasini). London, Wellcome Institute (4630/B, no. 5).



Figure 8. [Eustachio Celebrino, author]. *Opera nova de Ricette e secreti che insengna apparecchiare vna Mensa a vno convito...* 1^r. ca. 1510. London, Wellcome Library (4630/B, no. 1).



Figure 9. Attributed to Baccio Baldini. *Venus* (detail). ca. 1465. (Florence). British Library.



Figure 10. Master CC. *The Planets (Venus)*. 1530-1550. French. 'Incomplete set of six plates representing planets with their corresponding god and zodiac'. British Library.



Figure 11. Francesco della Cossa. *Allegory of March* (detail). mid 15th century. Palazzo Schifanoia, Ferrara.



Figure 12. Lorenzo Lotto. *Venus and Cupid*. mid 1520s. Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure 13. [Petrus Hispanus, author]. First page of text of *Thesoro de poueri*. 1498. Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini (FOAN.G.223).



Figure 14. Image of Distillation from *Dificio de ricette*. 1525. (unpaginated). Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini (FOAN TES 407).

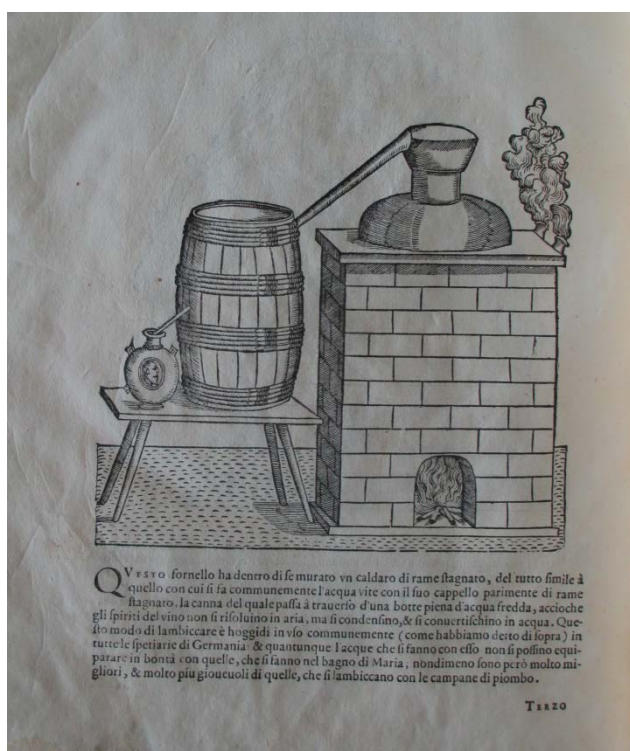


Figure 14a. Pietro Andrea Mattioli (author) 'Seconda Fornace'. *Del modo di distillare le acque da tutte le piante*. a3^v (detail). 1581. (Venice, Felice Valgriso). Edinburgh University Library.



Figure 15. *Dificio de ricette*. Frontispiece, 1^v. 1525. Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini. (FOAN TES 407).



Figure 16. Arnaldo da Villanova (author). ca. 1500. *Regimen sanitatis*. Title Page, 'A physician with his apprentice holding a mortar'. Wellcome Library, London.



Figure 17. *Dificio de ricette*. 1^v. 1531. Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice. (FOAN TES 410).



Figure 18. *Questa sie vna operetta molto Piaceuolissima...* 1^r. ca. 1525. (Venice: Nicolo dicto el Zopino). London, Wellcome Institute. (4630/B, no.6).

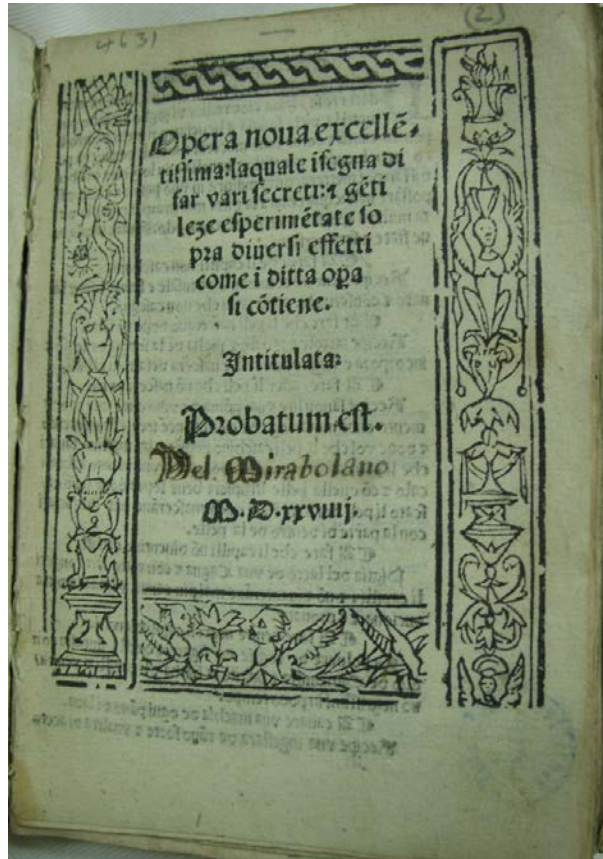


Figure 19. Frontispiece to *Probatum est*. (unpaginated). 1529. Venice. London, Wellcome Library (4630/B, no. 2).



