Pietro Longhi's Oblique Perspective: Venetian Painting, its Past and its Present

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Abstract

Reassessing the career of Pietro Longhi (1701–1785), this thesis brings to light distinctive ways in which his artworks were shaped by evolving technologies and art markets, social practices and philosophical ideas, as well as through the artist's interactions with noble patrons, print-makers, publishers, itinerant performers, writers, and artists. Longhi is described as a self-aware painter, highly conscious of the need to distinguish himself in the commercial art world, critically responding to the surrounding world and experimenting with his viewers' pictorial experiences. The thesis thereby challenges still prevalent views of Longhi as both a naïve and unskilled artist and also of Venice as an unchangeable place. Four themes are identified as central to his practice: paintings within paintings, which fashion the artist and his noble patrons as both current and connected to an illustrious past; printing, through his direct involvement with the technology, the mobility of print through the city, and its distinctive formal characteristics; pictures of *mondi nuovi* (peepshow boxes), which were connected to print, as well as to questions about vision and knowledge; and exotic animals, which connect patrons to specific public displays in the city, as well as with renewed interests in natural history and physiognomy. These themes reveal the diversity of his work and the multiple roles it played in his patrons' lives, in their identities as nobles, and in his distinctive artistic practice and self-presentation. As such, this thesis argues that Longhi and his art not only participated in, but also actively promoted an image of a modern and changing Venetian art world.

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(all in London), as well as the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles and the Museum of Metropolitan Art in New York.

Introduction

Pietro Longhi's *The Lion's Booth*, a small-scale canvas at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia in Venice, epitomises the issues raised in the artist's works that are the focus of this thesis (Fig. 1). The painting is devised as an interior space in an outdoor setting, the provisional character of its wooden enclosure evoking structures erected in Piazza San Marco to display carnival entertainments. On a wooden platform at the centre of the picture, a showman with a whip in his hand directs a cast of animals who perform in human clothes. Dogs dance in the foreground to the sound of music played by the violinist who stands behind the lion lounging on the right side. The diagonal of the showman's whip directs us to a monkey on the left, who sits on a beam above the stand, observing the performance. Below the monkey, a group of spectators crowds around the stage, their clothes and masks indicating that they come from various social strata. If the costumed dogs look like puppets at first glance, we begin to see that they mirror the appearance and postures of the human figures in the audience. The lion, whose face is strangely humanised, stares at us from the centre of the composition. Below the stage, a *trompe l'oeil* note informs us that we are looking at "The lion's booth, seen at Venice Carnival in 1762, painted from nature by Pietro Longhi."[1]

Longhi's use of perspective, or rather how he resists perspective, was unusual in eighteenth-century Venetian art. His compositions differ greatly from the contemporaneous wide-open views of Canaletto, popular amongst

[1] English trans. in Terisio Pignatti, *Pietro Longhi: Paintings and Drawings* (London: Phaidon, 1969), 95.

tourists visiting the city. Longhi's paintings, lacking views of the sky, horizons, ground or vast architectural settings, possess an almost claustrophobic quality. When looking at *The Lion's Booth* for the first time, it is difficult to make sense of all the details crowded into this hermetic picture. Longhi seems to draw our attention to what cannot be seen. The wooden fence and hanging cloth in the background of the painting conceal the sky. The human faces are either hidden behind masks, obscured by shadow (the charlatan and the violin player), cropped by the picture frame, or the figures are turned with their backs toward us. At the same time, the artist repeatedly reminds us of the potential to see both clearly — the raised platform with its spectacle — and also voyeuristically, through the peephole in the fence on the left, the eyeholes in the masks, the monkey looking down, and the spectators in the foreground. These peepholes and the surrogates, who observe the spectacle for us, are particularly noteworthy given the small scale of the picture that provokes inspection. Its oblique perspective draws us close to the surface and engages us in a form of visual play. It poses a riddle for the viewer that requires interpretation.

The lion picture brings to the fore persistent elements in Longhi's *oeuvre* that are discussed in the chapters of this thesis. Chapter One focuses on paintings depicted within paintings. This strategy is introduced, for example, by the showman whose pose is set off by the red textile draped over a wooden panel behind him following conventions from portraiture. The table-like stage supports the performers, and its structure resembles wooden stretchers for a canvas that frames the *cartellino*, the paper notice, below. The depiction of an ephemeral event with a large paper caption evokes popular prints of

charlatans and festivities from the beginning of the seventeenth century, and print culture with which the artist was engaged, discussed in Chapter Two. Printed images were used in optical devices, known as *mondi nuovi* (peepshow boxes), the focus of Chapter Three. This form of street entertainment is suggested in *The Lion's Booth* by the miniature theatre and the hole in the fence. Exotic animals and their implied and intended meanings are the main theme of Chapter Four. Elucidating these aforementioned elements in the thesis, I see them as apparatuses that not only played an aesthetic function, but also a strategic one in the hands of noble patrons and the artist himself. Other considerations, such as scale and performance, painting's self-reflexivity, deceit and ambiguity, the artist's patronage, his play with the viewer's experience of looking at art, his self-awareness and self-fashioning — how he positions himself in relation to what was already perceived to be the glorious legacy of Venetian painting — inform each of my chapters to varying degrees. The thesis structure, which is discussed in detail below, develops a new interpretive framework for Longhi's works. It offers a multifaceted argument on Longhi's art which contributes towards a deeper understanding of the artist's oeuvre and persona.

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Pietro Falca, known as Pietro Longhi (1701–1785), occupies an ambiguous place in Venetian art history. Although his works were successful and praised during his lifetime, defused through engravings, and reinterpreted by many

artists, they have received remarkably little sustained scholarly analysis.[2] Longhi was an exceptionally prolific painter who executed a vast number of works in diverse styles, media, and subject matters throughout his long career. He began with large-scale mythological and religious frescoes and altarpieces, followed by small-scale pastoral paintings, polite interior and outdoor hunting scenes, religious cycles, portraiture, and pictures of Venetian street-life. The greatest number of the painter's works are held in art collections in the Veneto region in Italy.[3] Only a few of his pictures are present in the United Kingdom and they are mostly confined to storage rooms as they are deemed neither significant, nor skilful enough to be displayed to the public.[4] Many paintings are also lost or owned by private collectors and therefore rarely available for viewing. The majority of Longhi's prints and drawings are kept in Italian archives.[5] Consequently, outside of Italy, the artist is relatively unknown to the general public.

Many works by Longhi and his imitators are being regularly sold at auction houses which not only reveals that the artist's output has been influential and sought after by art collectors, but also how much it has been understood as an expression of a particularly nostalgic view of Venice, as the

[2] The most recent book length studies solemnly devoted to Pietro Longhi are: Adriano Mariuz, Giuseppe Pavanello, and Giandomenico Romanelli, eds., *Pietro Longhi* (Milan: Electa, 1993) and Petra Stammen, *Longhi und die Tradition der italienischen Genremalerei* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: P. Lang, 1993). The majority of secondary sources dealing with the artist's oeuvre date back to 1970s and 1980s.

[3] The largest collections of Longhi's works are held in Ca' Rezzonico Museum in Venice (36 paintings), Pinacoteca Querini Stampalia in Venice (30 paintings), Fondazione Palazzo Leoni Montanari in Vicenza (9 paintings of Longhi and 7 by his followers), and Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice (8 paintings).

[4] The largest collections of the artist's works in the UK are held at the National Gallery, London (5 paintings) and the Royal Collection (2 paintings). In 2019, at the National Gallery, London only one painting of Longhi *The Rhinoceros* (1751) was displayed to the public.

[5] The largest collection of the artist's works on paper is located at Museum Correr in Venice.

libertine and romantic city with its carnival entertainments and masquerades.[6] Indeed, the fortune of Longhi's oeuvre among collectors has been sustained by this nostalgic perception of the eighteenth-century Republic. This last century of the *Serenissima* — of Venetian claims to being the "most serene" state and thus unchanging — has been seen predominantly as a time of unrestrained decadence and indulgence. This view of Venice was largely conceived by Grand Tourists who visited the city, taking part in its many festivals, regattas, and carnival, as well as its theatrical spectacles, opera concerts, cafes and gambling houses.[7] From the medieval period to the end of the seventeenth century, Venice was one of the most important trading ports in the Mediterranean, and it continued to attract people of different cultures until the end of the Republic in 1797. The city's unusual topography with its narrow streets surrounded by water and only a single bridge over the Grand Canal obliged physical contact between people of various backgrounds which added to visitors' impressions of the Republic's tolerance, which became one of its enduring myths.[8] A contributing factor was the Venetian practice of wearing masks that represented an absence of rules and a freedom of action to tourists and gave them a novel sense of liberty and anonymity. During the period of carnival, which lasted around six weeks and during numerous festivities, another world unfolded in front of travellers' eyes.[9] Piazza San

[6] According to the MutualArt website, the most recent successful sale of Longhi's works took place September 22 – 30, 2020, Lot 189 (two prints *Scena di vita Veneziana*) and July 1, 2020, Lot 57 (painting *Il Baciamano*). The website's records indicate that Longhi's works and his imitators are sold regularly at auctions; see "Pietro Longhi: Auction Lots," MutualArt, accessed October 1, 2020, https://www.mutualart.com/Artist/Pietro-Longhi/679F5593B413FAFC/AuctionResults.

