



The Practice of Reform in Health, Medicine, and Science, 1500–2000

Essays for Charles Webster

Edited by

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Chapter 8

Between Anatomy and Politics: John Finch and Italy, 1649–1671

Stefano Villani

In the chapel of Christ's College at Cambridge, one may visit the burial monument of John Finch and Thomas Baines. Two medallions with the sculpted portraits of two friends, their eyes peering at the observer, are posed on two tablets, on which runs a single, long Latin inscription celebrating the knot of friendship which in life and death linked the two for more than thirty years, permitting them to share 'interests, fortunes, counsels'.¹

Finch and Baines met each other, in their twenties, in that college in the 1640s. Finch came to Christ's in 1648, having completed part of his studies at Oxford, and there he met Baines, who was introduced to him by Henry More, their common tutor. From that moment onwards, and for the rest of their lives, the two men became inseparable from one another.

John Finch and Thomas Baines

Born in 1626, Finch was about four years younger than Baines and came from one of the most illustrious families in England: his father, Heneage Finch, who died in 1631, had been Speaker of the House of Commons and both his uncle Thomas and, later, his cousin Heneage were earls of Winchilsea.² We know very little about the years that Finch and Baines spent together in Cambridge. What is sure is that, after their initial acquaintance, the two men embarked upon a deep and lasting friendship that made them virtually indissoluble in the minds of their contemporaries and

I would like to express my thanks to Sandra Cerrai, Sara Bonechi, Mario Caricchio, Maria Pia Donato, Giuseppina Petroccia, Adriano Prosperi, and Mario Rosa for their help.

- 1 Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago, 2003). Just a few weeks before his death in 2001, I corresponded with Alan Bray and he very kindly sent to me the chapter from his forthcoming book dealing with the friendship of Finch and Baines.
- 2 See Arthur Collins, *Peerage of England*, ed. Sir Egerton Brydges (9 vols, London, 1812), iii, pp. 378–9.

of posterity. It was a friendship that Finch, in a poem written after the death of his friend, described as *Animorum Connubium* and that, as a matter of fact, resembled in every respect a marriage. From 1649, Baines, who came from a modest family, followed Finch like a shadow in all his travels and stays abroad, and the two figures seemed as one.

The two friends, after having completed their MA degrees in 1649 – the fatal year in which Charles I was beheaded – decided to leave their country, now in the hands of people who seemed to them to be the enemies of friendship, and set off for Italy.³

John Finch at Padua

I left England in that unhappy time when honesty was reputed a crime, religion superstition, loyalty treason; when subjects were governors, servants masters, and no gentleman assured of any thing he possessed.... This posture of affairs so changed the face of home, that to live there appeared worse than banishment; which caused most of our youth (especially such whose families had adhered to the late king) to travel; amongst others myself.⁴

These were the reasons that, Sir John Reresby declared, with some emphasis, had induced him in 1654 to abandon England and to travel on the continent. And these were certainly the reasons that also persuaded Finch – who came from a royalist family and had perhaps served in the army of Charles I – to leave his country and to go to Padua to study medicine.⁵

In autumn 1651 Finch, with his already inseparable friend Baines, set off for a new life on the continent. The two spent the winter of 1651 in Paris and in April 1652 reached Geneva, where they stayed for some months.⁶ Then they started their journey to Padua, where they arrived in October of that year.⁷

3 Thomas Archibald Malloch, *Finch and Baines, A Seventeenth-Century Friendship* (Cambridge, 1917). For the supposed enmity of Cromwell's soldiers to friendship see G. Cozzi, *Venezia barocca. Conflitti di uomini e idee nella crisi del Seicento veneziano* (Venice, 1995), p. 405.

4 Albert Ivatt, ed., *The Memoirs and Travels of Sir John Reresby* (London, 1904), p. 1.

5 For the possibility that Finch participated in the civil war see Malloch, *Finch and Baines*, pp. 2–3.

6 See the letters by John Finch to Anne Conway, Paris 10/20 November 1651, Paris 1/11 December 1651, Geneva 27 April/7 May 1652, Geneva 1/10 August 1652, in Marjorie Hope Nicolson, ed., *Conway Letters* (New York, 1930), pp. 55, 58–61, 62–4, 64–7.

7 Horatio F. Brown, 'Inglesi e scozzesi all'Università di Padova 1618–1775', in *Contributo del R. Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti alla Celebrazione del VII Centenario della Università di Padova* (Venice, 1921), pp. 140–213. See letters by John Finch to Anne Conway, Venice 10/20 February 1653, Venice 9 N. S. April 1653,

The University of Padua of the *Universitas Iuristarum Artistarum*, for those who universities were structured annually at the beginning of an organized body in the to study medicine (as indeed instead matriculated among Molinetti, author of impo Johann Wesling in the chosenominated pro-rector and ment, in autumn 1657, he separable friend, Baines.¹⁰

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9 On Molinetti see Ar Molinetti anatomico p 102.

10 In the same year (16 Lucia Rossetti, ed., G. 2339, 2795, 2810–281

11 See London, British Li

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Seventeenth-Century Friendship
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3, Venice 9 N. S. April 1653,

The University of Padua was then organized into the two student corporations of the *Universitas Iuristarum*, for those who studied law, and of the *Universitas Artistarum*, for those who studied philosophy, medicine and arts. Both of these universities were structured by 'Nations' which designated representatives who formed the university council, headed by a syndic and pro-rector, who was elected annually at the beginning of August. Because the English nation was not present as an organized body in the *Universitas Artistarum*, Finch and Baines, who intended to study medicine (as indeed did almost all the Englishmen who studied at Padua), instead matriculated amongst the jurists.⁸ Their professor of anatomy was Antonio Molinetti, author of important studies on the sense organs, who had succeeded Johann Wesling in the chair after his death.⁹ On 1 August 1656 John Finch was nominated pro-rector and syndic of the jurists and, at the end of his year in government, in autumn 1657, he graduated. With him, naturally, graduated also his inseparable friend, Baines.¹⁰

Eight years had already passed since the two friends left their own country. We do not know if Finch wanted to return to England, but almost certainly he preferred not to come back to his country when Cromwell was still in power and at the height of his influence on both the English and international scenes. Possibly, in the months after they had taken their degrees, he and Baines travelled in Italy.¹¹ In any case, in spring 1659, the two relocated to Tuscany.

The first period of John Finch as lecturer at the University of Pisa

In 1659 the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was certainly the place in Italy where the finest resources to pursue their researches were offered to scholars of the anatomical and biological sciences. Moreover, it afforded the best opportunities for scholarly discussion and for interrogating the results obtained by other researchers.

Padua 6 November N. S. 1653, Padua 9/19 November 1653, Padua 30 November/10 December 1653, in Nicolson, ed., *Conway Letters*, pp. 73–4, 77–9, 86–90.