Figure 20. *Secreti secretorum...* 1^r. ca. 1500. (Venice, Bernardino Benalio). London, Wellcome Library (4630/B, no. 4).



Figure 21. Raphael. *Lady with Unicorn*. ca. 1506. Galleria Borghese. (Image from wikimedia commons).



Figure 22. Agostino Veneziano. *Chastity*. 1515-1530. British Museum.



Figure 23. Baccio Baldini. *Emblem of Chastity*. 1465-1480. British Museum.

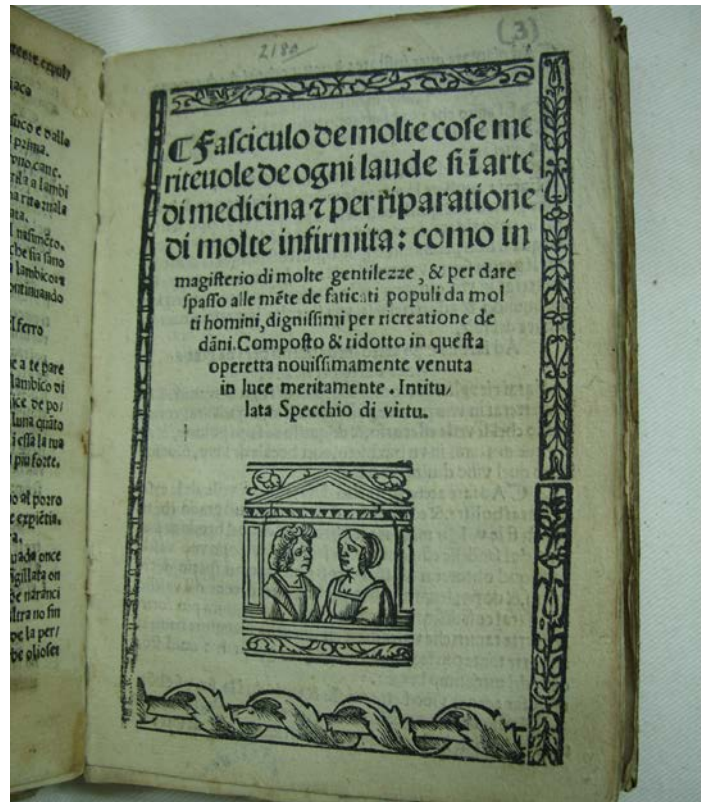


Figure 24. Frontispiece to *Specchio di virtu*. 1r. ca. 1510. (n. l.: Paulo Danza). London, Wellcome Institute (4630/B, no. 3).



Figure 25. *Spouted Drug Jar with an Embracing Couple* 1548. Maiolica. (Castelli, Italy). Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Dr. Francis W. Lewis Collection.