[7] John Eglin, *Venice Transfigured: The Myth of Venice in British Culture, 1660-1797* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

[8] Christopher Hibbert, *The Grand Tour* (London: Thames Methuen, 1987), 130.

[9] In the liturgical calendar, carnival period lasted only for around six weeks: from the feast of St. Stephan on December 26 to the start of Lent. However, since in eighteenth-century Venice the

Marco as well as the rest of the city was flooded with freak shows, fortune-tellers, exotic animals, acrobats, and magicians. The presence of a large number of prostitutes and transvestites in the city as well as the possession of *cicisbei* (male servants) by married noble ladies, often considered by foreigners to be their lovers, convinced tourists that Venice was a centre of promiscuity.[10]

Longhi's works are persistently read as epitomising this decadent, libertine, and pleasurable view of Venice. In fact, the traction of this cliché is evident in the popularity of recent exhibitions where the artist's paintings featured prominently. Two titles of such exhibitions are *Casanova: the Seduction of Europe* (27 August–31 December 2017, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth; 10 February–28 May 2018, The Legion of Honor, San Francisco; 1 July–8 October 2018, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) and *Sérénissime! Venise en fête, de Tiepolo à Guardi.* (25 February–25 June 2017, Museum Cognacq-Jay, Paris).

The decadence and frivolous lifestyle of eighteenth-century Venetians are often considered to have led to the fall of the Republic when Napoleon's troops arrived. This is reflected in John Ruskin's quote from his famous

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practice of wearing masks lasted for six months a year, many modern scholars assumed that the carnival season lasted for that amount of time, see for example: Lina Padoan Urban, *Il carnevale veneziano nelle maschere incise da Francesco Bertelli* (Milan: Edizioni Il Polifilo,1986); Frederic C. Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press,1973), 434; Tony Tanner, *Venice Desired* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 5; Hetty Paërl, *Pulcinella: La misteriosa maschera della cultura europea* (Rome: Apeiron Editori, 2002), 70. For an explanation of the misconception regarding the carnival's length see James H. Johnson, *Venice Incognito: Masks in the Serene Republic* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2011), 47-53; Gilles Bertrand, *Histoire du carnaval de Venise: XIe-XXIe siècle* (Paris: Pygmalion, 2013), 97-104; Benjamin Couilleaux, "Au carnaval: La distraction perpétuelle," in *Sérénissime! Venise en fête, de Tiepolo à Guardi,* eds. Rose-Marie Herda-Mousseaux and Benjamin Couilleaux (Paris: Paris-Musées, 2017), 123-139.

[10] Paula Findlen, Wendy Wassyng Roworth, and Catherine M. Sama, eds. *Italy's Eighteenth Century: Gender and Culture in the Age of the Grand Tour* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 22-31.

Stones of Venice (1851) where the artist expressed the view that "the final degradation of the Venetian power appears owing not so much to the degradation of the principles of its government, as to their being forgotten in the pursuit of pleasure."[11] The view of Venice as *città morta* pervaded nineteenth-century literature and can be illustrated with the quote of British Romantic poet Lord Byron from his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1812):

> In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
> And silent rows the songless gondolier;[12]
> Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
> And music meets not always now the ear;
> Those days are gone — but Beauty still is here.
> States fall, arts fade — but Nature doth not die,
> Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
> The pleasant place of all festivity,
> The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy![13]

Byron's canto represents a quintessentially Romantic view of a perishing Venice. The poet draws an image of the fallen city by using a poetic metaphor of a ruin. At the same time, we can sense the author's sad reflection on time bringing decay, and his nostalgia for the past greatness of the city.

The nineteenth-century association of Venice with a decay of its artistic tradition and society was largely responsible for the lack of scholarly

[11] John Ruskin, "Stones of Venice," in *The works of John Ruskin*, eds. Edward Tyas Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London: George Allen, 1903-12), 428.
[12] The gondoliers used to sing passages from Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*.
[13] George Gordon Byron, *The poetical works of Lord Byron. Complete* (London: John Murray, 1867), Canto IV, 169.

attention to Longhi's art. It is only in the following century that we can notice a resurgence in interest in the painter's output, even if he is usually represented as a minor figure in Venetian art. The artist is often marginalised and sometimes chided by modern scholars as a "jolly painter of manners"[14] who made "lazy, little pictures."[15] He is seen as a passive subject, a naïve painter "without possessing … psychological acuteness,"[16] and his art is frequently viewed as "provincial."[17]

The most distinctive features of Longhi's works — their subject matters and small-scale, which differentiate them from the majority of eighteenth-century pictures produced in the city — are rarely acknowledged by scholars. Given the market for *vedute,* paintings of views of Venice created by European visitors and collectors to the city, developed by Canaletto, Bernardo Bellotto and, in the succeeding generation, Francesco Guardi, the genre devised by Longhi is unique in the Serenissima.[18] Unlike the expansive perspectival compositions of the *vedutisti*, the artist never painted spectacular buildings or picturesque views but instead offered close-up scenes of Venetian life which were exclusively commissioned — and this point warrants underlining — by local noble families.

[14] Philippe Monnier, *Venise au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Editions Complexe, 2001), 98.
[15] Michael Levey, *Painting in Eighteenth Century Venice* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 142.
[16] Aldo Ravà, *Pietro Longhi* (Florence: Istituto di edizioni artistiche Fratelli Alinari, 1923), 22-23, trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 62.
[17] Terisio Pignatti, *Pittura in Europa: il Settecento* (Milan: Fabbri, 1961), 157-8, trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 66. In the same volume, Pignatti also writes that "his [Longhi's] vein is more domestic and his ambitions less evident."
[18] On the Venetian vedutisti see for instance Filippo Pedrocco, *Il Settecento a Venezia: i vedutisti* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2001); Filippo Pedrocco, *Canaletto, Guardi e i vedutisti veneziani* (London and New York: Scala Group, 2012; Charles Beddington, *Venice: Canaletto and His Rivals* (London: National Gallery, 2010); Peter Björn Kerber, *Eyewitness Views: Making History in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Los Angeles: Getty Publication, 2017).

Longhi began his career, perhaps surprisingly, as a painter of large-scale mythological and religious paintings, but at the beginning of the 1740s he changed the format and style of his works completely to small-scale scenes of everyday life. It is striking that the distinctive nature of Longhi's paintings, which sets him apart from other artists working in Venice, is never analysed by scholars in relation to the Venetian art market and instead dismissed as a consequence of the artist's supposed lack of painterly skill. As an example, the famous art historian Giuseppe Fiocco believes that the artist painted "with no brain,"[19] and Michael Levey points to his "clumsy handling of paint, his inability ever to establish the planes of a picture, and his incapacity to draw properly."[20] This staggering critical appraisal is challenged by a wealth of evidence considered in this thesis. The artist produced a vast number of highly skilled drawings, was praised by his contemporaries, and managed to establish a very successful career in an increasingly competitive and crowded Venetian art market.

