HUMAN REMAINS & VIOLENCE

Iconographies of death: écorchés, moulages and anatomical preparations – the cadaver in the teaching of artistic anatomy at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera

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Abstract

Since the sixteenth century, artistic anatomy – a branch of medical science subordinated to the Fine Arts – has understood itself as a comparative investigation halfway between forensic dissection and the analysis of classical art and live bodies. Its teaching was first instituted in Italy by the 1802 curriculum of the national Fine Arts academies, but underwent a drastic transformation at the turn of the century, as the rise of photography brought about both a new aesthetics of vision and an increase in the precision of iconographic documentation. In this article I will attempt to provide a history of the teaching of this discipline at the close of the nineteenth century within the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan, with a focus on its ties to contemporary French practices. Drawing on archival materials including lesson plans, letters and notes from the classes of the three medical doctors who subsequently held the chair (Gaetano Strambio, Alessandro Lanzillotti-Buonsanti and Carlo Biaggi), I will argue that the deep connections between their teaching of the discipline and their work at the city hospital reveal a hybrid approach, with the modern drive towards live-body study unable to wholly supplant the central role still granted to corpses in the grammar of the visual arts.

Key words: artistic anatomy, dissection, corpses, anatomical preparations, photography

Art teaching and, in particular, courses dedicated to representing the human body have always looked to the corpse and its multiple morphologies, subjecting it to close examination without being unduly affected by the beliefs that gravitate around it, nor by the organic instability that ultimately results in the degradation of its appearance. Artistic anatomy was unique among art courses (compared to painting or sculpture classes, for example) in approaching the study of the lifeless body in such detail, however, calling on a range of teaching aids to illustrate various aspects of the human form, each with multiple cultural implications. Natural preparations, écorché statues, plaster and wax body casts and an immense range of anatomical illustrations all contributed to the wealth of cadaveric iconography

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that enriched this original area of study, lying at the intersection of art and science and initially imparted at national Fine Arts academies, followed by arts-focused secondary schools across much of Europe from the 1920s. This case study focusing on the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan shows, in keeping with Edgar Morin's philosophy, how death represents less an image – and one which is typically static (as Bachelard in particular claims) – and more an event involving three perspectives in constant tension, each different yet closely related: a reality whose inevitability is manifest; 'a trauma that can become an idea of a particular type, an idea whose content corresponds to the void, the destruction';[1] and a whole host of complex and polyvalent images 'that show death as part of life'.[2]

A 'very special' subject

The school of anatomy at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan was inaugurated in 1802, nearly thirty years after the Accademia's foundation[3] and lagging almost two centuries behind that at its counterpart, the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris, trailblazer of French arts education.[4] In large part responsible for its creation was Giuseppe Bossi,[5] the internationally renowned painter who took over as secretary of the Accademia in 1801.

Bossi's vision for the school was closely modelled on Rome's Accademia Nazionale di San Luca (National Academy of San Luca) and drafted following careful examination of the regulations of other national institutions and the curricula of the London, Paris and Vienna Fine Arts academies. It was presented to the Minister of Internal Affairs in 1802 and came into force the following year, along with the creation of the neighbouring Pinacoteca (art gallery), understood to form an integral part of training in the arts. The goal was to establish the Milanese school on an equal footing with its counterparts in Bologna and Venice via a comprehensive review of its teaching provision, outlining a core educational programme and organising the distribution of the different schools within the available spaces. Teaching was spread over three blocks from morning to evening and covered seven areas: Architecture, Painting, Decoration, Elements of Figure, Engraving, Perspective and Anatomy. Among the articles of the educational ordinance referring to the individual disciplines, the entire eleventh article was devoted to expounding the complexity of the scientific teaching of anatomy in the context of art. It featured some rather specific internal provisions:

1 The school of anatomy is equipped with the best anatomical statues, several large illustrative charts – mainly osteological and myological – a few ancient statues and many models of flayed body parts.
2 It teaches the assembly and workings of the human body insofar as they are relevant to the art of drawing.
3 The school of anatomy opens at the beginning of December and closes at the end of March. It reopens at the beginning of June and remains open until the end of July. Three lessons are given per week.

4 Winter's teaching principally consists of myology, taught using prepared cadavers; in summer, the focus is on osteology, using skeletons of varying age and sex.
5 The professor must provide the school of anatomy with twelve fresh cadaveric preparations, ensuring their presentation is clean and clear, as far as possible using cadavers in good condition, so that the students can successfully draw them. If more preparations are needed, the Accademia will cover the cost of these.
6 When required by the anatomy and life drawing schools, myological preparations are made using well-proportioned cadavers and cast using plaster, also enabling myology studies to continue in summer as necessary.
7 The anatomy professor may use the Accademia's models to draw comparisons between the living body and the skeletons and myological preparations, to show how the bones are attached etc.
8 Outside of lesson times, the school of anatomy is also served by a steward, particularly when myological preparations are involved, so that students can draw them before they deteriorate.
9 The professor gives a lecture which, while touching briefly on other aspects, will focus individually on osteology and myology, giving a clear idea of the uses, shapes and characteristics of the bones, and of the muscles (mainly external) etc.
10 Outside of lesson times, only students who have shown a solid grasp of life drawing will be allowed to enter the school of anatomy.[6]

The ten points of the article show how, since its very inception, the study of anatomy at Brera comprised two parallel but contiguous strands: one relating to scientific practice and the other more exclusively artistic. This symbiosis between the two disciplines is clearly visible in the detailed report accompanying Bossi's directive and affected both the choice of subject matter and the way in which it was imparted. Intended to clarify the curriculum presented to the commission, the report claims a special status for the course, owing to this intrinsically dual nature. Laying the foundations for attendance of the life drawing school, the anatomy course was delivered over a relatively short period of time as compared to the other disciplines, owing to the organic and inorganic qualities of the material being studied. Classes were given in two blocks of three hours per week. From December to March, the focus was on autopsy-style examination of the cadaver, while in June and July the living body was studied via special casts taken from a corpse in order to 'enable students to continue the study of myology under the direction of the life drawing professor: plaster casts of corpses are an excellent complement to fresh preparations [. . .]'.[7] We thus observe that the originality of the artistic anatomy course lay mainly in the coexistence of two different pedagogical practices – medical/surgical and artistic – accompanied by their respective and varied teaching aids.

The variety of materials used by professors during the nineteenth century belies the unity of the educational project, whose 'theoretical and methodological fulcrum was the Renaissance concept of the "human machine"', elaborated via the study of osteology, myology, morphology and art.[8] The discipline thus represented

an open and experimental space in continuous transformation, rooted in the history of the practical vicissitudes affecting the institutions involved, such as the Ospedale Maggiore and the Accademia itself, all of which were embroiled in an 'intense debate on the teaching of art, with highly detailed standpoints ranging from those which held that art should be learned through worldly experience and those which favoured a more rigid, structured approach'[9] (a debate which would lead to the progressive distancing of the Pinacoteca). It was also rooted within the educational systems established by the individual professors, who, in addition to the subjects traditionally affiliated with anatomy, sought to incorporate the fruits of new scientific and technological research, ever more prevalent in European culture.