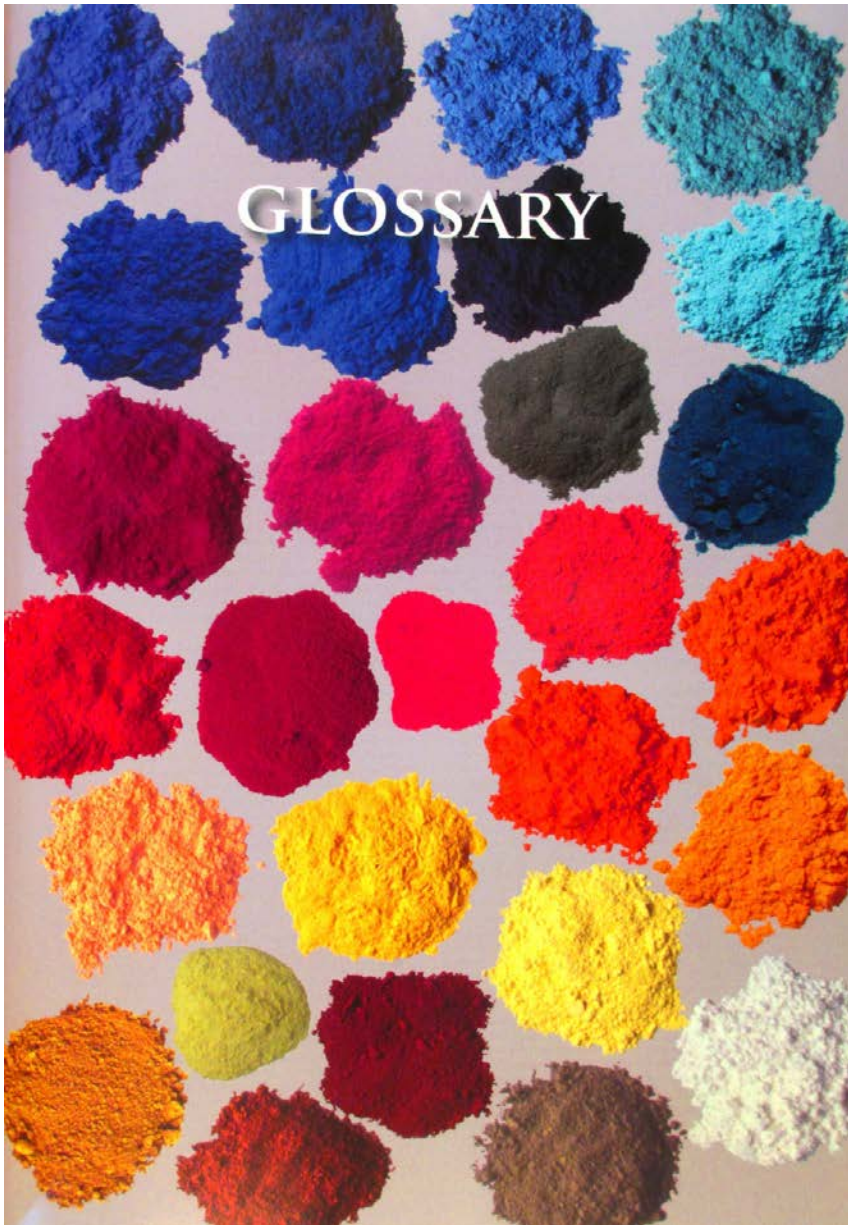


Figure 26. Artists' pigments. Top row, left to right: lapis lazuli ultramarine; high grade natural azurite; medium grade natural azurite; natural malachite. Second row: smalt; blue verditer (equivalent to artificial azurite); indigo; green verditer (equivalent to artificial malachite). Third row: lac lake; cochineal lake; green earth; verdigirs. Forth row: madder lake; kermes lake; a brazilwood lake; vermilion (below green earth) realgar. Fifth row: Naples yellow (lead antimonate); lead-tin yellow 'type II'; red lead (below vermilion); orpiment (below realgar). Sixth row: weld lake (below Naples yellow and lead-tin yellow 'type II'); synthetic red ochre (below lead-tin yellow 'type II'); lead-tin yellow 'type I' (below red lead). Bottom row: yellow ochre; natural red earth; raw umber; lead white.

Reproduced from Kirby, Nash and Cannon, eds., *Trade in Artists' Materials* (London: Archetype, 2010): 444 (caption), 445 (image). Image © The National Gallery, London.



Figure 27. Giovanni Bellini. *Young Woman at Her Toilette*. 1515. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.



Figure 28. *Queen of Coins: Elena*. Sola-Busca Tarot. Late 15th Century. Pinacoteca di Brera.



Figure 29. Cecco d'Ascoli. *L'Acerba Eta, Luxuria with Mirror*. 1456. (Florence).
Rhymed Bestiary, Bodleian Library, MS. Canon. Ital.38 (fol. 040r).



Figure 30. Titian and Workshop. *Girl Before the Mirror*. After 1515. Barcelona, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.



Figure 31. Tiziano Vecellio. *Woman with a Mirror (Lady at her Toilet)*. 1512-15. Paris, Musée du Louvre.



Figure 32. Tiziano Vecellio. *Young Woman at Her Toilet—Lady at the Mirror*. 1512-1515. Prague, Prague Castle Picture Gallery.



Figure 33. Follower of Titian. *Allegory*. 16th Century. Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art.



Figure 34. Bernardino Licinio. *Allegory*. ca. 1525. University of Miami, Lowe Art Museum.



Figure 34a. Licinio. *Allegory* (detail of bottle).



Figure 35. Palma il Vecchio. *Young Woman in Green Dress*. 1512-1514. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.



Figure 36. Palma il Vecchio. *Portrait of a Young Woman, known as 'La Bella'*. ca. 1525. Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza.



Figure 37. Paris Bordone. *Venetian Women at Their Toilet*. ca. 1545. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland.



Figure 38. Paris Bordone. *Woman at Her Dressing Table*. ca. 1550. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