Modern critics' judgments of Longhi are in opposition to the opinion of the artist's first biographers. Both Pellegrino Antonio Orlandi, in his *Abecedario Pittorico* (ABC of Painting, 1753), and the artist's son Alessandro Longhi, in his *Compendio delle Vite de' Pittori Veneziani* (Compendium of the Lives of the Most Celebrated Venetian Painters, 1762), draw a celebratory picture of the painter.[21] Their accounts follow a traditional biographical paradigm which makes use of the notion of the artist as an

[19] Giuseppe Fiocco, *La pittura veneziana del Seicento e Settecento* (Bisignano: Apollo, 1929), 66; trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 64.
[20] Levey, *Painting*, 142.
[21] See Pellegrino Antonio Orlandi and Pietro Guarienti, *Abecedario Pittorico* (Venice: Pasquali, 1753), 427; trans.in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 58; Alessandro Longhi, *Compendio delle Vite de' Pittori Veneziani istorici più rinomati del presente secolo con suoi ritratti tratti dal naturale* (Venice: Alessandro Longhi, 1762); trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 58-60.

idiosyncratic genius. Orlandi and Longhi focus on the artist's exceptional and "bizzare" (as both put it) personality and originality of his oeuvre.[22] Also, both authors concentrate on Longhi's formative years and the master – pupil relationship he had with Antonio Balestra and Giuseppe Maria Crespi. Of course, the veracity of these biographies should not be taken for granted, especially as one of them was written by the artist's son during his lifetime. Nevertheless, the artist's continuous employment by the nobility, his appointment as a director of the Pisani's Academy of Drawing and Engraving, and his prominent place at the Venetian Academy of Fine Arts would suggest that the biographers' assertions that the painter enjoyed a formidable reputation during his lifetime are to a large extent accurate.[23]

The majority of twentieth-century scholarly literature on Longhi is constituted predominantly by catalogues and monographs published on the artist by authors such as Aldo Ravà (1909; 1926), Octave Uzanne (1924), Vittorio Moschini (1956), Francesco Valcanover (1964), Terisio Pignatti (1969; 1974), Anna Pallucchini (1970), Filippo Pedrocco (1993), Petra Stammen (1993).[24] These publications trace the life of the artist and his artistic influences. They also try to position Longhi within a larger European tradition of genre painting despite the fact that the variety of styles and topics

[22] Ibid.

[23] Between 1763-1766 Longhi was employed by Marina Sagredo Pisani as a director of the Academy of Drawing and Engraving in Palazzo Pisani in Santo Stefano, see Rodolfo Gallo, *Una Famiglia patrizia. I Pisani ed i palazzi di S. Stefano e di Stra* (Venice: Reale Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Venezie, 1945), 53-54. Longhi was as a member of the Venetian Academy of Fine Arts since 1759 where he was appointed as a lecturer of the nude painting.

[24] See Aldo Ravà, *Pietro Longhi* (Bergamo: Arti Graf: 1909) and (Florence: Fratelli Alinari, 1923); Octave Uzanne, *Pietro Longhi* (Paris: Nilsson, 1924); Vittorio Moschini, *Pietro Longhi* (Milan: Martello, 1956); Francesco Valcanover, *Pietro Longhi* (Milan: Fratelli Fabri, 1964); Terisio Pignatti, *Pietro Longhi: Paintings and Drawings* (London: Phaidon, 1969) and *L'opera completa di Pietro Longhi* (Milan: Classici dell'arte Rizzoli, 1974); Anna Pallucchini, *Pietro Longhi* (Milan: L'italica, 1970); Filippo Pedrocco, *Longhi* (Florence: Mondadori, 1993); Petra Stammen, *Longhi und die Tradition der italienischen Genremalerei* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: P. Lang, 1993).

of the artist's works thwart straightforward classification. Pignatti's book is the most extensive of catalogue raisonnés written so far, with a large collection of Longhi's paintings, drawings and prints (225 paintings, 162 drawings).[25] It is the only published source on the artist that attempts to deal with the entirety of the artist's oeuvre. Nevertheless, it is quite outdated and the attribution of certain works to Longhi is questionable. Also, the author does not alter the common understanding of the painter's art; nor does he scrutinise the works' various subject matters and details.

The documentary character of Longhi's paintings is a key theme in the twentieth-century literature. Longhi is often viewed as a *pittore di costume* — a social recorder or pictorial chronicler of everyday life customs. The detailed depiction of clothing, furniture and damask walls in Longhi's pictures is often discussed by historians of costume and interior decoration.[26] Surprisingly, the complexity of the painter's works is rarely acknowledged. Critics hardly ever question the objectivity of Longhi's paintings. Also, although humour and irony in the artist's works are often mentioned by his contemporaries, who propose that he scrutinised Venetian society, scholars are reluctant to address the artist's social criticism.[27] Gino Damerini claims that "Longhi is completely without editorial comment. He recognises social situations for

[25] Pignatti, *Longhi*.
[26] See Giuseppe Morazzoni, *La moda a Venezia nel secolo XVIII* (Milan: Officine Grafiche Schor S. A., 1931); Rosita Levi Pisetzky, *Storia del costume in Italia* (Milan: Istituto editoriale italiano,1964); Doretta Davanzo Poli, "La moda secondo Longhi in alcune opere datate (1741-1781)," in *Longhi,* eds. Mariuz et al., 257-262; Filippo Pedrocco, *Luce di Taglio: Preziosi momenti di una nobildonna veneziana. Una giornata di Faustina Savorgnan Rezzonico* (Milan: Skira, 2002); Isabella Bigazzi, *Tessendo la storia. Tessuti, abiti, costumi, paramenti. Dal XVI al XX secolo* (Florence: Edifir, 2004); Doretta Davanzo Poli, *Lampassi, damaschi e broccati nei dipinti di Pietro Longhi: Rubelli interpreta il Settecento veneziano* (Venice: Fodazione Querini Stampalia, 2005).
[27] See for instance Gasparo Gozzi, *L'Osservatore Veneto*, February 14, 1761, in *Opere di Gasparo Gozzi*, vol.1 (Milan: Nicolò Bettoni, 1832), 83, where the author points out that "Longhi introduce[s] into his scenes certain sentiments which evoke a genial good humour," trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.

their pictorial value and records them as situations; he seems to say 'This is the way it is,' and leaves it at that."[28] Similarly, Levey is convinced that "his [Longhi's] mind had shown neither desire nor ability to express anything other than what is registered as *seen* [*sic*],"[29] and Bernard Berenson expresses the view that there is "no tragic note anywhere."[30] These voices clearly negate Longhi's artistic agency.

Approaches to social dimensions of Longhi's pictures can be noticed in articles and chapters from the mid-seventies to early nineties of the twentieth century when scholars start to express a view that more careful and detailed exploration of the painter's works should be pursued. Ronald Paulson applies an attentive analysis of details in Longhi's paintings to reveal the erotic content of the artist's works; yet he does not make any reference to contemporary culture.[31] Rolf Bagemihl on the other hand carefully examines the iconography of four of Longhi's paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection by looking at them in the context of eighteenth-century print culture and literature.[32] Michael Quinn and Philip Sohm offer valuable contributions which explore the relation between Longhi's works and theatrical performances.[33] Both writers use Goldoni's plays to decipher the meaning of the painter's pictures. Importantly, Sohm underlines the symbolic content of fashion in Longhi's paintings and the semantic basis of his

[28] Gino Damerini, *I pittori veneziani del Settecento* (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1928), 86.
[29] Levey, *Painting*, 144.
[30] Bernard Berenson, *The Venetian Painters of the Renaissance* (New York and London: Putnam, 1911), 73-74.
[31] Ronald Paulson, *Emblem and Expression* (Cambridge: Mass., 1975), 108-112.
[32] Rolf Bagemihl, "Pietro Longhi and Venetian Life," *The Metropolitan Museum Journal* 23 (1988): 233-247.
[33] Philip L. Sohm, "Pietro Longhi and Carlo Goldoni: Relations between Painting and Theater," *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 45, no. 3 (1982): 256-73; Michael L. Quinn "The Comedy of Reference: The Semiotics of Commedia Figures in Eighteenth-Century Venice," *Theatre Journal* 43, no. 1 (March 1991): 70-92.

humour.[34] Mira Pajes Merriman also draws a parallel between the artist's adaptation of scenes from everyday life and Carlo Goldoni's theatrical reform.[35] Significantly, she stresses that both artists scrutinised their society. She points to "the sharp awareness [of both artists in relation to] the tensions, contrasts, and conflicts between the various social classes," but she does not explore it in great detail.[36] It is evident that these scholars introduce a new approach towards the artist's oeuvre. They recognise the intricacy of Longhi's output and its social aspect, but these elements of the scholarship have remained underdeveloped.[37]

At the end of the twentieth century, several museums launched exhibitions devoted to Longhi's art. One held at Galleria Carlo Orsi in Milan (1993) allowed us to see for the first time some of Longhi's pictures kept in private collections.[38] These paintings brought to light various stages in the artist's career and his dramatic change of style; however, the content and meaning of these works continued to be unexamined. At the end of the same year, the Correr Museum (1993–94) opened the largest retrospective show to date devoted to Longhi, which brought together some of the artist's paintings, drawings, and prints. The catalogue produced for this exhibition contains