Indeed, the professor charged with teaching this unusual discipline had to possess specific techno-scientific skills (anatomical and surgical in particular) enabling him to carry out dissections, take anatomical specimens and make plaster casts of the lifeless body. At the same time, however, he also had to be skilled in drawing – a prerequisite for conversing with professors of painting and sculpture and for assembling a theoretical and practical programme of studies rich with references to art history and aesthetics, capable of guiding students towards creating art that successfully and accurately represented the body. This mastery of different theoretical and practical disciplines on the borders of science and art is evident in the professional profiles of those who taught this course in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. All qualified doctors, they charted a multifaceted didactic course which expounds the history of a silent negotiation between the knowledge base of traditional anatomical studies and the emergence of new scientific disciplines, particularly physiology/psychology and ethnology/anthropology. It is the story of a two-fold negotiation which followed the development of thought and scientific theory and yet was actually rooted in artistic, aesthetic and pedagogical debate, and moreover was not exempt from discussions about the advent of new media – in particular photography – distorting the canons of Fine Art and their own statute. A story composed of diverse documents, including curricula, specialist and more popular articles, speeches, lectures and reports; but also comprising the remains of that complex didactic, clinical and artistic apparatus, organised and continuously updated by professors in the preparation of their own lessons, in constant tension between the study of the living body and that of the corpse.

Teaching tools: cadaveric dissection and living bodies, from the artificial to the natural

The original profile of the professors at Brera and the way they approached the complexity of their task is evidenced by a rereading of unpublished papers about the school from the Accademia's historical archive. These tell us that dissections – which had been taking place at the Ospedale Maggiore since 1837 – were suspended from 1875 to 1889 when Gaetano Strambio (professor from 1860 to 1894) was in post, owing to the dilapidated condition of the ancient mortuary.

Built in 1678 beyond the bounds of the Ospedale, the mortuary had superseded the 'Old Brugna', and comprised a burial area with an adjoining room for

dissection and analysis. Its poor state had been the subject of discussion for several years among the Ospedale's management: outdated hygiene practices and cramped rooms caused a stench to emanate from its underground rooms and penetrate the walls of the Ospedale, much to the exasperation of patients and staff. During the nineteenth century many doctors complained about the unpleasant smell exuded by this underground storehouse on the banks of the canal, described by Edoardo Porro as a 'filthy charnel house',[10] and which – in the second half of the century – served as the premises for pathological and surgical anatomy teaching, in addition to housing experimental pathology and microscopic and chemical analysis laboratories, at the behest of the first prosector to hold the post, Achille Visconti. Visconti was responsible for the significant development of the Milanese school of pathological anatomy: 'a discipline deeply influenced by the German school – which at the time was at the cutting edge – but reworked in the Italian image, based on domestic theories and findings [. . .] by Marcello Malpighi and Giovanni Battista Morgagni, which were then taken up and cultivated at the Ospedale Maggiore by Giovanni Battista Palletta and Giovanni Battista Monteggia'.[11] Despite Visconti's commitment to a pragmatic updating of the discipline, the space used for dissections remained in a pitiful state at the end of the century, forcing a halt to the practical element of the Accademia's artistic anatomy course and prompting the professor in charge to seek out alternative teaching aids and devise new learning strategies.

Strambio was born into a medical dynasty and highly active in the Lombard territories, where he had accumulated a wealth of prestigious clinical experience. His teaching at the Accademia was nevertheless significantly compromised by the state of the classrooms designated for autopsy and analysis of the various parts of the corpse. He himself testified to this in a report drawn up in association with some of his colleagues for a commission established in 1882 to assess the state of the Ospedale Maggiore and its institutes. The short text highlights the general insufficiency of the clinical spaces owing to 'the imbalance between the size of the room and the number of sick people it holds',[12] along with the inadequate state of the building. The scarcity of resources is clear from the professor's description of the autopsy room and mortuary, which his predecessors had described as a place with no principles of morality or decency. Diametrically opposed to the positive examples of the hospitals of Lucca and Paris, such unsanitary conditions compelled Strambio to alter his approach to delivering the artistic anatomy course from the 1870s, adopting a range of pedagogical tools and diverse teaching aids alongside dissection and thus boosting the Accademia's didactic collections. These teaching aids included plaster casts of the corpse and both natural and artificial osteological and myological preparations, for example,[13] with living models still used in some classes.

Strambio's preference for artificial preparations – as opposed to natural ones, which frequently did not stand the test of time – is clear from a letter dated 1875 and signed by the Minister of Education, Betti, in which the latter gave his consent to the president of the Accademia for 'the natural pieces used in anatomical preparations for study by the Accademia's students to be replaced by clay casts made from real supports, appropriately coloured'.[14] Painted to resemble the original

organic material, artificial preparations were evidently preferred by Strambio over natural ones for being easier to handle, as indicated by the acquisition of a model made by Professor Louis Auzoux (now lost), intended as a substitute for direct observation of the cadaver. This teaching aid is recorded in an inventory dating from 1875 which mentions the purchase, on 19 July, of a new 'life-sized anatomical model made from paper pulp',[15] which can plausibly be traced back to the Lyonnais doctor, whose work was widely known at the time throughout Europe. This hypothesis is confirmed by the description of a large statue, also bought in the same year, recorded in 1894:

> [. . .] a large anatomical statue, moulded by Dr Auzoux of Paris using the method he calls Clastic, easily separable into the various body parts, and whose external surface replicates the subcutaneous organs; muscles, aponeurotic fascia, arteries, veins, lymphatic and nervous system, etc. – and from whose cavities the individual viscera of the head, chest and abdomen, ingeniously depicted in form, volume, colour and mutual relations, can be removed and replaced.[16]

In the midst of this inventory, composed of a long list of diverse cadaveric iconographies including myological charts by Giuseppe Bossi, skeletons, skulls, organic preparations in wax and plaster casts of desiccated body parts, this kind of teaching aid was considered to be of great value for teaching anatomy in the Accademia for many years, as Galli notes, not least because it allowed for 'the observation and reproduction of the organs as if in full dynamic functionality, i.e., healthy, alive'.[17] Indeed, Auzoux's models are in a league of their own among the many fruits of technical-artistic experimentation aimed at manufacturing this kind of pedagogical artefact, halfway between an image of the dead body and a simulation of its living form. His creations reproduced real models on a life-size scale using a technique of his own invention, perfected during the early nineteenth century, which involved moulding papier-mâché on to a skeleton to create layers that could be removed and replaced. Using a technique that he himself defined as *clastic anatomy* – literally anatomy in pieces, or fragmented – his creations were robust, yet light and easy to handle, offering the immense benefit of enabling students to study either the structure of the model as a whole, or its individual components. The manufacture of Auzoux's models, which comprised a minimum of 130 pieces each and up to a maximum of 3,000, involved a highly specialised workforce following a detailed assembly process as laid out by the doctor while at the pinnacle of his success.[18]

In addition to this didactic tool, Strambio's course employed further teaching aids for the comparative study of the body in life and in death. Regarding the living body, Strambio specifically requested to expand the Accademia's collection of pedagogical resources 'via the purchase of new iconographic treatises and more especially some of the large myological and physiognomic charts produced by Prof. Duchenne (de Boulogne)'.[19] The charts he mentions here demonstrate both his interest in contemporary physio-psychological research into human expression and his desire to remain abreast of the teaching materials fortuitously born of clinical trials. In 1854, Duchenne de Boulogne, a pioneer of neurophysiology

and inventor of the technique known as *électrisation localisée* (involving muscle stimulation via the application of targeted electrical shocks), commissioned Adrien Tournachon – brother of the photographer Nadar – to take the photographs which would illustrate his famous treatise, published in 1862: *Mécanisme de la physionomie humaine, ou analyse électrophysiologique de l'expression des passions*.[20] Used to support his thesis according to which the application of light faradic shocks to the face would prompt muscular contractions expressing a wide array of human emotions (attention, suffering, anger, ecstasy, wickedness . . .), the photographic plates showed the results of his electromagnetic machine in action on the faces of his models. These photographs are a disconcerting caricature of the human emotions, composed of 'a set of voluntary, reconstructed, performed gestures, [. . .] seen through an aesthetic filter that demands consideration'.[21] In the eyes of the medical profession, the collection formed an 'objective' synoptic table of the facial expressions and related emotions that would also influence the work of Charles Darwin.