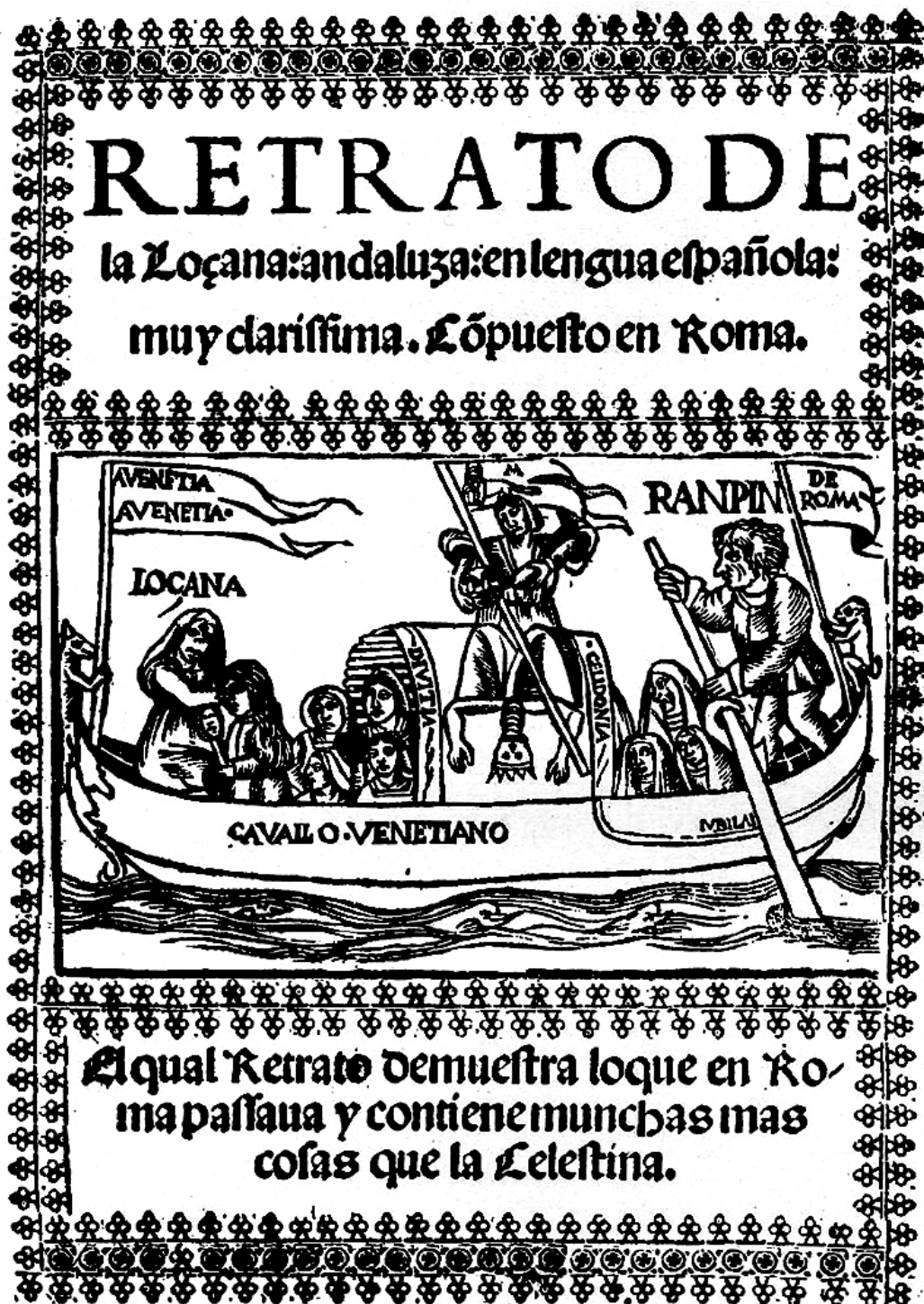


Figure 39. Francisco Delicado (author). Title Page, *Retrato dela Loçana: andaluza...* 1528. (Venice) folio 1r.



Figure 40. Francisco Delicado (author). Loçana's 'Workshop'. *Retrato dela Loçana: andaluza...*1528. (Venice) folio 1v.



Figure 41. Enea Vico, Francesco Salviati. *Vanity*. Mid 16th Century.



Figure 42. Cesare Vecellio, Cristoforo Guerra. 1598. *Habiti Antichi et Moderni*. (Venice) folio 112v.



Figure 43. Giovanni Bellini. *Four Allegories: Prudence*. ca. 1490. Venice, Accademia.



Figure 44. Titian. *Young Woman with a Mirror*. ca. 1515. Munich, Althe Pinakothek.



Figure 45. Bernardino Licinio. *Young Woman with a Mirror and Aged Lover*. ca. 1530. Private collection.



Figure 46. Coffret 'Onesta e Bella'. ca. 1400. Florence. Wood with painted and gilded gesso decoration. London, V&A Museum (object no. 9-1890).



Figure 47. Casket. ca. 1500. Northern Italy. Alder wood with white-lead base decoration and gilding. London, V&A Museum (object number 1565-1855).



Figure 48. Restello. Early 16th century. Venice? Poplar, carved, gilt, polychrome and pastiglia. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (accession number 1975.1.2104).



Figure 49. Frame (Restello). 1500-1550. Italy. Softwood and lime or poplar, carved and water gilded. London, V&A Museum (object number 7150-1860).



Figure 50. Tondo mirror frame. 1490-1500. Siena. Poplar, carved and gilded. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (accession number 1975.1.2101).