8 The matriculation roll of Englishmen has been published by Gian Luigi Andrich, *De Natione Anglica et Scotia Iuristarum Universitatis Patavinae ab a. MCCXII p. ch. n. usque ad a. MDCCXXXVIII* (Padua, 1892). For the English students at Padua see Lucia Rossetti, 'Membri del "Royal College of Physicians" di Londra laureati nell'Università di Padova', *Atti e Memorie della Accademia Patavina di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, 75 (1962–3), 175–201; for the Tudor years see Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 28.

9 On Molinetti see Andrea Bosatra, 'L'organo dell'udito negli studi di Antonio Molinetti anatomico padovano del '600', *Minerva otorinolaringologica*, 4 (1954), 99–102.

10 In the same year (1656) Baines was elected counsellor for the English nation. See Lucia Rossetti, ed., *Gli stemmi dello studio di Padova* (Trieste 1983), numbers 328, 2339, 2795, 2810–2810bis. For Baines see numbers 1095, 2812.

11 See London, British Library, MS. Add. 23, 214, fols 32, 38.

Both Ferdinand II, Grand Duke of Tuscany from 1620, and his brother Prince Leopold, a sort of 'minister of culture' of the grand dukedom, showed great personal interest in the new Galilean science. After Galileo's condemnation they tried to find a point of equilibrium between the will to further scientific research – which bestowed enormous prestige upon the Medici dynasty and which afforded a real intellectual pleasure both to the Grand Duke and, especially, to his brother Leopold – and the pressing necessity to avoid incurring any further ecclesiastical censure that would inevitably have brought about an end to these kind of researches. The strategy that had been adopted was to promote and finance biological and meteorological studies especially, letting the scholars involved in such researches clearly understand that it was necessary to avoid drawing any consequences of a general order about the structure of the universe or of the physical world. Thanks to Leopold's wishes, from 1657 research activity structured itself into an academy that came to be known by the name *Cimento*. In order to pursue the strategy that we have described, intellectuals with different philosophical and methodological orientations were called to be its members: there was a conservative group which included Carlo Rinaldini and, especially, the acknowledged Aristotelian Alessandro Marsili; there was the group of moderate Galileans which included Vincenzo Viviani, Francesco Redi and Lorenzo Magalotti; and, eventually, a group of innovators which included Giovanni Alfonso Borelli and Antonio Oliva.¹²

Finch was not the only British intellectual to find an appointment in Tuscany in these years. One year before his arrival in Pisa, the Scotsman Thomas Forbes, who had been at the University of Padua in the same years as Finch, was appointed Extraordinary Professor of Philosophy and then, after one year, took the chair of Theoretical Medicine, a chair that he kept for three academic years until 1662, the year in which he decided to return to his own country.¹³ The Catholic Hellenist John Price lived in Florence between 1651 and 1658, being maintained by the Grand Duke and by Prince Leopold.¹⁴ The Catholic priest Peter Fitton, who was for

a long time in Italy, took office in October 1656.¹⁵

So there is some truth to which from all the parties their pilgrimages' were *virtute*').¹⁶

Finch was appointed to Florence at the beginning of 1660 and Baines performed a tour of general admiration.¹⁷

In the long-lasting controversy between the academicians of Cimento and the question alongside the formation of a scientific point of view from a scientific point of view Oliva regarding the vacuum the space of a few months two English anatomists (invited into an open and ended with numerous letters to Malpighi).

In April 1660, with the end and obtained permission to return at the end of the vacation. The year formed in just a few months of events, preparing

also Laura Giovannini, *Lettere di Ottavio Falsoni*. There are many letters from Florence, MSS Redi, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale.

- 12 On the Academy of the Cimento see W.E. Knowles Middleton, *The Experimenters. A Study of the Accademia del Cimento* (Baltimore, 1971); Paolo Galluzzi, 'L'accademia del Cimento: "Gusti" del Principe, filosofia e ideologia dell'esperimento', *Quaderni Storici*, 16 (1981), 788–844; Ugo Baldini, 'Un libertino accademico del Cimento Antonio Oliva', *Supplemento agli Annali dell'Istituto e Museo di Storia della Scienza*, 1 (1977), 33–5; Galluzzi, ed., *Scienziati a Corte. L'arte della sperimentazione nell'Accademia Galileiana del Cimento (1657–1667)* (Livorno, 2001).
- 13 Forbes matriculated in February 1650 and in August of that year he was elected counsellor for the Scotch nation. On John Forbes see Alistair Tayler and Henrietta Tayler, *The House of Forbes* (Aberdeen, 1937), pp. 300, 472. See *Storia dell'Università di Pisa* (Pisa, 2000), vol. I*, p. 310; see Brown, 'Inglesi e scozzesi all'Università di Padova', number 433^c, p. 157; Andrich, *De Natione Anglicana et Scotica*, pp. 112, 176.
- 14 Edward Chaney, *The Grand Tour and the Great Rebellion. Richard Lassels and 'The Voyage of Italy' in the Seventeenth Century* (Geneva, 1985), pp. 263, 274–5, 290; Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti delle scienze fisiche accaduti in Toscana nel corso di anni LX del sec. XVII* (3 vols, Florence, 1780), i, p. 489; see

- 15 On Fitton, properly Baines, see BNCNF, MS. Gal. 276, su alcuni contatti Toscani.
- 16 Francesco Redi, *Esperienze di Fisica* (Venice, 1712), ii, pp. 209–10.
- 17 *Storia dell'Università di Pisa*, aggrandimenti, ii, p. 5.
- 18 Borelli to Malpighi, PNCNF, MS. Gal. 276, *Correspondence of Francesco Redi* (Florence, 1972), p. 35.
- 19 *Malpighi Correspondence*, see BNCNF, MS. Gal. 276, (Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti delle scienze fisiche accaduti in Toscana nel corso di anni LX del sec. XVII*), su alcuni contatti Toscani.
- 20 BNCNF, MS. Gal. 276, su alcuni contatti Toscani.