The sense of urgency which drove Strambio's efforts to define and update his teaching materials is also evident in the years preceding the inventory, as in the letter of 1877 whereby he responds to an internal circular, highlighting the need to use living models during lessons:

> One innovation that would cost the Accademia relatively little would be to allow the Professor of Anatomy to use a model with strong and defined musculature during the summer months, when the focus is on myology and the physiology of movement, to demonstrate – in conjunction with the skeleton and myological statue – the cause and mechanism of each individual movement.[22]

Under Strambio, teaching thus focused on various practices: theoretical study, drawing and sculpture sat alongside analysis of the cadaver via autopsy. Indeed, early in December 1889, a document issued by the Council of Professors confirmed the implementation of 'experiments and anatomical studies using corpses in a trial capacity for the school year underway'.[23] As dissections could not be performed because of the decrepit state of the designated hospital spaces and the lack of suitable equipment at the Accademia, mentioned previously, such studies were carried out using 'corpse fragments'[24] provided by Milan's Ospedale Maggiore. These lessons were held in a room kept at a very low temperature in order to preserve the body parts and took place twice a week from 12:00 hrs to 15:00 hrs, in the time slot usually allocated to life drawing. Life drawing students were 'freely permitted to participate in these sessions',[25] on the proviso that they would 'maintain an appropriate demeanour'.[26] Strambio's interest in cadaveric preparations can also be deduced from other documents pertaining to his professional life as a doctor. In particular, its origins can be found in a report drawn up together with other eminent doctors some thirty years previously on the work of the famous embalmer of Lodi, Paolo Gorini.[27] For Strambio, the desire to preserve human remains and the methods devised for doing so were very ancient, whereas attempts 'to preserve corpses for a greater or lesser period of time in a way that enables them

to be separated into parts and ensure that the resulting anatomical preparations last'[28] are more recent endeavours, linked to contemporary developments in the natural sciences. Researchers tried a variety of methods to snatch 'from the dissolving chemistry of putrefaction that ephemeral aggregate of molecules from which a short while before proceeded the august magisterium of life'[29] – rarely succeeding and often creating preparations with multiple issues. The main problems with these, as enumerated by the professor, were 'the considerable decrease in volume of the soft parts, and the conspicuous change in complexion',[30] compensated for, respectively, by the use of artificial stuffing and paint. It was not reasonable to demand that a preparation replicate the human body perfectly, continued Strambio, as the latter naturally loses certain organic qualities. Scientists who acknowledged this fact, such as Paolo Gorini, could only try to remedy it as best they could with humility and further study.

Such were the intentions of the 'wizard of Lodi', as he was known. And indeed, shortly before the middle of the century, Gorini succeeded in developing various methods to improve anatomical preparations, the most popular of which caused the organic material to mineralise, resulting in a sort of 'petrification'. This method treated both the tissues and internal organs of parts of bodies and whole bodies alike, through 'the injection of highly toxic solutions via the large blood vessels, after having correctly prepared the corpse by thoroughly flushing out the arterial and venous circulatory system'.[31] Gorini's methods were inspired by Girolamo Segato's research on mummification, along with petrification work carried out by Efisio Marini, from Cagliari. In the face of regional and international scientific acclaim, however, Gorini kept his methods a secret even from the commission tasked with evaluating the results. His various organic preparations were held to be mysteriously well preserved, across 'the broadest range of consistencies, from the yielding flexibility of their elastic rubberiness, to their wooden or perfectly stone-like hardness'.[32] The works assessed included a series of 'embalmed corpse parts' obtained at different times, including 'various hands, forearms and arms',[33] from both male and female subjects, 'cutaneous and subcutaneous tissue from a female chest [. . .], a child's head, [. . .], two adult heads – hard, odourless and dense, with the hair intact, thick and firmly attached to the skin of the cranium':[34] in brief, a series of so-called temporary cadaveric preparations, aimed at identifying a suitable method for conserving the corpses for longer periods of time in order to allow for anatomical dissection 'over several months'.[35] The fruit of a lengthy and complex procedure that the commission swore to investigate further so as to identify the chemical elements involved, such preparations – were they to be used in classrooms for scientific teaching – potentially represented a veritable revolution, 'benefitting studies of anatomy and anatomical pathology'[36] and also forensic medicine and artistic anatomy. In their final report, the commission recognised the seemingly magical qualities of Gorini's work as being of great significance for the advancement of anatomical studies, noting the absence of smell, the minimal decomposition of the organic matter and the consequent possibility of studying the form of and relationships between body parts 'at any time of year'.[37]

The embalmer continued to refine his techniques over the following years, gaining a popular following thanks to various national and international exhibitions, yet today no trace of his cadaveric preservations can be found in the registries of material acquired by the Accademia for the teaching of artistic anatomy. Studying the dead body continued to represent a central axis of teaching for Strambio's successor, Alessandro Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, under whom dissections were resumed. A trained veterinary surgeon, Lanzillotti-Buonsanti oversaw the anatomy course from 1895 to 1898, reintroducing the corpse to the classroom via an agreement with the College of Veterinary Medicine whereby the Accademia would provide comparative anatomy classes for veterinary students which would also naturally be open to those taking the artistic anatomy course, thus implementing a comparative and experimental pedagogical approach. More on this fusion between the animal and artistic anatomy courses can be read in a note written by Lanzillotti-Buonsanti in 1894:

> Having as it does a well-defined purpose, artistic anatomy requires special study and special precepts of demonstration. Whether dealing with man or animals, one single ideal must be held in mind by whosoever is responsible for its teaching: to direct the artist to understand and interpret the subject he wishes to represent. The artist must not, therefore, be a simple and sterile copier; his work must be the expression – the evocation I might say – of that which he has seen and studied at length and in great detail.[38]

Lanzillotti-Buonsanti thus perceives the student not only as needing to perfect his ability to make a faithful copy of the subject matter at hand, but also as an artist who reinterprets the world around him. Such teaching must be conducted scrupulously by the anatomy teacher, whose job it is to 'concentrate all his efforts on knowledge of the morphological topography of the body in its various and multiple manifestations of life'.[39] For Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, teaching needed to follow a two-fold approach, encompassing study of the dead body (necessary for learning the alphabet of the anatomical language) and of living models (facilitating the study of myology, inclinations and differences attributable to age, gender and ethnicity). The latter was considered the most fundamental part of the course, 'requiring lengthy and attentive observation in order to seize and render in their drawings the variations and modifications that the muscles produce to a greater or lesser extent on the contours and protrusions of the body'.[40]

Defined by its 'essentially practical and demonstrative approach'[41] and followed by students from the Accademia, the life drawing school and external artists (on request), the course was taught in classrooms of the Accademia, museums and the Veterinary College. Following study of the corpse in the clinical teaching rooms, students moved across to the Accademia to focus on life drawing, as evidenced by Lanzillotti-Buonsanti's letter written to the Accademia on 26 March 1985, reiterating agreements made 'so that on Monday and Tuesday at 3 the model I chose will be there'.[42] In his teaching programme, organised around practical demonstrations aimed at guiding teaching towards 'that anatomical canon which constitutes

the authentic ideal, from which the artist must not depart when representing the horse',[43] Lanzillotti-Buonsanti stated that he has directed the student 'to distinguish and appreciate that which pertains to the individual from that which is proper and characteristic of the type'.[44] This emphasis, intended to underline the relationship between skeletal and muscular development on the one hand and physiological aptitudes on the other, was championed by Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, who highlighted 'the relationship which exists between the deeper parts and the external form'[45] based on the use of a precise practice and tools:

> In order to better establish the topography of those particularities of bone, ligament and muscle which influence the outer form of any given region of the body, I examined the skeleton and superficial musculature from different perspectives, i.e., in profile, from the front, from behind, lying on its back and on its front with the help of appropriate fresh preparations, charts and photographs and any other means which met the purpose.[46]

Lanzillotti-Buonsanti thus introduced to the Accademia various teaching aids traditionally employed in veterinary schools, above all the use of fresh organic anatomical preparations – expensive but vital in order to correctly understand the equine form. Despite the shortage of corpses and their constant increase in price, the veterinarian – contrary to Strambio – supported the exploitation of natural organic parts in artistic pedagogy as well, in preference to artificial preparations which often 'rather than facilitate the study of anatomy, frequently seem designed to mislead the students'.[47] In addition to these, he underlined the importance of graphic charts, not only for the initial part of the course traditionally focusing on the static body, but also incorporating new photographic materials in the second part, dedicated to 'application, that is to the conference of forms, expressions, proportions, attitudes and progressive movements'.[48] Here, the professor describes the practical methods used: 'After having identified, in their most essential points, the general characteristics of the form and the considerations that contributed to it deviating from the norm, I went on to make a comparative analysis of the main characteristics of the different horses – whether for racing, riding, pulling carriages, or performing heavy labour [. . .].'[49]

The difference between the types of horses was thus illustrated via the extensive use of 'photographs and plaster models'[50] and on various living models, focusing lastly on proportions, studied not only in relation to the different races, but also in continuous comparison with the human body. For this type of analysis, but above all that pertaining to bodies in motion, the professor admits to using photography, relying on some

> excellent photographs by Ottomar Anschütz, particularly noteworthy for the precision and illustration of the various phases of lift, support, placing, galloping and jumping. In order to give a clearer demonstration of the way in which the extremities work together and function, I had one of my most diligent students, the painter Camillo Corti, enlarge some of Anschütz's photographs by drawing, taking care to

> choose – among the many available – those which best represented the movements and bearings of the horse's gait.[51]

Alongside an exploration of the horse in the history of art and the canonical anatomical studies involving analysis of the skeleton, musculature and external forms, Lanzillotti-Buonsanti thus maintained the open approach called for by his predecessor Strambio, in recognising the potential of photography. In photography, as in the experimental practice adopted by the clinical teachings of the faculties of physiology and human anatomy, he saw significant potential for a new kind of analytical examination in relation to the various existing canons and their correlation with a hypothetical 'norm', reaching its maximum potential in the study of movement and expression. In this light, Lanzillotti-Buonsanti's desire to overhaul the iconography appears decisive, in line with the most up-to-date national Fine Arts academies and born of an education system urgently requiring reform in terms of both instruments and practice, as can be seen from his speech at the sixth National Artistic Congress held at the Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti in Turin in 1892. Lanzillotti-Buonsanti expounded the criteria that, in his opinion, ought to guide artistic anatomical studies, a discipline which in Italy – following an initially prosperous period during the modern era – appeared to be in inexorable decline, owing to its obsession with studying the dead body:

> It is said that the teachers, accustomed to studying still life, know only the anatomy of the amphitheatre subject lying horizontally on the marble table set in its cadaveric rigidity; that they do not use anatomy, but rather abuse it; that not only do they not teach anything useful, they even provide inaccurate information about knowledge of the external forms of the live model; and lastly, that they have a damaging effect on the expression of the artist's sentiment. In conclusion, accusations are brought not against anatomy, but against the teachers of anatomy, which, while they may not all be true, are however in large part justified by the practical results obtained in the schools of anatomy.[52]

The criticisms outlined by Lanzillotti-Buonsanti are therefore levelled against his own profession, accused of taking too narrow a focus in courses based exclusively on the study of the corpse and avoiding for the most part the comparative anatomical study of animals, and in particular of the horse. The origins of anatomical studies of the horse can be found almost a century before, mainly in France – first at the veterinary school in Alfort, and then principally 'at the hands of Prof. Duval'[53] at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In Italy, however, Lanzillotti-Buonsanti noted the lack of a comparative approach to anatomy, a situation which gave rise to uncertainty in the artist when faced with the majestic and complex equine form and resulted in the consequent 'scarcity of good animal artists, and especially horse artists'.[54] Hence his idea for a course teaching horse anatomy, which he launched in 1892 in an attempt to redress this deficiency and fill this 'need felt by the artists themselves'.[55] In addition to the importance of each individual professor's choices and organisation of the course of study, the veterinarian also called for a reform

of the teaching method for this new strand of teaching, which was to peremptorily take a specific 'practical' form:

> In the School of Anatomy, the young student must be directed to distinguish and interpret *that which pertains to the individual from that which is proper and characteristic of the type*. This is the ideal, the anatomical canon, from which the artist must not depart whether depicting the human or animal form. Without entering into all the arid technical details, the teacher must clearly specify the manner in which the deeper tissues relate to the external forms, the relationship between the anatomical reality and external appearance of a given area of the body; but in order to make it easier for the artist to assimilate all the knowledge necessary for the plastic arts it is absolutely essential to accord the anatomical part *true importance* prior to embarking on the study of the applied part which it complements and with which it blends to form a harmonious whole.[56]

The professor delivering such a course needed to be capable of refraining from the vain erudition that was sometimes prevalent in the medical profession and adhere to these dictates in a course that 'should be essentially demonstrative: the skeleton should always be accompanied by the corpse and the live model'.[57] This was generally not the case in the Italian schools, however: according to Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, models were often entirely supplanted by an extensive collection of plaster casts, full of anatomical errors and offering incomplete and sterile representations of a life that they had never been suffused with. The veterinarian's proposed reform was thus based on comparative study, covering not only the anatomical grammar but also the body's proportions, movements and expressions. Indeed, according to his words, there was great

> advantage to the artist of studying the movement of the muscles that move the features of the mobile mask of the face; but studying these muscles will not teach him to express the passions. These are expressed thanks to nerve impulses which are mostly involuntary and instinctive; thus the sympathetic nerve impulse behind the smile cannot be manufactured by anybody; contracting the smile muscles can only ever give rise to a false, sardonic smile – a smile for appearance's sake. This is why the movements of such muscles can only be captured by photographs, of which I have a great collection, or via electric stimulation.[58]

For Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, photographs thus proved a necessary aid to the study of the emotions, by nature fleeting and volatile, and represented a natural complement to materials already used in the teaching of anatomy, such as drawings, prints, anatomical preparations, statues and moulages. Of the latter in particular we find considerable evidence in the current collections of the plaster cast gallery at the Accademia di Brera, naturally home to a variety of plaster casts from cadaveric dissections (Figure 1) and also in photographs taken by professionals based in and around Milan, such as those taken by Giulio Rossi of various life casts of female hands, still part of the historical photographic archives (Figure 2).[59]

Figure 1 Cast of the right leg of a male subject, plaster, undated, plaster cast gallery of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, Milan.