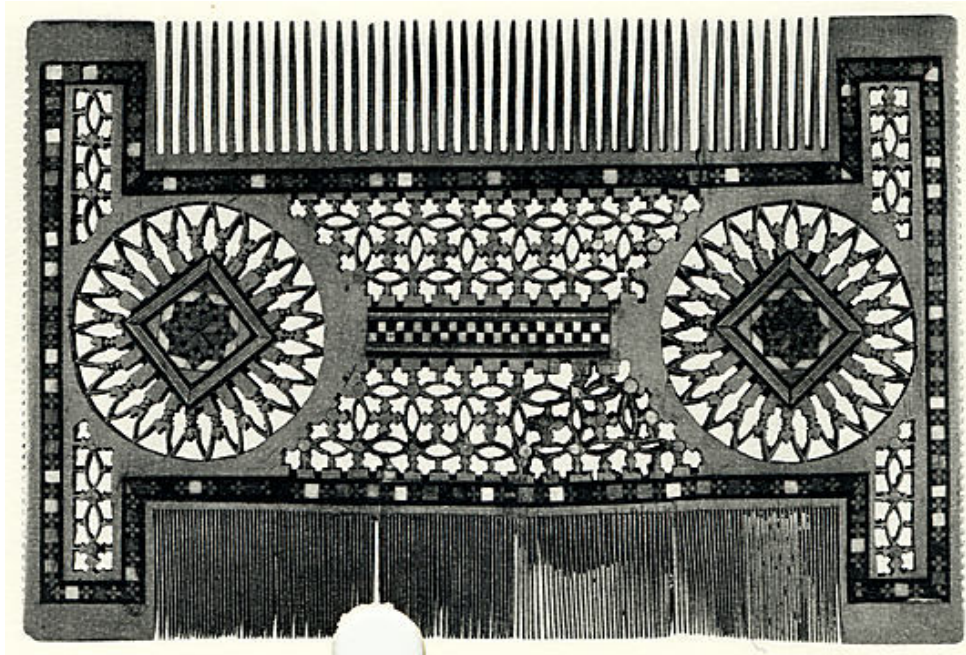


Figure 51. Comb. 15th century. Northern Italy. Wood with ebony and ivory inlay. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (accession number 61.30).



Figure 52. Woman's Comb. 15th-16th century. Italian or French. Ivory with paint and gilding. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (accession number 17.190.245).



Figure 53. Tintoretto. *Venus in the Mirror* (detail). Mid- to late- 16th century. New York, Riverdale-on-Hudson, Private Collection.



Figure 54. Dish Depicting a Virgin and a Unicorn (detail). ca. 1486-88. Italy, Pesaro. Maiolica. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (accession number 46.85.30).



Figure 55. Frame. 1500-1550. Tuscany. Poplar or lime with gilded pastiglia relief.
London, V&A Museum (object number 10-1890).

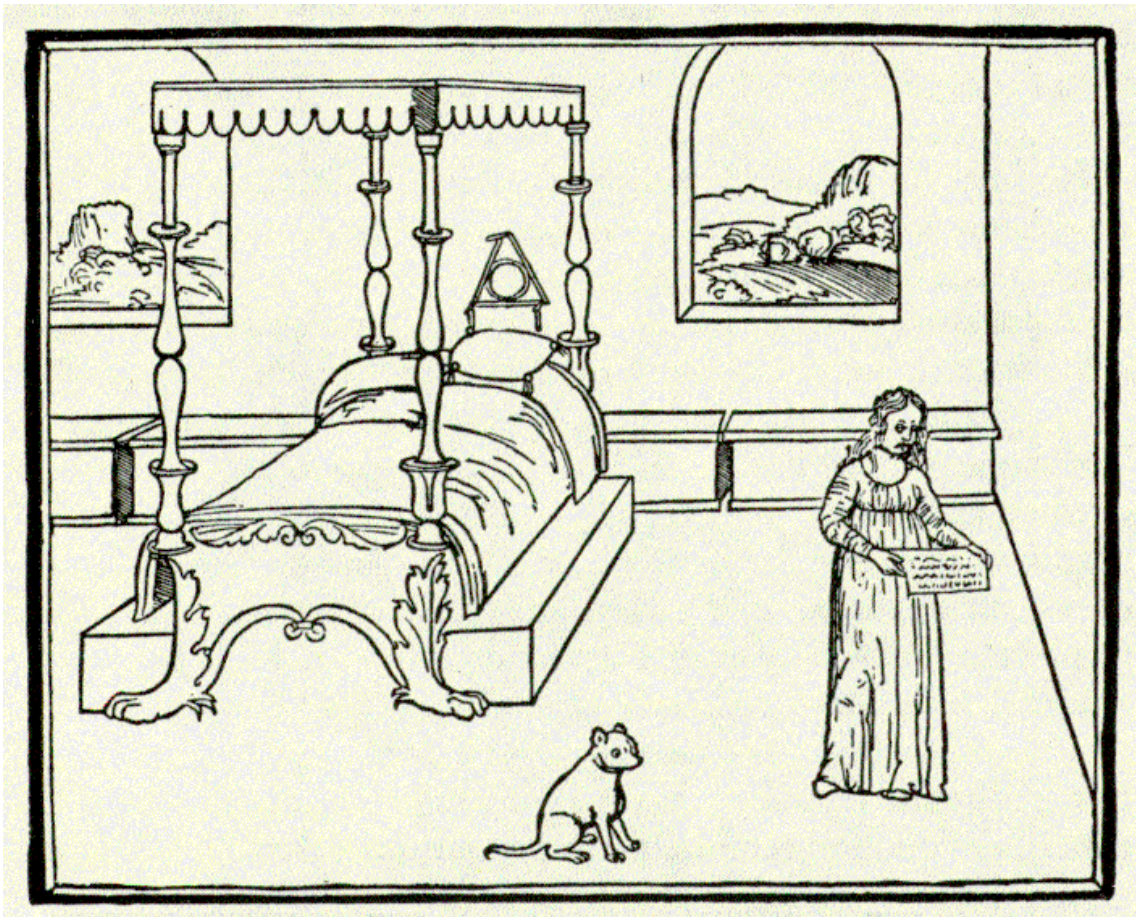


Figure 56. Francesco Colonna (attr. author). Polia reads Poliphilo's letter.
Hypnerotomachia poliphili. 1499. (Venice).