0, and his brother Prince Leopold, showed great persistence in his condemnation they tried to carry out scientific research – which was not only and which afforded a real intellectual challenge, to his brother Leopold but also to the ecclesiastical censure which was the kind of researches. The Academy of the Physical and Meteorological Sciences in such researches clearly showed the consequences of a general scientific revolution in the physical world. Thanks to the Academy it led itself into an academy to pursue the strategy that was both theoretical and methodological and which was a conservative group which included Aristotelian Alessandro Lessa – which included Vincenzo Vivanti. Eventually, a group of innovative scientists, Antonio Oliva.¹²

On his appointment in Tuscany by the Scotsman Thomas Forbes, as well as Finch, was appointed in the year, took the chair of Natural History until 1662, the year of the Catholic Hellenist being maintained by the Peter Fitton, who was for

Oliver, *The Experimenters. A History of the Experimental Philosophy* (London, 1990).
 Paolo Galluzzi, 'L'accademia dell'esperienza', *Quaderni di storia della scienza, della sperimentazione nell'Europa del XVII secolo* (Florence, 2001).
 In that year he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society by William Brouncker and Henrietta Maria. See *Storia dell'Università di Pisa*, pp. 112, 176.
 1. Richard Lassels and 'The History of the Royal Society' (London, 1685), pp. 263, 274–5, 290; *Storia della scienza e delle scienze fisiche accadute in Inghilterra* (London, 1780), i, p. 489; see

a long time in Italy, took care of the Medicean collection of medals until his death in October 1656.¹⁵

So there is some truth to Redi's description of the court of Florence as 'a court to which from all the parts of the world' were welcomed 'great men, who with their pilgrimages' were 'searching and bringing goods of virtue' ('*merci di virtude*').¹⁶

Finch was appointed lecturer in anatomy at the University of Pisa and at Florence at the beginning of May 1659. For the pleasure of Prince Leopold, Finch and Baines performed a first anatomical demonstration which was received with general admiration.¹⁷

In the long-lasting conflict between the moderate group of the majority of the academicians of Cimento and the more radical Borelli, Finch lined up without question alongside the former. They were closer to him from both a personal and from a scientific point of view. We know for example that in a discussion with Oliva regarding the vacuum, Finch and Baines denied its existence strongly.¹⁸ In the space of a few months, the initial curiosity that Borelli had shown towards the two English anatomists (the '*notomisti inglesi*') transformed rapidly and progressively into an open and explicit hostility, of which we can find many traces in his numerous letters to Malpighi from this period.¹⁹

In April 1660, with the end of the academic year approaching, Finch asked for and obtained permission to come to England and to stay there for a while, until the end of the vacation. The English political situation had been completely transformed in just a few months: Cromwell died in September 1658 and, in a tumultuous run of events, preparations were now being made for Charles II's restoration.²⁰

also Laura Giovannini, ed., *Carteggio d'artisti dell'Archivio di Stato di Firenze e Lettere di Ottavio Falconieri a Leopoldo de' Medici* (Florence, 1984), pp. 21, 166–7.

There are many letters written by Price to Redi in the Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence, MSS Redi 222, fols 91–129, and from Price to Prince Leopold in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence (hereafter BNCF), MS. Lettere Aut. Palat. 75.

15 On Fitton, properly Biddulph, see Chaney, *The Grand Tour*, p. 261.

16 Francesco Redi, *Esperienze intorno a diverse cose naturali...*, in Redi, *Opere* (5 vols, Venice, 1712), ii, pp. 2–3.

17 *Storia dell'Università di Pisa*, vol. I*, pp. 519, 559; Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti*, ii, p. 599.

18 Borelli to Malpighi, Pisa 7 November 1659, printed in Howard B. Adelman, ed., *The Correspondence of Marcello Malpighi* (Ithaca, 1975) (hereafter, *Malpighi Correspondence*), p. 22; see also Baldini, 'Un libertino accademico del Cimento Antonio Oliva', p. 35.

19 *Malpighi Correspondence*, *passim*. For the scientific activity of Finch in this period see BNCF, MS. Baldovinetti 258 III.19 and *Report on Finch Papers*, ii, pp. 500–1 (Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti*, i, p. 269).

20 BNCF, MS. Gal. 276, fols 27^r–28^r; Finch to Leopold. See Anna Maria Crinò, 'Inediti su alcuni contatti Tosco-Britannici nel Seicento', *English Miscellany*, 12 (1961), 147–209.

And so the two friends left for London, reaching the city a few weeks after the arrival of Charles Stuart.²¹

An important English intermezzo (1660–2)

As is well known, the king did not forget the people who had remained loyal during the difficult years of his exile, and, among those who had proof of the affection and gratitude of the sovereign, there were many members of Finch's family. In June 1660 John's elder brother Heneage Finch was appointed solicitor-general and made a baronet and his cousin, also a Heneage Finch, already the governor of Dover castle, was created a baron.

Finch and Baines evidently appreciated the new political climate of their country and, contrary to what they had initially envisioned, stayed on in England till the end of 1662, well after the date of December 1660, when they had originally expected to return to Italy.

The year 1661 was really an *annus mirabilis* for the two Englishmen: on 26 February 1661 both were elected extraordinary members of the College of Physicians; in March, Baines was appointed Professor of Music at Gresham College; and finally, in June, Finch was knighted. In a couple of weeks both he and Baines were awarded the degree of doctor of physic by the University of Cambridge.

During these two and a half years spent in England, Finch wrote with some regularity to Prince Leopold, each time offering apologies and excuses for the impossibility of his returning to Florence because of his duties and the important affairs of his family ('affari importanti di casa') which kept him in his homeland. Apart from excuses and compliments, his letters generally dealt with the English political situation, giving notice of the successes of Charles II's domestic and foreign policy.²² The tone of the letters makes it clear that Finch wanted to return to his chair of anatomy in Tuscany, but nevertheless what emerges is a progressive dimming of his general medical-naturalistic interests for, significantly, in the majority of his letters there is not any trace of discussion of scientific problems. In

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On 28 November 16 long time met at Greshar natural science decided week they produced an a was signed also by John Leopold know that in L Academy ('per far dell Accademia del Cimento, had proposed to some Tuscany.²³ Having recei pondence, Finch, in Jun future Royal Society) is will.²⁶

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21 See Finch to ?, in Archivio di Stato, Florence (hereafter ASF); MS. Misc. Medicea 62/2, fols 543–4; see letter by Oldenburg to Boyle, October 1661, in *The Correspondence of Henry Oldenburg*, edited and translated by A. Rupert Hall and Marie Boas Hall (13 vols, Madison and Milwaukee, London, Philadelphia, 1965–1986) (hereafter *Oldenburg Correspondence*), i, pp. 440–2; Michael Hunter, Antonio Clericuzio, and Lawrence M. Principe, eds, *The Correspondence of Robert Boyle* (6 vols, London, 2001), i, p. 466.

22 In the *fondo galileiano* of the BNCF are kept these letters by Finch to Leopold: 12/22 October 1660 (MS. Gal. 281, number 148, fols 181^r–183^r); 30 November 1660 (*ibid.*, number 26, fols 32^r–33^r); 12/22 April 1661 (MS. Gal. 280, number 39, fols 77^r–78^r). All of them have been transcribed thanks to the Progetto Galileo and it is possible to access the digitized version of the letters and their transcripts at this web address: <<http://www.bnsefirenze.sbn.it/cgi-galileo/makeQuery.cgi>>.