This collection of different teaching aids thus represented a vast toolbox to support the teaching of this subject, which professors needed to consider in relation to their ultimate goal: training an artist, and not a doctor. This was the crux of the matter, in Lanzillotti-Buonsanti's view. To his mind, no particular artistic or scientific material was to be eradicated, since each iconographic element had its own

Figure 2 G. Rossi, plaster cast of a female hand, albumin print mounted on secondary support, 26.4 × 20.7 cm (31 × 36.7 cm), undated, historical photographic archive, Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, Milan.

didactic value, to be clearly established and used to serve the world of artistic representation. The same went for the corpse itself, the use of which was renounced at the end of the veterinarian's speech by certain exponents of the art history world present at the congress, such as Enrico Panzacchi and Giuseppe Aimery, who argued that it was an unsuitable and highly problematic teaching aid, owing to its organic nature and the consequent difficulties occasioned by its conservation, transport and handling in the classroom, which attested to its ancillary role in the history of ancient art. In his response, Lanzillotti-Buonsanti reiterated the

centrality of cadaveric analysis, citing works by Old Masters such as Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael: 'Study of the cadaver must not be abused, otherwise it serves little purpose and achieves the opposite to what it sets out to accomplish, namely irritating the artist and ensuring he is not passionate about anatomy.'[60] For Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, the dead body was thus indispensable, but only if examined according to precise criteria and used to facilitate 'learning by viewing'.[61] We can thus appreciate the real need underlying the veterinarian's petition, which did not consist in eradicating the traditional pedagogic tools of the discipline, inherent in the definition of anatomical iconography, but, rather, related to the desire to rethink them in relation to a new understanding. This new understanding was made necessary by Lanzillotti-Buonsanti's renewed objective relating to the wider world of artistic representation, as well as his aim of developing new teaching aids for this anatomical branch as it evolved alongside the various medical specialisations.

From the mortuary to the Institute of Anatomical Pathology: a modern place of experimentation

At the threshold of the twentieth century, with the accession of Dr Carlo Biaggi to the teaching post, it became clear that an area for the artistic study of anatomy was required within the hospital, to avoid having to transport the corpses across to the Accademia. Biaggi's letter to the Director of the Ospedale Maggiore in Milan shows that this latter practice was commonplace during his first year of teaching, from 1897 to 1898. He requested that he be granted 'for the purposes of study, the temporary export from the anatomical rooms [. . .] of some body parts from time to time depending on teaching requirements'.[62] Biaggi considered the use of body parts alone to be insufficient for a comprehensive course of study, prompting him to urge the Director of the Accademia, Camillo Boito, to intervene with the city's hospitals in order to request an appropriately equipped teaching room on their premises. Following the reorganisation of the spaces, the Ospedale Maggiore had begun work on a new building for anatomical studies. As the prosector Emilio Speroni observed, at the dawn of the new century 'the need to replace the concept of the anatomical teaching room and mortuary with that of the Institute of Anatomical Pathology, whose name clearly determines and specifies the function assigned to it in science and in practice', was widely recognised.[63] The Accademia's goal of attaining a teaching room, first aired in 1905, thus became part of the wider reform of the city's clinical centres promoted by Luigi Mangiagalli and was officially approved in 1908. Plans for the project provided for the construction of two three-storey annexes near the church of San Nazaro, connected to the back of the Sforza building by two smaller buildings, to give the resulting construction the appearance of a quadrangle with a central courtyard accessed through a portico. Work began in 1912 under Antonio Bertolaja, but two years later only the first annex overlooking the canal had been completed. The building of the second, interior annex – which would have housed the museum, library, archive, conference room and much-desired artistic anatomy room – was abandoned, owing to

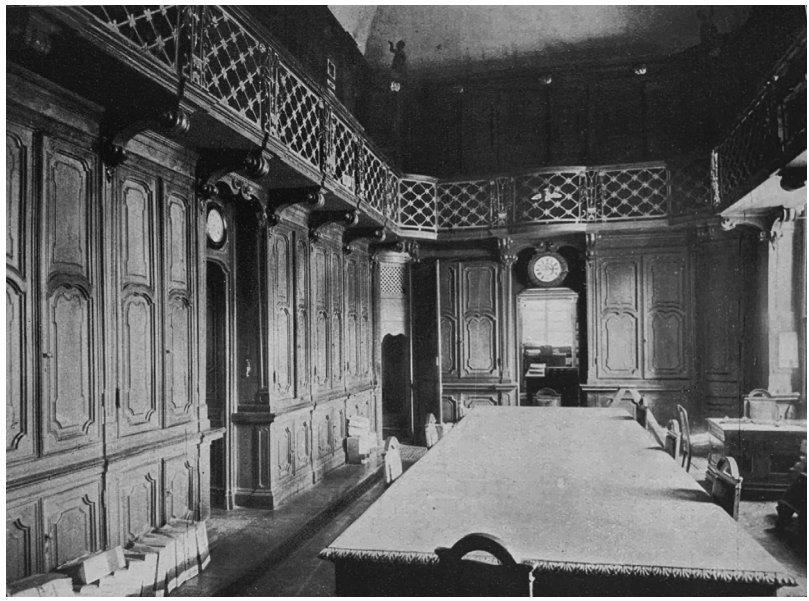

Figure 3 Archive walnut room, formerly winter chapter house or Capitoletto, in P. Pecchiai, *Guida dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano e degli istituti annessi* (Milan: Stucchi Ceretti, 1926).

insufficient funds. The Accademia was thus forced to make do with the existing rooms, such as the mortuary, autopsy room and chemical, microscopy and bacteriology laboratories. In the absence of any dedicated museum rooms, the extensive anatomical pathology collections were distributed along corridors and around the hall, where sources show they remained until the end of the 1930s.[64]

Nevertheless, the Institute's annual reports show that in 1916 it hosted 'the usual annual Artistic Anatomy course for Fine Arts students'[65] given by Dr Carlo Biaggi. This is further confirmed by the Institute statutes dating from the same period, which contained instructions on the running of the anatomical and surgical schools. These mention the permission granted to the Accademia's professor of artistic anatomy to deliver the course within the Institute, as well as the professors' commitment to keeping 'the catalogue and registers of the anatomical pathology room up to date and the anatomical parts clearly displayed and well ordered'[66] and to adding to its collections by 'collecting or having their students collect everything which may be useful or noteworthy in the interests of science'.[67] It seems likely that, in keeping with the archivist Pio Pecchiai's descriptions, the artists-in-training actually worked in the great hall, or conference room, following medical students from Pavia, Milan and Turin as they observed how the anatomists recorded their information, and attending autopsies carried out by Biaggi and several assistant dissectors (Figures 3–4). In this room, students would have had the opportunity

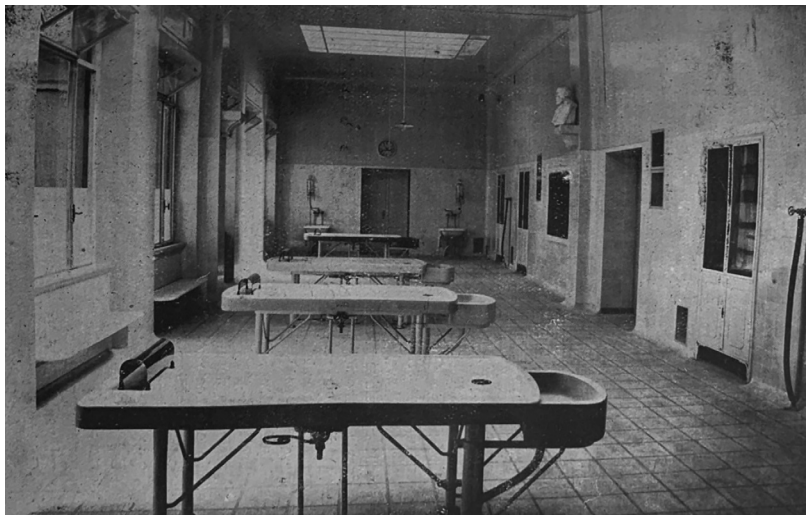

Figure 4 Institute of Anatomical Pathology: autopsy room, in P. Pecchiai, *Guida dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano e degli istituti annessi* (Milan: Stucchi Ceretti, 1926).