Figure 57. Jean Cousin le fils or Jean Goujon. Francesco Collona (attr. author). Polia reads Poliphilo's letter (detail). *Hypnerotomachie, ou Discours du songe de Poliphile*. 1546. (Paris). London, Warburg Institute (folio 152v).



Figure 58. Giulio Romano. *Woman with a Mirror*. ca. 1520-24. Moscow, Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts.

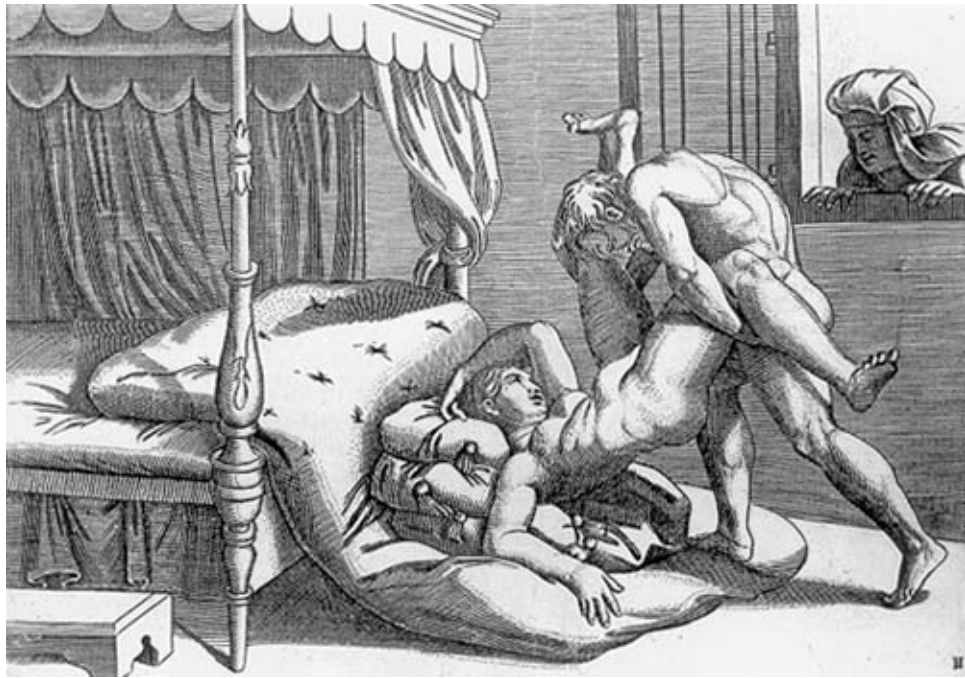


Figure 59. *I Modi: Position 11*. After Marcantonio Raimondi.



Figure 60. Giulio Romano. *The Lovers*. ca. 1525. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage Museum.



Figure 61. Tiziano Vecellio. *Diana and Actaeon*. 1556-1559. Edinburgh, National Galleries, Scotland.