[34] Sohm, "Longhi and Goldoni," 258-259.
[35] Mira Pajes Merriman, "Comedy, Reality, and the Development of Genre Painting in Italy," in *Giuseppe Maria Crespi and the Emergence of Genre Painting in Italy*, ed. John T. Spike (Forth Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1986), 39-76.
[36] Ibid., 65.
[37] Other important studies on Longhi include Werner Busch, "Pietro Longhis »Taufe« - Der religiöse Akt und die Realität," in *Ikonographia: Anleitung zum Lesen von Bildern*, ed. Brazon Brock (Munich: linkhardt & Biermann, 1990), 111-123 and Dominik Brabant, "Pietro Longhis Beobachtungsräume: Zur Inszenierung des Blicks in der venezianischen Genremalerei," in *La città dell'occhio. Dimensioni del visivo nella pittura e letteratura veneziane del Settecento*, eds. Barbara von Kuhn and Robert Fajen (Rome, Venice: Viella Centro Tedesco di Studi Veneziani, 2020), 283-315. Brabant's chapter is the most recent innovative study of Longhi's oeuvre focusing on the visuality and pictorial strategies in the artist's works.
[38] See Andrea Daninos, *Pietro Longhi: 24 dipinti da collezioni private* (Milan, Galleria Carlo Orsi, 1993) published to accompany the exhibition *Pietro Longhi, 24 dipinti da collezioni private at Galleria Carlo Orsi* (May 7 – 21, 1993).

ground-breaking critical essays on the artist that discuss not only his biography but also place Longhi and his oeuvre in a larger cultural context of eighteenth-century Venice by discussing his patronage, social milieu, and analysing various archival materials. A principal shortcoming of this successful exhibition was its cursory glance at Longhi's engagement with print culture.[39] The following year, in 1995, Palazzo Grassi was a venue for *Pietro Longhi, Gabriel Bella: scene di vita veneziana.* Longhi's street life scenes were placed side by side with Bella's views of Venetian everyday life. The exhibition followed a traditional approach towards Longhi's works which concentrates on their documentary nature — "cataloguing folklore" — but it omitted other significant aspects of the paintings.[40] In 2006, the Correr Museum devoted an exhibition to Longhi's drawings. The display highlighted the artist's skilful draughtsmanship, individual style and exceptional attention to detail.[41] As of yet, no exhibition has focused solely on Longhi's prints and the painter's engagement with this industry, which leaves an important part of his output unexplored. The significance of Longhi's involvement with print, and the insights its yields about his artistic practice more broadly, is one of the contributions of this thesis.

This thesis was born out of the need to reassess Longhi's works and to do them long-deserved justice by considering their variety of subjects and media. The thesis attempts to address persistent gaps in the critical

[39] See Mariuz et al., *Pietro Longhi* published to accompany the exhibition *Pietro Longhi* held at Museum Correr in Venice (December 4, 1993 –April 4, 1994).
[40] Giorgio Busetto, *Pietro Longhi, Gabriel Bella: Scene di vita veneziana* (Milan: Bompiani, 1995), 21, published to accompany the exhibition *Pietro Longhi, Gabriel Bella: Scene di vita veneziana* at Palazzo Grassi, Venice (February 18 – May 1, 1995).
[41] Filippo Pedrocco, *Pietro Longhi disegnatore: dalle collezioni del Museo Correr* (Venice: Marsilio, 2006) published to accompany the exhibition *Pietro Longhi disegnatore: dalle collezioni del Museo Correr* at the Museum Correr, Venice (January 28 – April 17, 2006).

understanding of Longhi's art: inattention to the numerous reoccurring details in the paintings, a lack of interest in his patronage, negation of his artistic curiosity and skills, as well as rejection of the distinctiveness and critical nature of the artist's works. By taking Longhi's oeuvre seriously, the chapters make a case for the artist's savvy experimentation with pictorial devices, his play with beholders' viewing experiences, his engagement with the modern world and its various forms of knowledge and technologies, his response to the needs of his patrons, his meditation on his position as an artist within larger Venetian art history, and the shaping of his artistic persona. By analysing Longhi's output in the lively artistic, cultural and historical world of eighteenth-century Venice, I also aim to interrogate myths of the city as decadent and promiscuous and to demonstrate its complexity and vitality instead. This was a century in which the city's political importance in Europe had waned, and when it became a major destination for visitors on the Grand Tour. However, to say that the Republic was simply a pleasure capital of the world would be to overlook the range of its artistic, social and intellectual investments and its own self-critical voices — a voice as I argue that can be heard in Longhi's works.

Venice was not an isolated place but a city where residents and visitors engaged in Enlightenment debates, inventions, and scientific discoveries shaping Europe. Many of these current theories and concepts circulated in the largely conservative Republic. The city's academies focused on dissemination of knowledge useful for modern life such as medicine, physics, natural

history, and agriculture.[42] A centre of print and publishing since the fifteenth century, the industry continued to thrive in the Settecento, with printed newspapers and bookselling contributing to the dissemination of new ideas.[43] Opera and theatre also flourished, with a number of venues attracting composers and providing employment for many artists who produced impressive stage scenery.[44] Another enduring industry was glass production, with Venetians excelling in the development of optical devices. Striking transformations of social spaces played an important role in exchanges of ideas.[45] Theatres, coffeehouses, pharmacies, workshops, gambling houses,

[42] See for instance Brendan Dooley, "The Public Sphere and the Organization of Knowledge," in *Early Modern Italy*, ed. John Marino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 209-228.
[43] For the eighteenth-century print industry in Venice see Rodolfo Gallo, *L'incisione nel '700 a Venezia e a Bassano* (Venezia: Libreria serenissima depositaria, 1941); Rodolfo Pallucchini, *Gli Incisori Veneti del Settecento* (Venice: Ferrari, 1941); Giorgio Trentin, "Appunti su taluni aspetti delle origini del rifiorire incisorio del '700 a Venezia e sullo spirito di questa rinascita incisoria," in *Venezia e l'Europa: Atti del XVIII congresso internazionale di storia dell'arte: Venezia*, September 12-18, 1955 (Venice: Arte Veneta, 1956), 341-344; Victor Wiener, "Eighteenth-Century Italian Prints," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 29 (January 1971): 203-255; Mario Infelise and Paola Marini, *Remondini. Un editore del Settecento* (Milan: Electa, 1990); Suzanne Boorsch, *Venetian Prints and Books in the Age of Tiepolo* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997); Mario Infelise, *L'editoria veneziana nel '700* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2000); Renato Pasta, "The history of the book and publishing in eighteenth-century Italy," *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 10, no. 2 (2007): 200-217.
[44]For the literature on the eighteenth-century Venetian opera and theatre see Rose-Marie Herda-Mousseaux, "De la ville à la scène: Théâtres et operas," in *Sérénissime!*, 51-63; Melania Bucciarelli, *Italian Opera and European Theatre, 1680-1720: Plots, Performers, Dramaturgies* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001); Simon Gilson, Brian Richardson and Catherine Keen, *Theatre, Opera, and Performance in Italy from the Fifteenth Century to the Present: Essays in Honour of Richard Andrews* (Leeds: Maney Publishing, 2004); Joseph Farrell and Paolo Puppa, eds. *A history of Italian Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Virgilio Boccardi, *Venezia a teatro nel Settecento: i virtuosi, l'ambiente, le leggi, il pubblico, gli scandali e altre storie* (Venice, Supernova, 2012); Rosie Razzall "Opera and Theatre," in *Canaletto: The Art of Venice*, Rosie Razzall and Lucy Whitaker eds. (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2017), 112-125.
[45] For the general literature on the development of public sphere see for instance Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1991); Craig Calhoun, ed. *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT, 1992); Lawrence Klein, "Gender and the Public/Private Distinction in the Eighteenth Century: Some Questions about Evidence and Analytic Procedure," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29, no.1 (1996): 98-112; Dooley, "The Public Sphere," 209-228; Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT, 2005); Bronwen Wilson and Paul Yachnin, eds. *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe: People, Things, Forms of Knowledge* (New York and London: Routledge, 2011); Brian Cowan, "Public Spaces, Knowledge, and Sociability," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, ed. Frank Trentmann (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2012); Massimo Rospocher, *Beyond the Public Sphere: Opinions, Publics, Spaces in Early Modern Europe* (Bologna: Mulino, 2012); Angela Vanhaelen and Joseph P. Ward, eds.

squares, salons, academies, and other public spaces were readily available for social encounters. To borrow Tiziana Plebani's metaphor, the entire city started to resemble "an open-air salon."[46] One could be struck by the increased aggregation and visibility of noblewomen in public spaces. Previously confined in their homes, they appeared at the centre of Venetian sociability, both as protagonists and as topics of conversation.[47] Many contemporary noblewomen started to play an important part in the cultural life of the Republic. The wives of procurators of San Marco such as Lucrezia Basadonna Mocenigo, Faustina Rezzonico, and Pisana Mocenigo Pisani and

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Making Space Public in Early Modern Europe: Performance, Geography, Privacy (New York and Oxon: Routledge, 2013).