23 BNCF, MS. Gal. 280 'Biblioteca Città di di uomini illustri (2 degli aggrandimenti, derations Touching Davis, eds, *The Wor* see also, Hunter, Cl 373, 552.

24 Thomas Birch, *The Knowledge from its j*

25 Finch to Leopold, in

26 Finch to Leopold, 9 with some courtly fl ('per far delle esperi dated answer by L Italian visitors to the *Society of London, menters*, p. 288.

this respect the first letter (dated 17 August 1660), in which Finch recounts at length both a meeting he had in Rotterdam with the anatomist Lodewijk Bills and an encounter with a blind man of Maastricht allegedly capable of distinguishing colours by touch, is an exception.²³

On 28 November 1660 the little group of philosophers and scientists who for a long time met at Gresham College to discuss issues in experimental philosophy and natural science decided to create a more organized structure, and the following week they produced an ample petition to the king to obtain an official sanction that was signed also by John Finch.²⁴ On 18 January 1661 Finch hastened to let Prince Leopold know that in London – thanks to a ‘royal command’ – an experimental Academy (‘per far delle esperienze’) had been born, similar to the Florentine Accademia del Cimento, and that he, knowing the attitude (‘il genio’) of the prince, had proposed to some ‘virtuosi’ the idea of starting a correspondence with Tuscany.²⁵ Having received from Leopold some encouragement to start this correspondence, Finch, in June of that year, advised that the experimental Academy (the future Royal Society) instructed him to thank the prince formally for his goodwill.²⁶

The absence of its lecturer in anatomy, however, was starting to create problems for the University of Pisa, where – as noted with malevolent satisfaction by Borelli – the students were starting to complain about Finch’s absence (‘per l’assenza dello Sfinchio’). These complaints were provoked by the fact that Tilman Trutwin, the Flemish anatomist who since the time of Aubry (Finch’s predecessor as professor of anatomy) had collaborated with a reputedly extraordinary dexterity on the dissections of the professors of anatomy, was now able only to cut but not to

23 BNCF, MS. Gal. 280, number 40, fols 79^r–82^r (a manuscript copy is in the Istituzione ‘Biblioteca Città di Arezzo’, MS. 188, fol. 124). See Angelo Fabroni, *Lettere inedite di uomini illustri* (2 vols, Florence, 1773–5), i, pp. 261–5; Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti*, i, pp. 272–3. Boyle spoke of the blind in *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours* (London, 1664): see Michael Hunter and Edward B. Davis, eds, *The Works of Robert Boyle* (14 vols, London, 1999–2000), iv, pp. 40–5; see also, Hunter, Clericuzio and Principe, *Correspondence of Robert Boyle*, ii, pp. 373, 552.

24 Thomas Birch, *The History of the Royal Society of London for improving of Natural Knowledge from its first rise* (4 vols, reprinted New York, 1968), i, pp. 3–4.

25 Finch to Leopold, in BNCF, MS. Gal. 276, number 2, fols 2^r–3^r.

26 Finch to Leopold, 9 June 1661, in BNCF, MS. Gal. 276, number 67, fol. 130^{r-v}. Finch, with some courtly flattery, said that the Academy was born to make some experiments (‘per far delle esperienze’) following the model of the Florentine one. See also an undated answer by Leopold (*ibid.*, fol. 217). See W.E. Knowles Middleton, ‘Some Italian visitors to the early Royal Society’, *Notes and Records of the Royal Historical Society of London*, 33 (1979), 157–73, at p. 157; Knowles Middleton, *The Experimenters*, p. 288.

speak.²⁷ Yet, for the second consecutive academic year, the chair remained deserted and it was only on 25 October 1662 that Finch and Baines left England to come back to Italy.²⁸

For the second time in Italy: Florence (1663–4) and Padua (1664–5)

As soon as Finch arrived in Pisa in January 1663, he was immediately engaged in an anatomical demonstration,²⁹ and over the following months he continued apace with his academic activity. In autumn 1663 Finch and Baines went to Naples. Their Neapolitan stay was very short, but useful: there they had very detailed news ('particolarissima notizia') of Tommaso Cornelio – 'Cartesian and a great defender of new things' ('cartesiano et molto difensore delle cose nuove') – and were able to purchase part of Severino's library. In Rome, on their way back to Tuscany, they met Michelangelo Ricci, a sort of ambassador of the Medici court for scientific affairs in the Roman curia.³⁰

27 Borelli to Malpighi, 13 January 1662, in *Malpighi Correspondence*, p. 112 (see also the letter of 29 December 1661, at p. 93). See ASF, MS. Misc. Med. 87/6, fol. 6^r. In September 1661 Finch apparently wanted to come back to Pisa and both he and Baines asked for and obtained permission from the College of Physicians to leave England, but then they postponed their departure; see John Ward, *The Lives of the Professors of Gresham College* (London, 1740), p. 229.

28 *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series of the Reign of Charles II, 1661–2* (London, 1861), pp. 463, 513. See letter by Thomas Bankes to Viviani, 6 December 1662, in BNCF, MS. Gal. 162, fol. 34.

29 See Bruto Annibale Molara to Viviani, Pisa 22 January 1662, in BNCF, MS. Gal. 161, fol. 352^r; cf. ASF, MS. Misc. Med. 87/6. For some of Borelli's malevolent comments see his letters to Malpighi of 2 February 1663, and of 24 January 1663, in *Malpighi Correspondence*, pp. 144, 146. Both Finch and Baines were called to be members of the Academy of the *apatisti*, as can be seen from BNCF, MS. Marucelliano A. 36, fol. 64^v. This dates the inscription of Thomas Baines ('D. Tommaso Fana inglese') to the year 1661 and that of John Finch ('cav. Gio. Finchio') to the year 1662: see Alessandro Lazzeri, *Intellettuali e consenso nella Toscana del 600: l'accademia degli apatisti* (Milan, 1983), pp. 93–4 (but the two Englishmen were surely called to be members of the Academy in 1663). See also *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series of the Reign of Charles II, 1663–4* (London, 1862), p. 226.