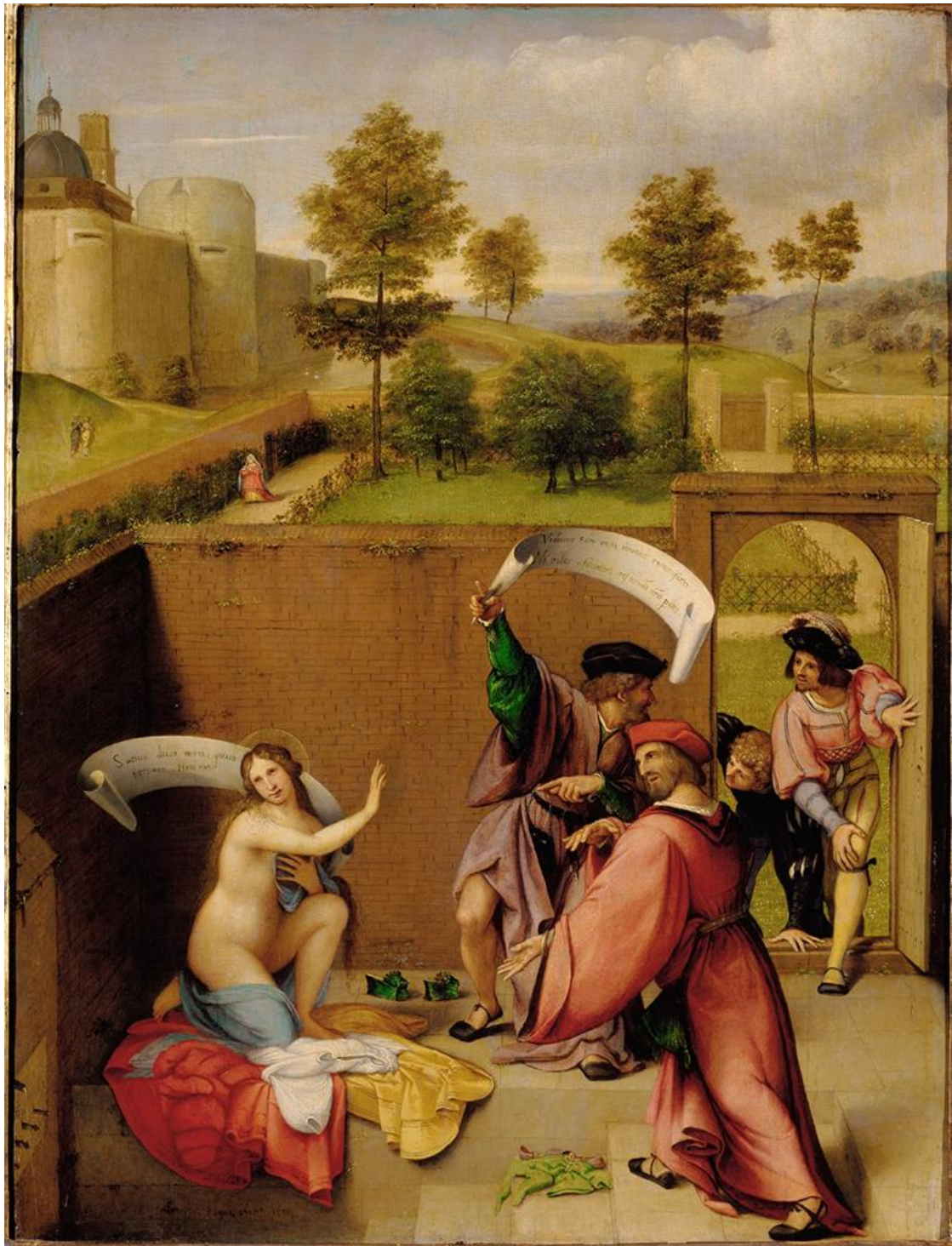


Figure 62. Lorenzo Lotto. *Susanna and the Elders*. 1517. Florence, Uffizi Gallery.



Figure 63. Giulio Romano. *Toilet of Bathsheba*. First half of the 16th century. Mantua, Palazzo del Te (Atrio di Davide).

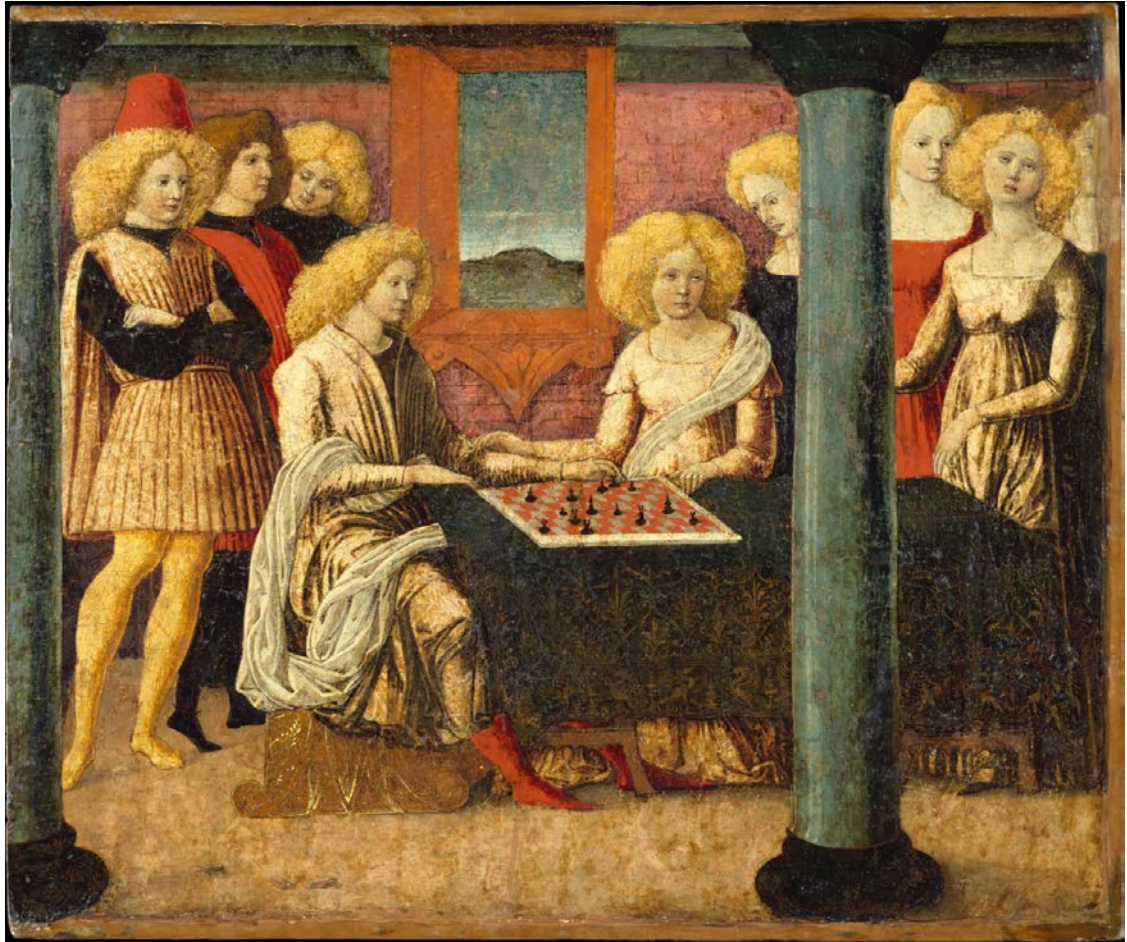


Figure 64. Liberale da Verona. *The Chess Players*. ca. 1475. Siena. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art (accession number 43.98.8).