to observe numerous anatomical preparations – pertaining to the study of histology, myology and neurology on the whole – along with drawings and skeletons, consequently gaining access to other nearby rooms which held the many exhibits collected as part of scientific research or received as gifts from eminent doctors. In other words, it is assumed that the students of the Accademia, in addition to gaining access to the anatomical hall and its equipment, could also take advantage of the adjoining educational and clinical areas of the Institute and the Ospedale Maggiore, including numerous laboratories, the photography rooms used to document the pathological cases under examination and, of course, the library (Figure 5).[68] This is evident in the course plan written by Biaggi, in which we read that

> After certain general physiology classes, the programme is entirely delivered in a classroom at the Ospedale made available to the Accademia. Every part of the human body is systematically studied on the skeleton, corpse and live model. The preparation of the individual muscles of the corpse is conducted by the teacher in the presence of the students. A particular area of the live model is studied depending on the objective of the lesson, noting the effect of muscle contraction on the surface of the skin, such that the student is able to make useful deductions about the relationship between theory and practice.[69]

Biaggi's teaching methods were therefore still in line with traditional classical anatomy in their use of dissection, but also exemplified a modern interest in observing and copying the shape and external tissues of the living model 'placed in

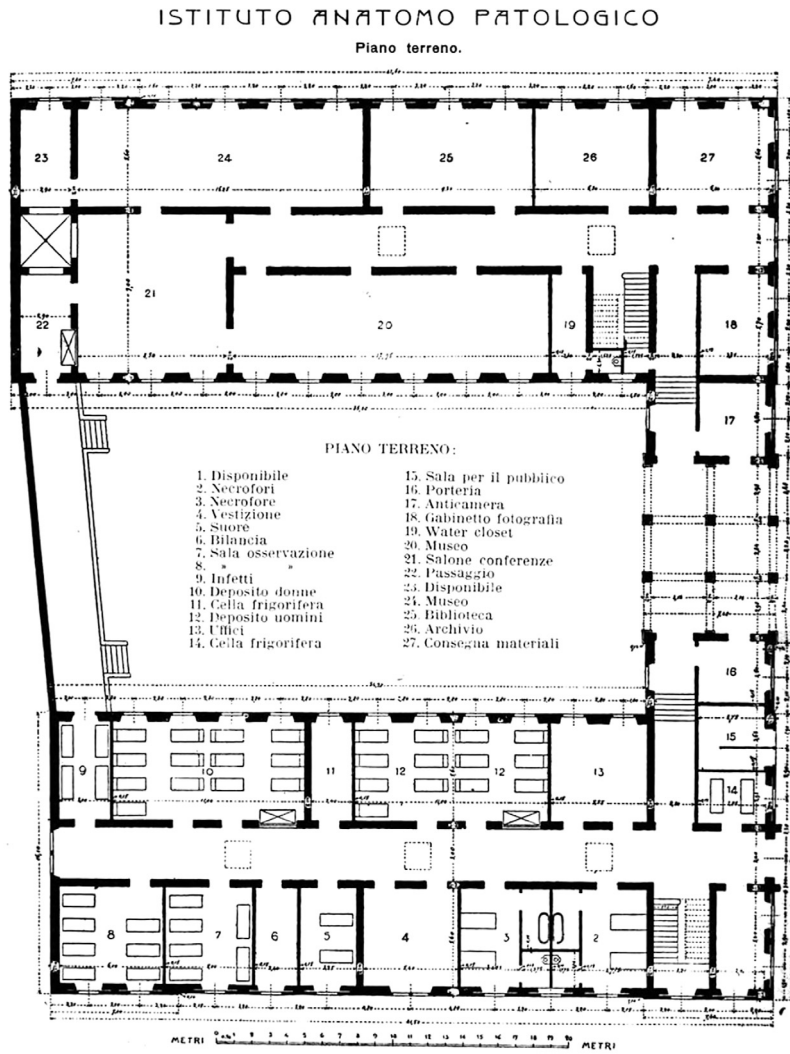

Figure 5 Plan of the ground floor of the Institute of Anatomical Pathology, in E. Speroni, 'L'istituto Anatomo-Patologico', *Ospedale Maggiore*, 1:2:6 (June 1913).

various poses, taking into consideration the morphology of the body in rest and in motion'.[70] Physiology and morphology thus found their place within the anatomy course, together with the 'indispensable knowledge and attitudes' demonstrated by Biaggi as a visiting lecturer in 1897, according to 'the unprompted and explicit statements of the life drawing, painting and sculpture professors. Considering the extent to which artistic anatomy is a highly specialised subject pursued by the few

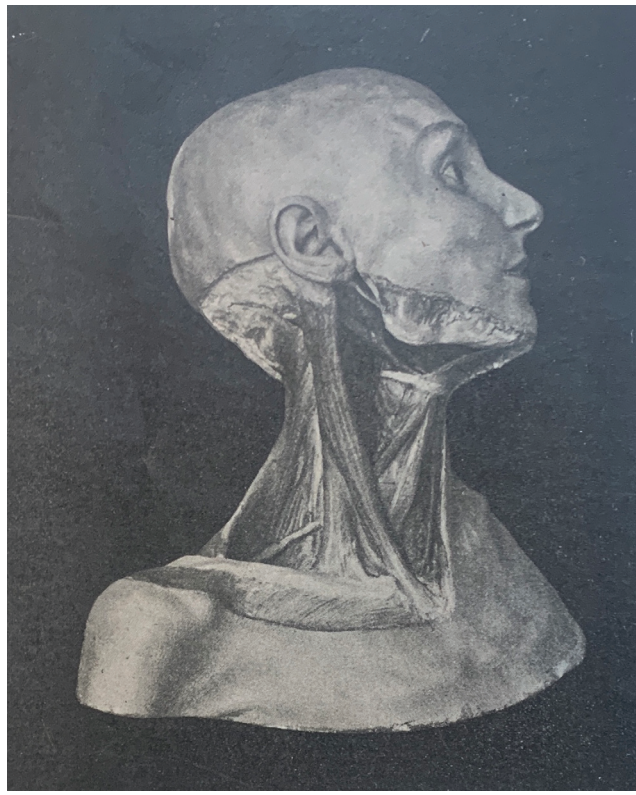

Figure 6 Muscles of the neck, photograph of an anatomical preparation, in G. Valenti, *Guida allo studio dell'anatomia artistica* (Milan: Società Editrice Libraria, 1905), historical library, Accademia di Belle Arti di Bologna, Bologna.

and taught by even fewer.'[71] Among the archives, two letters sent by Biaggi further testify to the originality of his interests: the first on the subject of Dr Luraschi's lecture 'on electricity in the electromagnetic radiation emitted by X-rays',[72] and the second on the series of talks given by Professor Ugo Pizzoli 'on light and colour'.[73] In addition to demonstrating Biaggi's interest in contemporary research into the physiology of vision, these texts also show the extent to which new media technologies rooted in the history of positivist scientific progress were assuming an increasingly broad role as veritable 'means of exploration'[74] on and into the body, including within Fine Arts education.