[46] Tiziana Plebani, "Socialità, conversazioni e casini nella Venezia del secondo Settecento" in *Salotti e ruolo femminile in Italia*, eds. Maria Luisa Betri and Elena Brambilla (Venice: Marsilio, 2004), 153. For the literature on public spaces in eighteenth-century Venice see Emanuela Zucchetta, *Antichi ridotti veneziani. Arte e società dal Cinquecento al Settecento* (Rome: Flli. Palombi, 1988); Brendan Dooley "Accademie scientifiche venete nel Settecento,"in *Studi Veneziani* 37 (2003): 91-106; Filippo De Vivo, "Pharmacies as Centres of Communication in Early Modern Venice," *Renaissance Studies* 21, no. 4 (September 2007): 505-21; Plebani, "Socialità," 153-176; Giovanni Dolcetti, *Le bische e il giuoco d'azzardo a Venezia (1172–1807)* (Treviso: De Bastiani, 2010); Marc Neveu, "The Space of the Masque, from Stage to Ridotto," in *Architectural Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Constructing Identities and Interiors*, eds. Denise Amy Baxter and Meredith Martin (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 149-165; Irene Zaffi-Cordi, "Botteghe da Caffè, Sociability and Gender in Eighteenth-Century Venice," *NeMLA* 35, (2013): 26-50; Marianna D'Ezio, "Eighteenth-Century Venice: European Travellers and Venetian Women's Casinos," in *Sociability and Cosmopolitanism. Social Bonds on the Fringes of the Enlightenment*, eds. Scott Breuninger and David Burrow (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014), 47-58; Martina Frank, "The Venetian Casino: Form and Function," in *Looking for Leisure. Court Residences and their Satellites, 1400-1700*, eds. Sylva Dobalová, Ivan P. Muchka, and Sarah Lynch (Prague: Palatium, 2017), 124-142; Martina Frank, "Casini e ridotti veneziani tra Sei e Settecento: per quale comunità?", *Comunità e società nel Commonwealth veneziano*, eds. Gherardo Ortalli, Oliver Jens Schmitt, Ermanno Orlando (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2018), 261-279; Tiziana Plebani, "Luoghi di caffè, spazio pubblico e conflitti di genere," in *Femminile e maschile nel Settecento*, eds. Cristina Passetti and Lucio Tufano (Florence: Florence University Press, 2018), 33-46.

[47] See for instance Rebecca Messbarger, *The Century of Women: Representations of Women in Eighteenth-Century Italian Public Discourse* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Susan Dalton, *Engendering the Republic of Letters: Reconnecting Public and Private Spheres* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 2004); Susanne Winter, *Donne a Venezia: vicende femminili fra Trecento e Settecento* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2004); Società italiana delle storiche ed., *Le donne nella storia del Veneto: Libertà, diritti, emancipazione (sec. XVIII-XIX)* (Padua: Cleup, 2005); Nadia Maria Filippini, *Donne sulla scena pubblica: Società e politica in Veneto tra Sette e Ottocento* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2006); Betri and Brambilla, *Salotti*; Tiziana Plebani, *Storia di Venezia città delle donne. Guida ai tempi, luoghi e presenze femminili* (Venice: Marsilio, 2008); Anna Bellavitis, Nadia Maria Filippini, Tiziana Plebani eds., *Spazi, poteri, diritti delle donne a Venezia in età moderna* (Verona: QuiEdi, 2012); Elena Brambilla, *Sociabilità e relazioni femminili nell'Europa moderna. Temi e saggi* (Milan: Franco Angeli: 2013).

doge's wives such as Pisana Corner Mocenigo opened salons and casinos which became famous centres of cultural conversation.[48]

Longhi's paintings thematise these changes that occurred in social spaces in eighteenth-century Venice and can be useful to understand the nature and new forms of public life. By putting Longhi's work and persona into dialogue with contemporary theories, technologies, forms of knowledge, and urban practices, this dissertation will present his oeuvre as being infused by, and critically responding to, the surrounding world. His works are not only forms of art but forms of life; they animate encounters, probe new ideas, and comment on social and modern experiences in a city too often seen as unchanging in what was a changing world.

Since Longhi's art is so diverse in its subject matter and deals with a range of issues, this is not a thesis that frames its material in a unified manner. No single methodology is enough to explore the artist's oeuvre. My work adapts an attentive multidisciplinary approach. I prefer to use the narrow focus on a single work in each chapter to open onto a broad range of cultural, social, and aesthetic issues. One direction of my methodology has been to trace ways in which Longhi's paintings mediate between diverse and new cultural experiences and their patrons. That requires exploring contemporary theatre, development of the public sphere, technologies of print and optics, the history of performance within the city, the social history of the Republic, contemporary theories of physiognomy, and gender and feminist studies regarding eighteenth-century Venice.

[48] Tiziana Plebani, "Il percorso delle donne nel secondo Settecento: dal privato al pubblico, dal pubblico al politico," in *Le donne nella storia del Veneto*, 15.

In contrast to a standard biographical monograph that narrates the arc or development of a career, my approach sees the artist as always under construction — through the works themselves. Longhi was an extremely malleable artist — his oeuvre was constantly penetrated and shaped by the social and material environment he was describing. The literature related to the artist is overburdened with traditional studies that tend to denominate and to classify Longhi as a genre-scene painter, even though the variety of his output does not fit such a limited and linear model of reading.[49] Linda Nochlin's assertion fifty years ago is still germane: that the traditional art-historical monograph accepts the notion of the great artist first, and gives secondary place to the social and institutional structures within which he lived and worked.[50] This thesis is not a self-contained monument to a single artist, but a chapter in a different story of art, one that may also intervene in the history of eighteenth-century Venice. I seek to interpret artworks in relation to the social dynamics of artistic production and reception rather than the elusive intentions of a lone ordinary or extraordinary figure. To understand Longhi's output, I believe, requires an approach that is commensurate with its multi-disciplinary character.

[49] On the problematics of a monograph and the fictive construction of the artistic subject in biographical accounts see for instance Ernst Kriz and Otto Kurz, *Legend, Myth and Magic in the Image of the Artist: A Historical Experiment* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979); Griselda Pollock, "Artists, Mythologies and Media Genius, Madness and Art History," *Screen* 21, no. 3 (1980): 58-59; Paul Barolsky, *Why Mona Lisa Smiles and Other Tales by Vasari* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991); Paul Barolsky, "Vasari and the Historical Imagination," *Word & Image* 15, no. 3 (1999): 286-291; Gabriele Guercio, *Art as Existence: The Artist's Monograph and Its Project* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).

[50] Linda Nochlin "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" *ARTnews* 69, no.9 (January 1971): 22-39, 67-71.

Sources and research methods

I have given priority to visual, and historical analysis through detailed examination of artworks and archival material, which was supported by the critical reading of primary and secondary literature so as to place Longhi and his output in its complex artistic and historical context. My research involved communication with museums, auctions houses, foundations, private collectors, and churches who own or used to own the artist's works. In particular, it was essential for me to study the artist's small-scale paintings with their many details *in situ*. I have viewed Longhi's pictures in major art collections in the Veneto region such as Ca' Rezzonico, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Gallerie dell'Accademia (all in Venice), and Fondazione Palazzo Montanari (Vicenza). In addition, I was able to analyse the artist's drawings and prints in the Museo Correr and his large-scale mythological and religious works in the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista (Venice), the Ca' Sagredo Hotel (Venice), and the Parish Church of San Pellegrino (Lombardy). Other important Italian collections that I have visited in preparation for this thesis include: the House of Carlo Goldoni and its library in Venice, which informed Chapter Four and focuses on the theatrical nature of the artist's works; the National Museum of Cinema in Turin as well as the Remondini Museum in Vicenza where I viewed collections of perspective prints and optical devices that I discuss in Chapter Three.