30 Leopold to Ricci, 16 October 1663, in BNCF, MS. Gal. 282, number 60, fol. 78^{r-v}. For this letter see also Fabroni, *Lettere inedite di uomini illustri*, p. 533 and Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti*, i, p. 274; Ricci to Leopold, 12 November 1663 and 29 November 1663, in BNCF, MS. Gal. 276, fols 223^r (number 139); 229^r (number 143); Finch to Leopold, 10 Dec. 1663, BNCF, MS. Gal. 276, fols 230^r–231^r (transcript in *Lettere di Uomini Illustri* (Florence, 1773), pp. 268–70 and see also Malloch, *Finch and Baines*, p. 42); Ricci to Leopold, Rome 10 December 1663, BNCF, MS. Gal. 276, number 145, fol. 232^r. Regarding the purchase by Finch of part of Marco Aurelio Severino's library, see Max H. Fisch, 'The Academy of the Investigators', in E.A. Underwood, ed., *Science, Medicine and History. Essays on the Evolu-*

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31 See Targioni Tozzetti Malpighi of 21 Marc 204, 208; see also *Rey*

32 Padua 14 November 1

33 Finch stayed at Padua Gal. 277, fol. 51^{r-v} (1 67, fol. 99^{r-v} (Padua 1665); MS. Gal. 281 letter is in Istituzione MS. Gal. 282, numb Targioni Tozzetti, *No*

34 Finch received the n May 1665, The Natic and 52) and Finch to 71^r–72^r; *Calendar of* (London, 1863), p. 2 lomatic instructions g (12 April 1665); SP 98/5–13.

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With the beginning of the new academic year, in December 1663, Finch started again his work as an anatomist in Pisa and the following months were passed making anatomical demonstrations on animals and conducting experiments in the presence of the prince.³¹ At the beginning of the holidays, in May 1664, Finch and Baines took their leave of Leopold, with the intention of returning to England. But before setting off for their native land, the two wanted to stop at Padua, probably to see the novelties undertaken in that university in the previous years; and, perhaps, under direction from Leopold, to see which among the professors of Padua could be recruited by the University of Pisa. The two friends stayed in Padua for almost one year, at least until the middle of April 1665, and Finch was afforded the opportunity to improve his experience of dissecting human bodies, both adults and children, since, unlike in Pisa, there were more than enough of these provided ('provisti soverchiamente').³² From Padua, Finch wrote with a certain regularity to Prince Leopold, recommending as a possible professor at Pisa his onetime teacher Molinetti as well as a young Greek student named Alessandro Maurocordato.³³

At the beginning of April, Finch and Baines moved to Venice, with the intention of setting off from there to England in a short time. But, presumably while the two friends were preparing for the journey, Finch received the appointment as English resident to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinand II.³⁴

And so the two friends came back to Tuscany, this time not as anatomists but as diplomatic representatives of the English monarchy. Finch made his official entry into Florence on 6 July 1665 and Borelli let Malpighi know that the two English *signori* had become residents of the King of England along with the most

tion of Scientific Thought and Medical Practice Written in Honour of Charles Singer (2 vols, Oxford, 1953), i, pp. 521–63. On the role of Ricci at Rome see P. Galluzzi, 'Nel "teatro" dell'Accademia', in Galluzzi, *Scienziati a Corte*, pp. 12–25, at p. 14.

31 See Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti*, i, p. 274. See letters by Borelli to Malpighi of 21 March 1664 and of 11 April 1664 in *Malpighi Correspondence*, pp. 204, 208; see also *Report on Finch Papers*, ii, pp. 500–1.

32 Padua 14 November 1664, BNCF, MS. Gal. 277, number 30, fol. 39^{r-v}.

33 Finch stayed at Padua from July 1664 to February 1665; see his letters in BNCF, MS. Gal. 277, fol. 51^{r-v} (Padua, 16 July 1664); fol. 23 (Padua 6 February 1665); number 67, fol. 99^{r-v} (Padua 14 November 1664); number 30, fol. 39^{r-v} (Padua 12 March 1665); MS. Gal. 281, number 55, fols 66^r–67^r (a seventeenth-century copy of this letter is in Istituzione 'Biblioteca Città di Arezzo', MS. 188, fols 128^r–129^v). BNCF, MS. Gal. 282, number 74, fol. 91^{r-v} (Leopold to Finch, 21 March 1664). See also Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti*, i, pp. 274–5.

34 Finch received the news of his appointment on 15 May: see Finch to Arlington, 15 May 1665, The National Archives (PRO), London, MS. SP 99/46, fol. 47 (see fols 50 and 52) and Finch to Leopold, 16 May 1665, BNCF, MS. Gal. 281, number 59, fols 71^r–72^r; *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series of the Reign of Charles II, 1664–5* (London, 1863), p. 286; Knowles Middleton, *The Experimenters*, p. 287. For the diplomatic instructions given to Finch, see The National Archives, London, MSS SP 98/5 (12 April 1665); SP 104/174B, pp. 61–4. For his diplomatic correspondence, see MS. SP 98/5–13.

superb pomp and solemnity ('con una pompa, e fasto superbissimo'). But he wanted to inform him as well that neither he nor his friends went to visit Finch or to watch the spectacle of his entry.³⁵ In the two previous years the concealed hostility that, from the beginning, Borelli had felt towards the two Englishmen, had been transformed into an irreparable and open rupture. The Englishmen's Tuscan stay of 1663–4 was in fact studded with continuous polemics and quarrels with Borelli and his school. In spring 1663 the two Englishmen disputed with Lorenzo Bellini about the existence of salivary ducts.³⁶ In December 1663 they debated with Carlo Fracassati about the acid juice or ferment of the stomach that – according to Finch, erroneously – was a 'residue of food' ('reliquia dei cibi precedenti').³⁷ In the following months they quarrelled with Antonio Oliva about the origin of the idea of colouring with a red pigment the rock salt of Volterra to distinguish it from common salt, as a measure that might put an end to the active contraband trade in this commodity that had always been practised.³⁸ Also in this period there was an animated discussion that saw a neat and sharp break between Aristotelians and Atomists, in which Finch in fact took sides with the traditional party.³⁹ In January 1664 the controversies developed into a veritable war when, faced with Malpighi's discoveries about the structures of the optical nerves of swordfish, at first Finch and Baines denied the validity of Malpighi's findings and then affirmed that they were already well known.⁴⁰ Borelli, who evidently wanted to settle accounts with the English, addressed an ample memoir to the Grand Duke Ferdinand in which he ascribed these discoveries to Malpighi and commented with irony on the attitude of people who wanted to deprive 'the inventors of new things' of their merit while offering as proof nothing more than 'a single word incidentally uttered as an enigma' ('una sola parola incidentalmente detta modo di enigma').⁴¹

35 See letter from Borelli to Malpighi, 10 July 1665, printed in *Malpighi Correspondence*, p. 266. Finch's successor to the chair of anatomy was called Carlo Fracassati, who announced to Malpighi that he got the place of 'sig. Finchio che hora qui sta in posto di Cavallerizzo ed è residente del re d'Inghilterra': Fracassati to Malpighi, 15 August 1665, in *Malpighi Correspondence*, p. 278. See Finch to Leopold, Padua 6 February 1665, in BNCF, MS. Gal. 277, number 67, fol. 99^{r-v}.