Figure 65. Tiziano Vecellio. *Venus of Urbino*. 1538. Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi.



Figure 66. Vittore Carpaccio. *Apotheosis of St Ursula*. 1491. Venice, Accademia Gallery.



Figure 67. Bernardino Licinio. *Portrait of a Lady*. 1520-1530. Rome, British Embassy, British Government Art Collection.



Figure 68. Bernardino Licinio. *Portrait of a Lady*. ca. 1530. Carrara, Accademia Carrara.



Figure 69. Bernardino Licinio. *Portrait of a Lady*. 1520s. Venice, Ca' d'Oro.

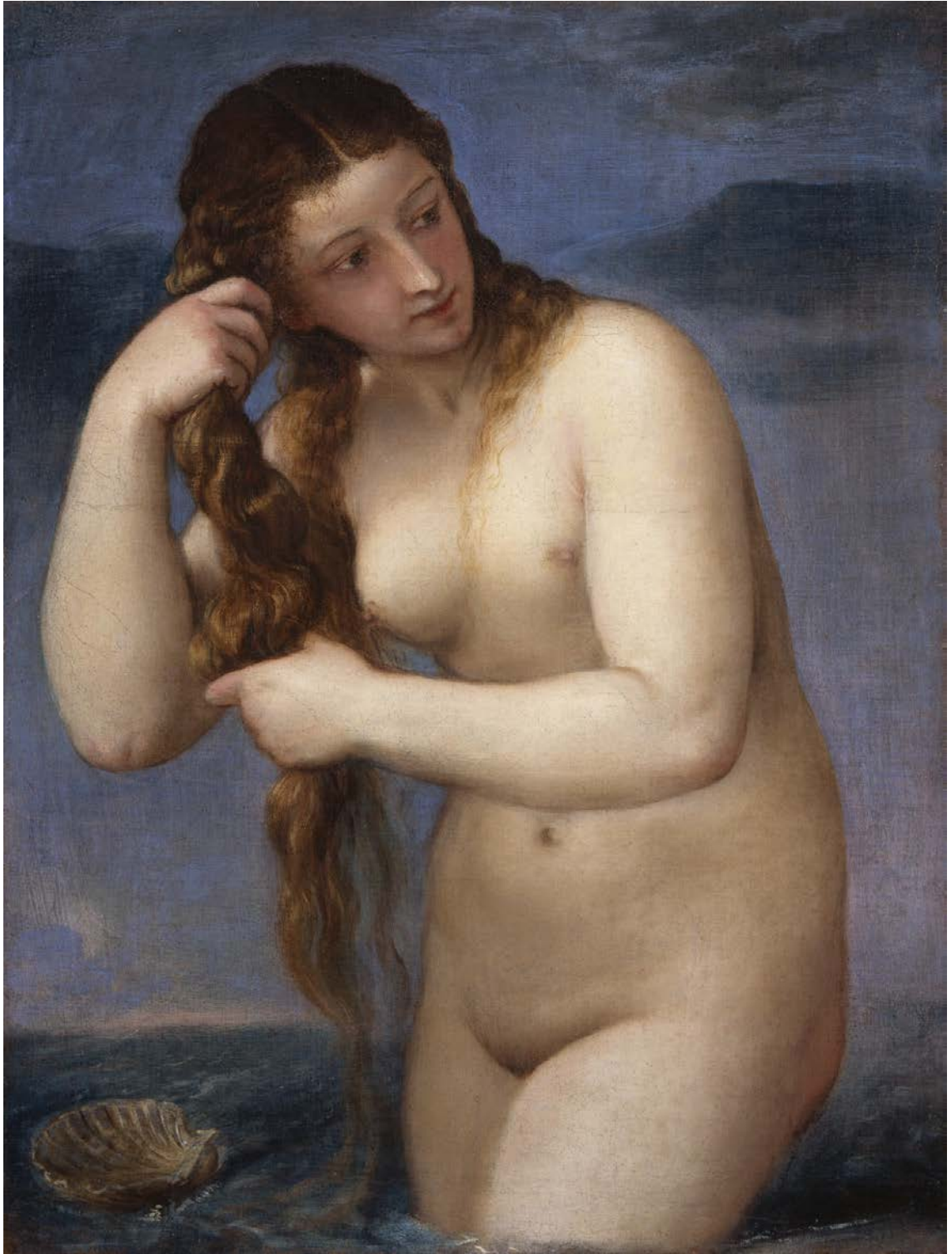


Figure 70. Tiziano Vecellio. *Venus Anadyomene*. ca. 1520. Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland.



Figure 71. Raffaello Sanzio. *Loggia di Raffaello, Vault: Stories of David*. 1516-19. Vatican, Loggia di Raffaello.



Figure 72. *Prudence Playing Card (Mantegna Tarot Cards)*. 1470-1480. (Ferrara).
London, British Museum.



Figure 73. Master of 1515. *Fortune*. 1510-1520. London, British Museum.



Figure 74. *Dish with Satyr Head, Fruit and Foliage*. 1540-1550. (Venice). London, V&A Museum.