Primary and archival sources regarding Longhi and his patrons were analysed in various Italian libraries and archives such as Biblioteca Correr, Archivio di Stato (state archive), Archivio Storico del Patriarcato (church

archives), Biblioteca Marciana, Fondazione Cini (all in Venice), and Biblioteca Civica (Bassano del Grappa). Other libraries and archives I have explored outside of Italy include the British Library, the British Museum, the National Gallery, London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

My archival investigation of eighteenth-century inventories and estimates of art collections belonging to nobility was particularly useful in examining the Venetian art market and Longhi's patronage. For instance, in the Archivio di Stato (A.S.V.), I explored inventories of various properties belonging to Longhi's commissioners such as Marina Sagredo Pisani and Alvise II Zuanne Mocenigo.[51] In Biblioteca Marciana (B.M.V.) and Biblioteca Correr (B.C.V), I studied the estimates of paintings and prints from the Sagredo collection written by several artists including Longhi himself (1762) as well as inventories of libraries belonging to Cecilia Sagredo and her daughter Caterina Sagredo Barbarigo.[52] My interrogation of Longhi's evaluation of Sagredo's art collection, which surprisingly has never been researched in detail, allowed me to understand the value placed on certain artworks in the eighteenth century and Longhi's views on art. The nobles' inventories of art

[51] *Inventory of belongings kept in Marina Sagredo Pisani's casino in Procuratia,* A.S.V. Giudizi di Petizion, b.463/128, n.98 (1776); *Inventory of Venetian palaces and casini bequeathed by Alvise II Zuanne Mocenigo*, A.S.V. Giudizi di Petizion b.482/147, n.4 (1787). Archivio di Stato also stores the *Inventory of Pietro Longhi's belongings created after his death*: A.S.V. Inquisitori alle acque, b.28 (1785).

[52] *Inventories of paintings in the palace in Santa Sofia* (estimates by Giambattista Tiepolo and Giambattista Piazzetta), B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750bis/8 (1738) and Mss. P.D. c. 2750bis/7 (1755); *Inventory of furniture in Marina Sagredo Pisani's casino in Trevisana*, B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750bis/12 (1753); *Inventory of Cecilia Sagredo's casino San Giobbe*, B.C.V. 2750 bis/1 (1755); *Inventory of paintings in the palace in Santa Sofia* (estimate by Pietro Longhi), B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2193/1 (1762); *Inventory and estimate of collection of drawings and prints* (estimate by Pietro Longh), B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750bis/4 (1762); *Catalogues of Books belonging to Caterina Barbarigo*, B.C.V. Mss. P.D.c. 2750bis/3 (1759) and B.M.V. Mss. It. VII 713 (8404) (1772); *Catalogue of Books belonging to Cecilia Sagredo*, B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2649/6 (1772).

collections and books on the other hand were particularly revealing about Longhi's patrons' artistic tastes and intellectual interests.

The secondary literature on the Venetian art market is occupied to a large extent with the Renaissance and Baroque periods rather than Settecento. Those studies that do consider the economic and commercial realities of artists in the long eighteenth century in Venice, such as Federica Spadotto's *Io sono '700. L'anima di Venezia tra pittori, mercanti e bottegheri da quadri* (2018), often pay attention solely to painters of vedute (Luca Carlevarijs, Michele Marieschi, Canaletto, Francesco Guardi) and landscape (Francesco Zuccarelli, Giovan Battista Cimaroli, Giuseppe Zais) as well as the British commissioners of Venetian art, leaving Longhi's relationship with the art market unexplored.[53] Fortunately, in the last few years, there has been an emergence of texts regarding Venetian art collectors.[54] In particular, the recent studies on the Sagredo family — Longhi's major patron throughout his career, such as Esther Gabel's "The Sisters Sagredo: Passion and Patronage in Eighteenth-Century Venice" (2013) and Cristina Mazza's *I Sagredo: Committenti e Collezionisti d'Arte nella Venezia del Sei e Settecento* (2004) allowed me to explore the needs and artistic choices of this influential

[53] Federica Spadotto, *Io sono '700. L'anima di Venezia tra pittori, mercanti e bottegheri da quadri* (Caselle: Cierre Grafica, 2018). The only critical study that examines Longhi's engagement with his noble patrons is a short essay by Piero Del Negro, " 'Amato da tutta la Veneta Nobiltà.' Pietro Longhi e il patriziato veneziano," in *Longhi*, eds. Mariuz et al., 225-241.
[54] Bernard Aikema, Rosella Lauber, and Max Seidel, *Il collezionismo a Venezia e nel Veneto ai tempi della Serenissima* (Venice: Marsilio, 2005); Linda Borean and Stefania Mason, *Il collezionismo d'arte a Venezia*. *Il Settecento* (Venice: Marsilio, 2007); Krzysztof Pomian, *Collezionisti, amatori e curiosi. Parigi-Venezia XVI-XVIII secolo* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 2007). Also, a valuable source on the eighteenth-century Venetian art market and patronage is Francis Haskell's *Patrons and Painters: Study in the Relations Between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980) which although written forty years ago offers multifaceted examination of the commercial worlds in Italy.

commissioner of Longhi's pictures.[55] Mazza's book in which the author engages with several archival documents (wills, inventories, estimates) gives insight into the relationship of the Sagredo with various artists, their personality and tastes, their passion for art collecting, and various aspects of their lives. Gabel's chapter on the other hand was useful to trace the Sagredo sisters' life style, intellectual interests, and engagement with the culture of the time.

Investigating the economic and political position of the nobility was significant in order to determine insecurities, conflicts, needs, and aims of the nobles and consequently what function Longhi's works could play in their lives. The eighteenth century was a particularly vexed period for patricians. The long-established political control by the caste-like noble class was increasingly challenged by wealthy merchants.[56] In the second half of the seventeenth century, these families were allowed to buy themselves into the ranks of patricians in order to replenish state funds and take up vacant

[55] Cristina Mazza, *I Sagredo: Committenti e Collezionisti d'Arte nella Venezia del Sei e Settecento* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2004); Esther Gabel, "The Sisters Sagredo: Passion and Patronage in Eighteenth-Century Venice," in *Architecture, Art, and Identity in Venice and its Territories, 1450–1750*, eds. Nebahat Avcioglu and Emma Jones, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013), 33-48.

[56] On the Venetian patriciate and the acceptance of new members into their class in the seventeenth and eighteenth century see James C. Davis, *The decline of the Venetian nobility as a ruling class* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969); Alexander Cowan, "New families in the Venetian patriciate," *Ateneo Veneto* 23, no. 1-2 (1985): 55-76; Brendan Dooley, "Crisis and Reform in Eighteenth Century Venice: The Venetian Patriciate Strikes Back," *Journal of Social History* 5 (1986): 323-33; Dorit Raines, "Pouvoir ou privilèges no-biliaires: le dilemme du patriciat vénitien face aux agrégations du XVIIe siècle," *Annales. Économies, sociétés, civilisations* 46 (1991): 827-847; Asa Boholm, *Venetian Worlds: Nobility and the Cultural Construction of Society* (Goteborg: IASSA, 1993), Volker Hunecke, *Il patriziato veneziano alla fine della Repubblica: 1646-1797. Demografia, famiglia, menage* (Rome: Jouvence, 1997); Dorit Raines *L'invention du mythe aristocratique. L'image du soi du patriciat Venitien au temps de la Sérénissime* (Venice: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2006); Alexander Cowan, *Marriage, manners and mobility in early modern Venice* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2007); Dorit Raines, "Strategie d'ascesa sociale e giochi di potere a Venezia nel Seicento: le aggregazioni alla nobiltà," *Studi Veneziani* 51 (2007): 279-317; Maartje van Gelder, "Gaining entrance to the Venetian patriciate in the seventeenth century: The van Axel and Ghelthof families from the Low Countries," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Italie et Méditerranée* 125, no.1 (2013): 1-13.

administrative posts.[57] The process continued in the eighteenth century threatening the unique position of old noble families who were concerned with maintaining their status quo in various ways, including via their patronage of art. In this environment of the nobility's struggle to distinguish themselves from newcomers, I was able to explore the role of Longhi's pictures in patricians' lives. My research revealed that the artist's paintings were not only a useful tool to manifest exclusive status and refined taste, but also that they were a means through which the nobility could safely reflect on their history and changing position within the world.