36 See letters from Borelli to Malpighi, 22 March 1663, 15 February 1663, 30 March 1663, in *Malpighi Correspondence*, pp. 148, 153, 156. See Howard B. Adelman, *Marcello Malpighi and the Evolution of Embryology* (5 vols, Ithaca, 1966), i, p. 216.

37 Carlo Fracassati to Malpighi, 22 January 1664, in *Malpighi Correspondence*, p. 195.

38 For Ferdinand II's decree of November 1664, see Angelo Fabroni, *Historiae Academiae Pisanae* (3 vols, Pisa, 1791–5; reprinted Bologna, 1971), iii, pp. 614–15; Baldini, 'Un libertino accademico del Cimento Antonio Oliva', pp. 33, 34, 35; Vincenzo Antinori, *Scritti editi e inediti* (Florence, 1868), p. 195.

39 Galluzzi, 'L'accademia del Cimento', pp. 808, 819–23. On Marsili and Rinaldini see Galluzzi, 'Nel "teatro" dell'Accademia', pp. 22–3.

40 Carlo Fracassati to Malpighi, 22 January 1664, in *Malpighi Correspondence*, p. 195 (cf. p. 133); Baldini, 'Un libertino accademico del Cimento Antonio Oliva', pp. 33–5; Fabroni, *Historiae Academiae Pisanae*, iii, pp. 466–7.

41 *Malpighi Correspondence*, pp. 215–16, 217; see Adelman, *Embryology*, i, p. 233;

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42 Borelli to Malpighi, 10 when Maurocordato at two Englishmen.

43 The memoir was publi Regis in 1698.

44 For the relationship b Mediceo del Principato *State Papers* (5 vols, C Factory of Livorno to scandalo catholicorum. il 1644 e il 1670', *Nuov*

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ited in *Malpighi Correspondence* was called Carlo Fracassati, g. Finchio che hora qui sta in ' Fracassati to Malpighi, 15 e Finch to Leopold, Padua 6 99^{r-v}.

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See Howard B. Adelman, ols, Ithaca, 1966), i, p. 216.

Malpighi Correspondence, p. 195.

Angelo Fabroni, *Historiae ogna*, 1971), iii, pp. 614–15; io Oliva', pp. 33, 34, 35; p. 195.

On Marsili and Rinaldini see

Malpighi Correspondence, p. 195 to Antonio Oliva', pp. 33–5;

ann, *Embryology*, i, p. 233;

Significantly the Grand Duke, after having read the memoir, ordered that an end be put to this controversy as soon as possible for several political reasons ('per diverse ragioni politiche') and, first of all, 'not to disgust the queen and the king of England, to whom this subject [i.e. Finch] has been appointed physician and knight' ('per non dar disgusto alla regina d'Inghilterra, et al re dei quali questo soggetto è dichiarato medico, e cavaliere').⁴² One year later, as we have seen, the 'medico e cavaliere' Finch was also appointed resident. And of course Borelli's memoir was published only in 1698 – when all the protagonists of the conflict were already dead.⁴³

John Finch as English resident in Tuscany (1665–71)

Contrary to the Grand Duke's expectations, and considering the extent of their acquaintance, Finch always had a very pugnacious attitude towards the Tuscan authorities, and the years in which he was resident in Tuscany (staying usually in Florence and in the first months of the year, in Livorno) were characterized by frequent and harsh conflicts. Between 1665 and 1671 about forty memorials were given to the grand-ducal authorities in Italian complaining about more or less serious wrongs experienced by the rich and numerous English community of Livorno.

One of the questions that for a long time poisoned the relationship between the English and Tuscans in those years was the attempt made by the British Factory of Livorno to obtain permission to celebrate Protestant religious services for its members. Finch tried in every way formally to obtain freedom of worship for the English of Livorno and initiated a sharp diplomatic battle, the only result being the issuing of humiliating exclusion orders for the Protestant preachers who went to Livorno in September 1666, December 1668, and January 1671.⁴⁴

Luigi Guerrini, 'Medicina e scienze naturali nell'attività dell'Accademia del Cimento', in Galluzzi, *Scienziati a Corte*, pp. 48–51; Baldini, 'Un libertino accademico del Cimento Antonio Oliva', p. 34. Finch obviously had these polemics in mind when he spoke of the *Cerebri anatomie nervorumque descriptio et usus* by Thomas Willis in a letter of 26 December 1664: BNCF, MS. Gal. 277, fol. 70^{r-v}.

42 Borelli to Malpighi, 10 January 1664, in *Malpighi Correspondence*, p. 193. Later, when Maurocordato attacked Malpighi, Oliva thought that he acted on behalf of the two Englishmen.

43 The memoir was published with the posthumous works of Malpighi edited by Pierre Regis in 1698.

44 For the relationship between Finch and the Medicean authorities see ASF, MSS Mediceo del Principato 4244, 1828; F.J. Routledge, ed., *Calendar of the Clarendon State Papers* (5 vols, Oxford, 1869–1963), v, *passim*. For the attempt of the British Factory of Livorno to be allowed a Protestant preacher, see Stefano Villani, "Cum scandalo catholicorum...". La presenza a Livorno di predicatori protestanti inglesi tra il 1644 e il 1670', *Nuovi Studi Livornesi*, 7 (1999), 9–58.

Both formal and personal relationships between Finch and the officials of the Tuscan court became more and more tense and one may suppose that it was a genuine relief for Finch to be recalled from his appointment in 1671 to undertake the more prestigious role of ambassador to Constantinople. Finch stayed in Turkey for almost ten years. In September 1681 his beloved companion Baines died and, a few months later, Finch came back to England where he died in November 1682.⁴⁵

If relationships between Finch and the authorities in the years in which he was resident in Tuscany were characterized by tensions and disagreements, relationships between Finch and his former colleagues at the University of Pisa were almost non-existent.

In the history of the Royal Society that he published in 1667, Thomas Sprat wrote that Tuscany had the 'excellent privilege' of having one of the Society's Fellows as resident for the king of England, whose presence allowed a continuous and valuable intellectual exchange with the 'most Noble wits' of Italy, and chiefly with Prince Leopold, 'the Patron of all Inquisitive Philosophers of Florence'.⁴⁶ Sprat here clearly speaks of Finch who when he was lecturer of anatomy in Pisa, had been appointed Fellow of the Royal Society.⁴⁷ But, contrary to what Sprat might lead one to believe, during the years in which Finch had a diplomatic function, he did not do very much himself to promote Anglo-Italian cultural exchanges. That he no longer wanted to deal with either anatomy or arts ('[né] di notomia né di lettere') because he was completely concerned with affairs of state ('negozi di stato') was immediately clear to Borelli who gave news of Finch and Baines to Malpighi on 14 August 1665.⁴⁸ That Finch did not want to become engaged substantially with scientific matters was however very less clear to the Royal Society. One of the major aims of the Society was to build up a network of international collaboration, especially for the circulation of scientific information, and its members intended to rely on Finch to establish a productive link with the Academy of Prince Leopold, which was considered by those in England as being more structured than it actually was.