Despite this openness, the historical collections of the Accademia di Brera's library show – including in Biaggi's teaching – a preponderance of studies on the dead body and its skeletal and myological morphology, with autopsy analyses remaining popular despite continued examination of the living model. The

Figure 7 E. Mack-Orlandini, Plate XIV – Chest muscles, charcoal and sanguine drawing, in G. Chiarugi, *Atlante di anatomia dell'uomo ad uso degli artisti* (Florence: Istituto Micrografico Italiano, 1908), historical library, Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze, Florence.

library's collections were boosted in 1969 by the donation of Biaggi's personal library by his son, Carlo Felice, who also left his own collection to the Accademia. Among the books belonging to the two men were a great many medical volumes and anatomy textbooks written between the early nineteenth and middle of the twentieth centuries, in Italian, English, German and French, which thus came to join the numerous artistic anatomy textbooks already in the library's possession. During the first decade of the twentieth century in Italy this publishing genre acquired real status and a particular pedagogic credibility (compared to its early days, when it was seen as strictly belonging to the realm of scientific treatises). Such texts gradually became commonplace throughout the libraries of the various Fine Arts academies, giving increasing coverage to scientific developments, albeit considering them with the recently developed view to produce a separate text- and image-based resource aimed exclusively at training the figurative artist. Interestingly, these texts – in addition to the main collection of certain French volumes that would become classics of the discipline, such as those by Mathias Duval, Édouard Cuyer and Paul Richer (successively responsible for teaching the artistic anatomy course at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris from 1873 to 1923) – show how study continued to rely on the 'practical' textbooks and volumes on anatomy published by professors of the same discipline in Italy. Comprising illustrated guides, handbooks and vade mecum written, for example, by Alberto Gamba, professor at the Accademia Albertina in Turin, Achille Lombardini of Carrara, author of the

popular Hoepli manual on artistic anatomy, Giulio Valenti of Bologna and influential Florentine anatomist Giulio Chiarugi, such texts actually show how, despite the arrival of photography – seen as an emblem of fidelity and the ideal way to render the living body in motion – the corpse still remained the iconographic image from which it was impossible to avert one's gaze (Figures 6–7). As such, the photographs of organic preparations and casts, the copying of écorché drawings and sculptures realised by skilled Renaissance masters, and the illustrations collected by the professors themselves over the years reveal the extent to which this original course blurred that threshold, recognised since time immemorial – as Testoni recently recalled – as the boundary 'not to be crossed so as to keep at a distance that which imitation has taught us to consider repugnant [. . .] thus turning a blind eye to the biological exchange between life and death'.[75]

Notes

Edited and translated by Cadenza Academic Translations.

1 E. Morin, *L'Homme et la mort* (Paris, Éditions Corrêa, 1948).
2 *Ibid.*
3 The Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera di Milano (Brera Academy of Fine Arts, Milan) was founded on 22 January 1776. For a history of the institution see: G. Agosti and M. Ceriana (eds), *Le Raccolte storiche dell'Accademia di Brera*, Quaderni di Brera, 8 (Florence, Centro Di, 1997); and R. Ferrari (ed.), *'Vado a Brera.' Artisti, Opere, Generi, Acquirenti nelle Esposizioni dell'800 dell'Accademia di Brera* (Brescia, Aref, 2008).
4 Launched in 1666, the anatomy course at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris has been the subject of several studies, including: M. Guédron, 'L'Enseignement de l'Anatomie Artistique en France et la Question de la Dissection (XVIIIe–XIXe siècles)', *Les Cahiers d'Histoire de l'Art*, 2 (2004), 33–40; M. Joly, *La leçon d'anatomie. Le corps des artistes de la Renaissance au Romantisme* (Paris, Hazan, 2008); D. Johnson, 'Anatomie, Réalité, Idéalité dans l'Art français autour de 1800', in I. Laboulais and M. Guédron (eds), *Études sur le 18e siècle XVIII. Écrire les Sciences* (Brussels, Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 2015), pp. 177–92; and P. Comar (ed.), *Figures du Corps. Une Leçon d'Anatomie aux Beaux-Arts*, exhibition catalogue, Paris, École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts de Paris, 2008–9 (Paris, Beaux-Arts de Paris éditions, 2008).
5 Giuseppe Bossi (1777–1815) was one of the leading figures of the Neoclassical period in Milan. For further reading on Bossi, see: P. Salvi, 'Giuseppe Bossi: il Corso miologico dell'Accademia di Brera. Due Secoli di Didattica Anatomia e della Figura', *Labyrinthos*, 17:33–4 (1998), 175–215; and C. Nenci (ed.), *Le Memorie di Giuseppe Bossi: Diario di un Artista nella Milano napoleonica, 1807–1815* (Milan, Jaca Book, 2004).
6 G. Bossi, 'Piano Disciplinare del 1803', in R. P. Ciardi (ed.), *Giuseppe Bossi. Scritti sulle Arti* (Florence, S.P.E.S., 1982), I., pp. 244–5.

7 G. Bossi, 'Relazione di Giuseppe Bossi che accompagna il Piano per le Accademie Nazionali di Milano e Bologna', in Ciardi (ed.), *Giuseppe Bossi*, p. 265.
8 P. Salvi, 'Giuseppe Bossi: Anatomia per il Disegno di Figura', in Various authors, *La città di Brera. Due Secoli di Anatomia artistica. Dalla Macchina Corporea al Corpo vissuto*, exhibition catalogue, Milan, Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, 1999–2000 (Milan, Libri Scheiwiller, 2000), p. 113.
9 N. Serio, 'Alla Ricerca dell'Accademia perduta. Note e Bibliografia', in R. Ferrari (ed.), *'Vado a Brera'. Artisti, Opere, Generi, Acquirenti nelle Esposizioni dell'800 dell'Accademia di Brera* (Brescia, Aref, 2008), pp. 397–8.
10 P. Pecchiai, *Guida dell'Ospedale Maggiore di Milano e degli Istituti annessi* (Milan, Stucchi Ceretti, 1926), p. 223.
11 P. Zocchi, 'Il Laboratorio della Morte. L'Istituto anatomo-patologico e la Cattedra di Anatomia Clinica', in E. Canadelli and P. Zocchi (eds), *Milano scientifica 1875–1924, Vol. 2. La Rete del Perfezionamento Medico* (Milan, Sironi, 2008), pp. 199–214.
12 G. Strambio, *L'Ospitale Maggiore e le Case pie annesse. Relazione al Consiglio provinciale di Sanità di Milano* (Milan, Stabilimento G. Civelli, 1882), p. 8.
13 On the difference between these and for an overview of the history of preparations and models from moulage to methods of cadaveric preparation see: M. Lemire, *Artistes et mortels* (Paris, Chabaud, 1990); R. Panzanelli (ed.), *Ephemeral bodies. Wax Sculpture and the Human Figure* (Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 2008); and C. Pirson, *Corps à corps. Les Modèles anatomiques entre art et médecine* (Paris, Éditions mare & martin, 2009).
14 Historical Archive of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera (hereafter ASAB), TEA G III 16, Milan, School of Anatomy from 1851 to 1929, Minister Betti, 'Acconsento che ai pezzi [. . .]', letter ms., Rome, 30 April 1875.
15 Milan, ASAB, TEA M II 11, Prospectus variations from 1871 to 1875, Presidency of the Accademia, 'Summary of increases or decreases for the period 1 July to 31 December 1875 in the Inventory of the furnishings of the R. Accademia di Belle Arti', Milan, 26 January 1876 (acquisition no. 460).
16 Milan, ASAB, TEA M II 9 from 1891 to 1924, Gaetano Strambio, 'Nella scuola di anatomia [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 1 July 1894.
17 M. C. Galli, '"Anatomie clastique" Lo spazio del corpo tra natura e techné', in Various authors, *La città di Brera. Due Secoli di Anatomia artistica. Dalla Macchina Corporea al Corpo vissuto*, exhibition catalogue, Milan, Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, 1999–2000 (Milan, Libri Scheiwiller, 2000), p. 155.
18 For further information on Dr Auzoux's work, see H. Palouzié (ed.), *Prodiges de la nature, les créations du docteur Auzoux (1797–1880). Collections de l'Université de Montpellier*, exhibition catalogue, Montpellier, Université de Montpellier, 2017 (Montpellier, Ministère de la culture et de la communication, 2017).
19 Milan, ASAB, TEA M II 9 from 1891 to 1924, Gaetano Strambio, 'Nella scuola di anatomia [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 1 July 1894.
20 Guillaume Benjamin-Amand Duchenne de Boulogne (1806–75) was one of the most influential clinicians of his time, conducting ground-breaking studies in electrotherapy and electrodiagnostics. He wrote numerous works, focusing

mainly on the study of the emotions and the physiology of movement. For a detailed study of his photographic plates on emotions, see: A. Pacquement, C. Mathon and J.-F. Debord (eds), *Duchenne de Boulogne. 1806–1875*, exhibition catalogue (Paris, École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, 1999); F. Delaport, E. Fournier and B. Devauchelle (eds), *La Fabrique du Visage. De la Physiognomonie antique à la première greffe* (Brepols, Turnhout, 2010); and J. Lerner, *Experimental Self-Portraits in Early French Photography* (London and New York, Routledge, 2021).