Recent studies on the importance of drawing in Venice allowed me to fill a missing gap with regards to Longhi's works on paper.[58] Longhi produced a large number of exceptional drawings, several of his paintings were translated into prints, and he was appointed as a director of Pisani's Academy of Drawing and Engraving. And yet, this aspect of the artist's oeuvre is rarely explored in the monographic publications on the artist. Dynamic new research on eighteenth-century Venetian print culture allowed me to place Longhi's works within a vibrant print industry.[59] In particular studies of the publishing house of Giambattista Remondini, with whom Longhi

[57] The acceptance of new families started in 1646 with a petition from the wealthy family Labia, requesting admission to the nobility. The new families were admitted in the periods 1646-1669 and 1685-1718, see Raines, "Pouvoir ou privilèges," 838-839 and Raines, *L'invention*, 633-653.
[58] For centuries, Venetian drawing has been underestimated by the scholars. Giorgio Vasari in his *Lives of the Artists* (1568) and Joshua Reynolds in his lectures at the Royal Academy of Arts (1770s) claimed that Venetian artists had neither interest nor talent for drawing. For the most pathbreaking and dynamic new research focusing on the importance of the Venetian draughtsmanship and closely related print culture, see Catherina Whistler, *Drawing in Venice: Titian to Canaletto* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2015), and Catherina Whistler, *Venice and Drawing 1500–1800: Theory, Practice and Collecting* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2016).
[59] Chiara Lo Giudice, *Joseph Wagner. Maestro dell'incisione nella Venezia del Settecento* (Caselle: Cierre Edizioni, 2018), Laura Carnelos, "L'arte degli stampatori e dei librai e la contraffazione nella Venezia del Settecento," in *Il libro. Editoria e pratiche di lettura nel Settecento*, eds. Lodovica Braida and Silvia Tatti (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2016), 145-156; Pasta, "The history," 200-217.

collaborated, were valuable for understanding working processes within the industry, his engagement with painters, engravers, and draughtsmen, and the channels of distribution of prints, which not only included *botteghe* (workshops), but also itinerant pedlars, often depicted by the artist.[60] Giorgio Marini's article "Pietro Longhi and his engravers" (1994) and Cristina Cortese's chapter "Pietro Longhi, Giuseppe Wagner a Giambattista Remondini" in *Lettere artistiche del Settecento Veneziano* (2002) are the only scholarly texts that focus specifically on the painter's engagement with the print industry and were a starting point in my exploration of the artist's collaborations with print makers and publishers.[61] Both of these publications emphasised the importance of letters written by Longhi to Giambattista Remondini in understanding the history of Venetian printing in the eighteenth century and directed me to the museum of Bassano del Grappa that holds this resource on technological and practical materials.[62] The study of letters not only yielded information regarding Longhi's relationships with print makers, but also evidence about the painter's full awareness of the promotional gains his engagement with print culture could bring. From these sources, a

[60] On the itinerant sellers of prints in the eighteenth century, see Laura Carnelos, *I libri da risma. Catalogo delle edizioni Remondini a larga diffusione (1650-1850)* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2008); Laura Carnelos, *Con libri alla mano. Editoria di larga diffusione a Venezia tra '6 e '700* (Milan: Unicopli, 2012); Melissa Calaresu, "Costumes and customs in print: Travel, ethnography and the representation of street-sellers in early modern Italy" and Alberto Milano, "Selling Prints for the Remondini: Italian Peddlers Travelling through Europe during the Eighteenth Century," both in *Not Dead Things: The Dissemination of Popular Print in England and Wales, Italy, and the Low Countries, 1500-1820*, eds. Roeland Harms, Joad Raymond, and Jeroen Salman (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 181-209; 75-96; Massimo Negri, ed. *I Tesini, le stampe, il mondo: uomini e immagini in viaggio* (Milan: Mazzotta, 2014).

[61] Giorgio Marini, "Pietro Longhi and his Engravers," *Print Quarterly* 11 (1994): 401-411. Cristina Cortese, "Pietro Longhi, Giuseppe Wagner a Giambattista Remondini" in *Lettere artistiche del Settecento*, eds. Marina Marini and Alessandro Bettagno (Venice: Neri Pozza, 2002), 379-413.

[62] The letters are kept in Biblioteca Civica, Bassano and Biblioteca dei Concordi, Rovigo. They include the collection of seven letters written by Pietro Longhi to the publisher Giambattista Remondini between November 1748-January 1753, and the group of letters written by Giuseppe Wagner to Giambattista Remondini between February 1751-June 1764.

previously unknown figure of Longhi appears — a deeply self-aware artist who carefully and consciously shaped his career and artistic persona.

Chapters

Chapter One functions as an introduction to Longhi's life and career and focuses on the artist's and his patrons' relationship with the Venetian past. The chapter situates Longhi and his works within the eighteenth-century Venetian art market, analysing his commercial choices such as the abandonment of large-scale mythological and religious works in favour of small-scale scenes of everyday life. My investigation of the artist's early works and primary sources indicate that the critics have been erroneously attributing the change of the scale and subject matter of his pictures to his lack of skill. I consider the main factors that contributed to this transformation such as the realities of the competitive art market as well as the impact of Enlightenment debates, omnipresent in Venice, regarding the primacy of reason over imagination in the arts. My examination of certain elements in Longhi's large-scale works demonstrates that, from the very early years of his career, the painter was interested in everyday life and he was attuned to the issues of spectatorship. The artist's large-scale pictures betray his experimentation with the potential and limits of a painted image and the ways in which a painting can reflect on its own visual structure. Chapter One also focuses on Longhi's patronage and the multiple strategies deployed by the artist to make his art appealing to the Venetian nobility. By analysing Longhi's paintings within paintings, I explore how these works were used by

his patrons to stress their noble lineage at a time when the Venetian oligarchy lost its distinctive political and social status. At the same time, the chapter draws a parallel between the nobility's struggle to deal with what they perceived as their glorious past and Longhi's own artistic struggle with the achievements of Venetian art history.

Chapter Two focuses on Longhi's engagement with the print industry. It complements Chapter One, expanding the discussion of how the technology of print informed and shaped the format and subject matters of Longhi's pictures. I place the artist's works within a larger context of print culture in Venice by analysing prints produced in the Republic and those that were brought to and collected in the city as well as investigating the main locations of the print circulation. My research brings to light how the technology of print became integral to the making of Longhi's paintings. Analysis of the professional exchange between Longhi, publisher Giambattista Remondini, and printmaker Giuseppe Wagner, discloses the painter's ambitions, his tactics to capitalise on prints to market his pictures, and his artist agency. The chapter concludes with the study of the involvement of itinerant sellers in the dissemination of prints in Venice. This discussion lays the groundwork for Chapter Three, where the use of prints in popular entertainments, known as mondi nuovi, is examined.

Chapter Three considers Longhi's experimentation with the possibilities and limits of vision and his fascination with optical devices and the showmen operating them. The chapter begins with an analysis of Longhi's paintings of mondi nuovi, devices through which people viewed topographical prints of various cities. My investigation of these pictures and the history of these

apparatuses introduces a deliberation on various modes of looking present in Venice and manifested in Longhi's work, such as erotic and curious peeping. Examination of the artist's paintings with peepshow boxes takes into account the technology of optics popular in the city. These optical devices, and the topographical views concealed inside them, evoked unknown places and global expansiveness, which opens up a discussion on geography and Longhi's pictures featuring globes and maps. As this chapter demonstrates, the painter's patrons engaged with these forms of knowledge and technologies which consequently informed the artist's oeuvre. The pictures played an important function in the artist's commissioners' lives. They signified their polite refinement and noble status and encouraged discussion and reflection amongst patricians, within the privacy of their home, on their place within an emerging public sphere and their role in shaping public life. Finally, this chapter shows that through the observation of various optical devices manipulated by showmen, Longhi meditates on his own role as an artist orchestrating his beholders' visual experiences.