Already on 7 December 1665 therefore, the indefatigable secretary of the Royal Society, Henry Oldenburg, had written to John Finch asking that he be informed about everything that might go on at the philosophical theatre in Florence

and in other Italian academies. Oldenburg wrote another letter to Finch informed about everything that was going on in the 'Virtuosi of Italy'.⁵⁰ The next

This situation was not ideal because in the meantime the scientific and celebrative intent of the letter now became necessary to present. In 1667 Oldenburg wrote for the copy of the *History of the Royal Society* a long covering letter addressed to the

Only on 14 July 1666, less than seven months before his death, that he had already let L. Dr Baines.⁵²

It has been suggested that Finch in response to the Academy of Cimento, could be the Academy had already been more probable that his scientific typical malevolence, but appointed to the office of secretary were now of interest to him.

Although it is true that the matter of fact it is also true that a strong desire to construct a growing economic, political and Italian scholars increased in England, which had large numbers of the *History of the Royal Society* the *Saggi di naturali esperienze*

45 See G.F. Abbott, *Under the Turk in Constantinople. A Record of John Finch's Embassy 1674-1681* (London, 1920).

46 Thomas Sprat, *The History of the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge* (London, 1667), p. 126; Knowles Middleton, *The Experimenters*, p. 290.

47 Finch was elected FRS on 20 May 1663: see Birch, *History*, i, pp. 239-40; Knowles Middleton, *The Experimenters*, p. 291; Michael Hunter, *The Royal Society and its Fellows 1660-1670. The Morphology of an early Scientific Institution* (2nd edn, Oxford, 1994), pp. 102, 103, 116, 249 n. 8, 261 n. 1, 262 nn. 5, 13, 265 n. 12, 269 n. 27.

48 Borelli to Malpighi, 14 August 1665, in *Malpighi Correspondence*, p. 276.

49 Oldenburg to Finch, 7

50 Oldenburg to Finch, 1

51 Oldenburg to Finch, 1667, in *Oldenburg Correspondence* Bosman going for Italy

52 BNCF, MS. Gal. 27: *Ottavio Falconieri a Principe Leopoldo di Firenze*, 10

53 Knowles Middleton, 1

54 W.E. Knowles Middleton, 'Segni's diary', *Studi*

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story, i, pp. 239–40; Knowles π, *The Royal Society and its ientific Institution* (2nd edn, 52 nn. 5, 13, 265 n. 12, 269 n.

pondence, p. 276.

and in other Italian academies.⁴⁹ Finch did not answer and so, on 10 April 1666, Oldenburg wrote another letter to him urging him again to keep the Royal Society informed about everything that from time to time was being done by the 'Excellent Virtuosi of Italy'.⁵⁰ The months passed without any reply from Finch.

This situation was starting to become embarrassing and irritating, not least because in the meantime the Royal Society had promoted – with clear propagandistic and celebrative intentions – the publication of its history by Sprat, and it would now be necessary to present a copy of it to Prince Leopold. Thus on 26 November 1667 Oldenburg wrote for the third time to Finch. Enclosed with the letter were a copy of the *History of the Royal Society* for presentation to Prince Leopold and a long covering letter addressed to him.⁵¹

Only on 14 July 1668 did Finch finally respond to the letter sent to him more than seven months before (and that he claimed that he had just received). He said that he had already let Leopold, now a cardinal, have a copy of the book through Dr Baines.⁵²

It has been suggested that one of the reasons that could explain the silence of Finch in response to the many questions posed to him by Oldenburg about the Academy of Cimento, could have been his embarrassment at having to explain that the Academy had already ceased its activity a few years before.⁵³ But it is much more probable that his silence was determined instead by the reasons that – with typical malevolence, but not falsehood – Borelli had pointed out when Finch was appointed to the office of resident: that 'negozi di Stato' were the only things that were now of interest to him.

Although it is true that in 1668 the Academy had already ceased to meet, as a matter of fact it is also true that, on the Tuscan side, in those years there was a very strong desire to construct cultural and scientific relationships with England. The growing economic, political and cultural importance of England was making Italian scholars increasingly more sensible of the impact of their activities in England, which had largely been ignored previously.⁵⁴ In the same year that Sprat's *History of the Royal Society of London* was published, there appeared in Florence the *Saggi di naturali esperienze* in which a decade of activity of the Academy of

49 Oldenburg to Finch, 7 December 1665, in *Oldenburg Correspondence*, iii, pp. 631–3.

50 Oldenburg to Finch, 10 April 1666, in *Oldenburg Correspondence*, iii, p. 86.

51 Oldenburg to Finch, 26 November 1667, and Oldenburg to Leopold, 26 November 1667, in *Oldenburg Correspondence*, iii, pp. 618–22. See also the 'Memoriall for Mr. Bosman going for Italy', *ibid.*, iv, pp. 119–20.

52 BNCF, MS. Gal. 278, number 49, fols 82^r–85^v. See L. Giovannini, ed., *Lettere di Ottavio Falconieri a Leopoldo de' Medici*, series *Carteggio d'artisti dell'Archivio di Stato di Florence*, 10 (Florence, 1984), pp. 213–15.

53 Knowles Middleton, *The Experimenters*.

54 W.E. Knowles Middleton, 'Marchese F. Riccardi and A. Segni in England in 1668–9. Segni's diary', *Studi Secenteschi*, 21 (1981), 187–279.

Cimento was celebrated.⁵⁵ This book had the same celebrative intentions as Sprat's history and, on 11 December 1667, four copies of the *Saggi* were presented to Finch: one copy was for the King of England, one for Robert Boyle, one for Finch himself, and the last one for his inseparable friend, Baines.⁵⁶ In the following year, between February and April 1668, the secretary of the Cimento, Lorenzo Magalotti, visited England together with Paolo Falconieri with the specific aim of presenting volumes of the *Saggi* to the king and the Royal Society.⁵⁷

Finch, from this point of view, did very little to create a connection between English and Italian scholars, and even the links that afterwards developed between the Royal Society and Italy grew up through essentially different channels.