21 E. Grazioli, *Corpo e Figura umana nella Fotografia* (Milan, Bruno Mondadori, 1998), p. 39.

22 Milan, ASAB, CARPI C I° 23, statutes, laws, decrees, regulations from 1860 to 1880, Gaetano Strambio, 'L'insegnamento dell'Anatomia Pittorica [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 18 May 1877.

23 Milan, ASAB, TEA G III 16, School of Anatomy from 1851 to 1929, President Visconti Venosta, 'Studio dell'anatomia dal cadavere [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, December 1889.

24 *Ibid.*

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*

27 On Paolo Gorini, see A. Carli (ed.), *Storia di uno Scienziato. La Collezione anatomica Paolo Gorini* (Azzano San Paolo, Bolis, 2005).

28 G. Strambio, *Intorno alle Preparazioni cadaveriche del Professore Paolo Gorini. Rapporto steso in nome di una Commissione* (Milan, Tipografia e Libreria di Giuseppe Chiusi, 1855), p. 3.

29 *Ibid.*

30 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

31 A. Carli, 'Rievocando il Mago di Lodi. La Collezione anatomica Paolo Gorini fra Storia e Cronoca', in A. Carli, *Milano Città delle scienze. Istituzioni, Attori e Ideali di un Secolo di Cultura scientifica a Milano 1863–1963*, s.n., s.l., pp. 1–7, p. 1.

32 Strambio, *Intorno alle Preparazioni*, p. 7.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

34 *Ibid.*

35 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

38 Milan, ASAB CARPI E IV 17, Teaching staff, file Prof. Lanzillotti-Buonsanti Alessandro, Alessandro Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, 'Breve esplicazione sull'insegnamento [. . .]', note ms., Milan, 29 November 1894.

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*

41 Milan, ASAB, TEA G III 16, School of Anatomy from 1851 to 1929, Alessandro Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, 'Illustrissimo Signor Presidente [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 21 June 1892.

42 Milan, ASAB CARPI E IV 17, Teaching staff, file Prof. Lanzillotti-Buonsanti Alessandro, Alessandro Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, 'Egregio Amico e Collega [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 26 March 1895.
43 Milan, ASAB, TEA G III 16, School of Anatomy from 1851 to 1929, Alessandro Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, 'Illustrissimo Signor Presidente [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 21 June 1892.
44 *Ibid.*
45 *Ibid.*
46 *Ibid.*
47 A. Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, *Conservazione dei Cadaveri e Preparazioni da Museo* (Milan, Tipografia editrice L. F. Cogliati, 1895), p. 4.
48 Milan, ASAB, TEA G III 16, School of Anatomy from 1851 to 1929, Alessandro Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, 'Illustrissimo Signor Presidente [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 21 June 1892.
49 *Ibid.*
50 *Ibid.*
51 *Ibid.*
52 A. Lanzillotti-Buonsanti, 'Riforma dell'Insegnamento Anatomico nelle Accademie di Belle Arti', in *Atti del VI Congresso artistico nazionale tenutosi in Torino* (Turin, Ditta G. B. Paravia e comp., 1892), p. 90.
53 *Ibid.*
54 *Ibid.*
55 *Ibid.*, p. 92.
56 *Ibid.*
57 *Ibid.*, p. 93.
58 *Ibid.*, p. 96.
59 On the multifaceted role of casts in the Accademia, often in direct competition with photographs in the School of Decoration, see F. Fergonzi, 'I Calchi da Opere del Medioevo e del Rinascimento. I Gessi dell'Ottocento', in G. Agosti and M. Ceriana (eds), *Le Raccolte storiche*, pp. 193–203.
60 *Ibid.*, p. 99.
61 *Ibid.*
62 Milan, ASAB, TEA G III 16, School of Anatomy from 1851 to 1929, Carlo Biaggi, 'Il sottoscritto nella sua qualità di [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 18 January 1898.
63 E. Speroni, 'L'istituto Anatomo-Patologico', *L'Ospedale Maggiore*, 1:2:6 (June 1913), 376–84, p. 378.
64 Pecchiai, *Guida dell'Ospedale*, pp. 229–30; E. Ronzani, *Gli Istituti ospitalieri di Milano dal XV al XX secolo. L'Igiene ospitaliera attraverso Cinque Secoli di Storia* (Genoa, Edizioni dei Nosocomi nazionali, 1937), pp. 59–61.
65 C. Zenoni, 'Relazione sull'Andamento dell'Istituto Anatomo-Patologico nell'Anno 1915', *L'Ospedale Maggiore*, 6:2:9 (September 1916), 538–40.
66 Milan, Historical archive of the Ospedale Maggiore, Schools, Surgical anatomy, President D'Adda, *Istruzioni per la Scuola di Anatomia-Chirurgica e pel Gabinetto Anatomo-patologico nell'Ospitale Maggiore di Milano*, Tipografia Manini.
67 *Ibid.*

68 On the archive's photographic collection, which contains an interesting selection of post-mortem photographs, see D. Scala, 'Una fototeca ritrovata', in P. M. Galimberti and D. Scala (eds), *L'occhio clinico. Milano nelle fotografie storiche dell'Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, Mangiagalli e Regina Elena*, exhibition catalogue, Milan, Museum of Milan, 2006–7 (Milan, Skira, 2006). On photography and post-mortem portraiture, see Bolloch's contribution in Various authors, *Le dernier portrait*, exhibition catalogue, Paris, Musée d'Orsay, 2002 (Paris, Réunion des musées nationaux, 2002) and Bolloch and Vidor's pieces in the more recent A. Carol and I. Renaudet (eds), *La mort à l'œuvre. Usages et représentations du cadavre dans l'art* (Aix-en-Provence, Presses universitaires de Provence, 2013).

69 Milan, ASAB CARPI E IV 5, Teaching staff, file Prof. Biaggi Carlo, Carlo Biaggi, 'Metodo d'insegnamento [. . .]', letter ds. with ms. signed by President G. Beltrami, Milan, 20 June 1923.

70 *Ibid.*

71 Milan, ASAB CARPI E IV 5, Teaching staff, file Prof. Biaggi Carlo, President Camillo Boito, 'Il 16 dicembre 1897 [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 25 July 1900.

72 Milan, ASAB, TEA G III 16, School of Anatomy from 1851 to 1929, Carlo Biaggi, 'Illustrissimo Sig. Presidente per soddisfare [. . .]', letter ms., Milan, 23 May 1900.

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74 A. Ségal, 'I mezzi di esplorazione del corpo', in M. Grmek (ed.), *Storia del pensiero medico occidentale. Dall'età romantica alla medicina moderna, Vol. 3* (Rome, Laterza, 1998), pp. 285–98.

75 I. Testoni, *Il grande libro della morte. Miti e riti dalla prehistoria ai cyborg* (Milan, Il Saggiatore, 2021), p. 129.