Further research might explain what was the scientific value of the investigations by Finch and Baines who, during their lifetimes, did not publish anything. In the archive of the Finch family – now deposited in the Leicestershire Record Office – are kept nine miscellaneous volumes of medical and philosophical notes written by Finch and Baines over many years, that it would be worthwhile to study.⁵⁸ And possibly a study of their personal papers would show some difference of theoretical attitude between Finch and Baines, the latter apparently much more interested in more general philosophical problems than the first. It was not an accident that Baines was depicted by Carlo Dolci, in Italy, surrounded by books by Plato and Aristotle.⁵⁹ The opinions of their contemporaries were contradictory. The two men certainly had a very good reputation for being excellent anatomists from a technical point of view. Both of them were always held in the highest regard by

their former tutor Henry Worthington and of Samuele Worthington and of Samuel things in Italy.⁶⁰ Redi with ('nella toscana corte') in 'illustrious and eminent : 'Pien di Filosofia la ling positive way by Claude B Finch with great appreciat

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55 The *Saggi di naturali esperienze* was translated into English in 1684 by Richard Waller.

56 Finch to Leopold, 11 December 1667, in BNCF, MS. Gal. 278, number 72, fols 112^r–113^v. Finch to Boyle, 28 January/6 February 1668, in Hunter, Clericuzio, and Principe, *Correspondence of Robert Boyle*, iv, p. 24.

57 On Magalotti's journey to England in 1688 see Knowles Middleton, *The Experimenters*, pp. 32, 291–5; Birch, *History*, ii, p. 286. See the letters from Oldenburg to Boyle of 11 February 1668, 10 March 1668, 17 March 1668, in *Oldenburg Correspondence*, iv, pp. 170, 234, 248.

58 Finch was described by Henry More in his *Divine Dialogues* (London, 1668), as 'a zealous but hairy-minded Platonist and Cartesian'. The nine notebooks are described in Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Finch Manuscripts*, II (London, 1922), pp. 500–4. The second one of them has been microfilmed (ref. MF 655) and a copy of the microfilm is in the Museo della Scienza di Florence. In this notebook there is also an ample catalogue of Finch's library. About his library, Finch once said: 'I am a pretender to some insight in books for all sort unlesse those of divinity of w^{ch} I have none in my library': The National Archives, MS. SP 98/11. An edition of the most important of Finch's manuscripts, an unpublished treatise of natural philosophy (Leicester Record Office, MS. Finch Papers, DG7 Box 4976 Lit. 9) is being prepared by Scott Mandelbrote, Sarah Hutton, and Robert Crocker.

59 C. McCorquodale, *Some Paintings and Drawings by Carlo Dolci in British Collections* (Florence, 1976), pp. 313–20.

60 James Crossley, ed., *The Works of Henry Worthington*, The Chetham Society, 1884, pp. 1–2.

61 See Redi, *Opere*, iv, p. 1.

62 Claude Bérigard, *Cinquecento e seicento. Aristotelis libros octo de meteoris et tres de aggrandimenti*, i, p. 27.

63 Borelli to Malpighi, 16

64 Francesco Folli, *Stade novità, si bilanciano* (Florence, 1680), pp. 2. scienza nell'opera di F. of Science (Tesi di Laurea Philosophy, Arezzo (ac

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their former tutor Henry More: he was certainly responsible for the belief of John Worthington and of Samuel Hartlib that the two friends could bring about great things in Italy.⁶⁰ Redi when he mentioned their presence 'in the Tuscan court' ('nella toscana corte') in his *Osservazioni sulle vipere* of 1664, spoke of them as 'illustrious and eminent subjects' ('soggetti ragguardevoli ed insigni') who had 'Pien di Filosofia la lingua e'l petto'.⁶¹ Their activity was also discussed in a positive way by Claude Bérigard in his *Circoli Pisani*⁶² and Robert Boyle spoke of Finch with great appreciation.

On the contrary side, we have already seen the judgement of the more original and passionate among the academicians of the Cimento. The discussion regarding the priority of discoveries regarding the optical nerve, in particular, had generated painful polemical ramifications. In that fiery year of 1664 in which Borelli composed a memoir in defence of Malpighi, he wrote that he was 'more than sure' of the two Englishmen's will to scrounge the credit for others' inventions ('loro volontà di scroccare l'invenzioni d'altri').⁶³ As late as 1680, Francesco Folli, who demanded for himself the merit of having thought of the idea of blood transfusion for the first time but who knew that it had been practised for the first time in England, expressed the suspicion that the news of his idea reached London from Tuscany ('di Toscana avesse navigato in Londra') and said explicitly that perhaps it was Finch – who without doubt had heard of Folli's work when he was in Florence – who had 'transport[ed]' it to his homeland.⁶⁴

But apart from the polemical bitterness of Borelli, well-known for his frequent and violent outbursts, and of his friends, it is absolutely certain that in the battle between innovators and conservatives that was being fought in the Italian scientific environment, Finch sided many times and unambiguously with the latter. His role as a cultural mediator between the English scientific world and the Italian one was also disappointing. As we have seen, Finch, rather than becoming the celebrated promoter of exchanges between the Cimento and the Royal Society, was possibly

60 James Crossley, ed., *The Diary and Correspondence of Dr. Worthington*, 2 vols in 3 parts, The Chetham Society 13, 36, 114 (Manchester, 1847–6), i, pp. 339, 342.

61 See Redi, *Opere*, iv, p. 151. The lines in Italian are by Petrarch.

62 Claude Bérigard, *Circulus Pisanus...De veteri et peripatetica philosophia in Aristotelis libros octo physicorum, quatuor de coelo, duos de ortu et interitu, quatuor de meteoris et tres de anima* (Padua, 1661), p. 617; Targioni Tozzetti, *Notizie degli aggrandimenti*, i, p. 272; Fabroni, *Historiae*, iii, pp. 532–4.

63 Borelli to Malpighi, 16 May 1664, in *Malpighi Correspondence*, p. 212.

64 Francesco Folli, *Stadera Medica nella quale, oltre la medicina infusoria ed altre novità, si bilanciano le ragioni favorevoli e contrarie alla trasfusione del sangue* (Florence, 1680), pp. 37–8. See Antonella Sacchetti, 'Il cerchio della vita: filosofia e scienza nell'opera di Francesco Folli (1624–1685)', unpublished MA thesis in History of Science (Tesi di Laurea in Storia della Scienza), University of Siena, Curriculum of Philosophy, Arezzo (academic year 2000/2001), supervisor: Prof. Walter Bernardi.

even an obstacle to communication at a time when news of what was going on in the panoply of English science was anxiously sought in Italy.⁶⁵

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65 In general on the relationships between the Royal Society and Italy see Marie Boas Hall, 'The Royal Society and Italy 1667–1795', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 37 (1982), 63–73; W.E. Knowles Middleton, 'What did Charles II call the Fellows of the Royal Society', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 32 (1977), 13–16; Marta Cavazza, 'Bologna and the Royal Society in the seventeenth century', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 35 (1980), 105–23.

I wish to thank Michael

1 Thomas Birch, *The Hi*
1967), p. 3.