Chapter Four addresses Longhi's paintings of exotic animals exhibited in Venice and depicted for specific patrons of the artist. These paintings have been primarily viewed as a record of Venetian outdoor entertainments which for centuries deceived, surprised, and challenged audiences, and as a result they have rarely been examined in detail. Longhi's pictures of a rhinoceros and an elephant as well as the related advertising print culture are the main focus of this chapter. The artist's works depicting foreign species are read in the context of the emerging debates on the human and non-human animal boundary and related theories of physiognomy. In particular, I explore those

theories promoted by the French artist Charles Le Brun (1668) and the Swiss pastor Johann Caspar Lavater (1775).[63] The pictures of exotic animals, which were painted for specific patrons, are discussed in relation to their commissioners' interests in natural history, collecting, and taxonomy of various species. Longhi's works attest to games with resemblances, not only by drawing similarities between animals and humans, but also by blending genre painting and portraiture. I propose that these paintings could also be read as the artist's commentary on Venetian society. For instance, *The Rhinoceros* painting invites contemplation in relation to gender inequalities in Venetian society. At the same time, the canvas possesses humorous, satirical details that play with the performative nature of Venetian social life. Accordingly, the chapter explores connections between Longhi's paintings and theatrical performances in the city. The role of pictures of exotic animals in the lives of their owners is a final consideration; I argue that apart from providing entertainment and recording the intellectual interests of Longhi's patrons, the paintings encouraged conversation about self-representation and were used by patricians to reaffirm their distinctive noble status. The chapter concludes with a brief meditation on the picture *The Lion's Booth* (Fig. 1), with which this chapter began, which brings together issues discussed in the thesis as a whole.

[63] In 1688, Charles Le Brun delivered two lectures on expression at the Academy of Fine Art in Paris, see Christian Michel, Chris Miller and Jacqueline Lichtenstein, *Lectures on Art: Selected Conférences from the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, 1667-1772* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Trust, 2020) 111-115; 116-132 and Charles Le Brun, *A method to learn to design the passions, proposed in a conference on their general and particular expression: Written in French, and illustrated with a great many figures excellently designed, by Mr. Le Brun, chief painter to the French King, Chancellor and Director of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture*, trans. John Williams (Ipswich and London: J. Huggonson, 1734).
Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy: For the Promotion of the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, trans. Thomas Holcroft (London: C. Whittngham, 1804).

During the conception of this thesis, I faced a difficult decision of choosing between English and Italian language. All the titles of the artworks are provided in English as they are known to a larger audience. In the text, I mostly include English translations of Italian quotes which are referenced in footnotes and I only provide them in the text if I think they are indispensable to the argument. However, since the thesis is deeply embedded in the context of eighteenth-century Venice, I decided to keep the Italian names of the city's venues and the Italian titles of primary sources, which are translated in parenthesis. All the translations are mine unless it is specified otherwise in the footnotes.

Chapter 1. Paintings within Paintings: Pietro Longhi's early mythological and religious works

Pietro Longhi is known for his small-scale interior scenes depicting noble families during their daily activities such as *An Interior with Three Women and a Seated Man*, executed c. 1740 and now at the National Gallery, London (Fig. 2).[64] Also known as *The Sagredo Sisters*, the painting's focus is two young women holding hands. The woman on the left-hand side gazes directly at the spectator and points with her finger at a seated old man. Her richly embroidered dress with lace trimmings and her blue earrings hint at her noble status. Her female companion wears a rather modest day gown, but her jewelled headdress and earrings as well as her affectionate gesture towards the woman on her right indicate that she too is a member of the Venetian patriciate. The women's blonde hair and pale complexions also imply that they are from the noble class. The old seated man in front of them is served food by another woman, perhaps a maid. His humble attire indicates that he is a servant. The scene is located in a modest interior in which we can see a few simple objects such as a chair on which the man sits, another one partially visible, a chamber pot, a curtain hanging above the niche on the right-hand side, and a painting in a gilded frame on the wall. Possibly the servant's room, its scantly furnished interior contrasts greatly with those of the patrician palaces covered with silk damasks in other pictures painted by

[64] This date has been suggested by Fabrizio Magani, in *Longhi*, eds. Mariuz et al., 170. Magani explains that the painting was probably executed when the younger sister, Marina was still living in the Sagredo Palace, which is suggested by her domestic attire. Marina married Ermolao Alvise Pisani in 1741 therefore according to Magani the painting was executed before this date.

Longhi, such as *The Sagredo Family*, c.1752, at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice (Fig. 3). Both this ornate interior and also the simple room in the London picture, however, are rendered as enclosed, even claustrophobic, spaces. Neither painting includes windows, doors, or a ceiling. Only a shaft of illumination in *The Sagredo Sisters* suggests that there is a source of light on the left-hand side (Fig. 2).

The small-scale (61.3 x 49.5 cm) of *The Sagredo Sisters*, its unusual focus on the servant, and details that are carefully singled out by the artist, invite closer examination (Fig. 2). Longhi often depicts servants in his portraits of noble families but never, with this exception, as the main protagonist. They appear in the background, such as the man on the far right of the Querini Stampalia group portrait, often entering or leaving the room, taking care of children or serving food (Fig. 3). In the London painting, on the other hand, the seated servant is the focus of the composition. He is framed by the two women standing behind him on the left, while the woman on the right leans toward him to offer him a spoon and a plate of food. On one level, the unusual composition in which the two noble women tend to their servant might imply their benevolence towards lower classes. However the artist's precise rendering of the gold frame and portrait of the man hanging above the two noble women demands notice (Fig. 4). The print — black and white with a caption — is a three-quarter portrait of a man who wears a wig, a robe, and a stole draped over his left shoulder. The attire is characteristic of Procurators of San Marco — a prestigious life appointment in the Republic, second only to that of Doge. Close inspection of Longhi's print allows the Latin inscription to be deciphered: *Gerardo Sagredo d. Marci Procurator*

(Gerardo Sagredo Procurator of Saint Mark). Gerardo Sagredo came from one of the most prominent, historical and influential noble families in the Venetian Republic. Active in politics, he was elected a Procurator of San Marco in 1718. From his marriage with Cecilia Grimani Calergi in 1713, he had two daughters, Caterina and Marina.[65] His features closely resemble an engraving by Andrea Zucchi of a full-length portrait of Gerardo Sagredo, painted by Pietro Uberti (Fig. 5).[66]

With this depiction of a print taken from a painting, Longhi makes reference to Venetian portraits of city rulers in the past, while also drawing attention to his own performance within that history. According to the inventory of the Sagredo painting collection produced in 1738, two portraits of Gerardo in official robes hung in his palace in Campo Santa Sofia.[67] The two women in *The Sagredo Sisters* standing under the portrait of Gerardo are most likely his daughters Marina and Caterina.[68] The rendering of the seated servant with his patrons, with a painting of a print of a painting, is form of meta-painting. There is a picture within the canvas, but, more poetically, that picture is doubly remade and remediated: it is a miniature painting of an engraving that was a reduced version of a full-size portrait — a process that,

[65] Mazza, *I Sagredo*, 15-16.
[66] "An Interior with Three Women and a Seated Man," The National Gallery, London, accessed August 16, 2020, https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/pietro-longhi-an-interior-with-three-women-and-a-seated-man.
[67] See B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750bis/8 (1738). The inventory indicates that the portraits of Gerardo Sagredo by Pietro Uberti can be found in the "sixth room" and "alcove." The portraits of officials were often subsequently engraved by printmakers including Marco Pitteri, and Giovanni Antonio Faldoni who were also engravers of Longhi's works.
[68] See Magani, *Longhi*, 171. Magani suggests that the elegant but simply dressed woman on the right in *The Sagredo Sisters* might be Marina Sagredo, who lived in the parental house until 1941. The woman in a rich floral dress on the left, according to Magani, could therefore be Marina's sister Catarina, who in 1739, married Gregorio Barbarigo. Specifically, Magani points to the Marina's gesture that looks as if she is presenting her visiting sister to the old man.

with the subject matter of a seated servant with his patrons, thematises Longhi's own work of making portraits for them.[69]

The artist is best known for his small-scale genre scenes, such as the two examples discussed thus far, but his first undertaking for the Sagredo family — his most important patrons throughout his career — was for mythological frescoes. This little-known work, *The Fall of the Giants*, painted c. 1734, decorate the staircase in their palace overlooking the Grand Canal, now the Ca' Sagredo Hotel (Fig. 6). The commission is one of several works from Longhi's early years when he tried to establish himself as a painter of grand-scale mythological and religious pictures. Why did Longhi change tacks, giving up frescoes and large canvases to devote his career to what his contemporary Pellegrino Antonio Orlandi described as "conversation pieces, games, ridotti, masquerades, and parlours" in his *Abecedario Pittorico* (ABC of Painting, 1753)?[70] According to modern critics, the artist's decision was determined by his lack of ability to paint large-scale paintings. However, this view needs to be re-evaluated, especially in the context of primary sources, which suggest there might have been other reasons for the painter's setting aside mythological and religious works.

In order to investigate this turn of events further, the first section of this chapter will focus on Longhi's grand-scale mythological and religious works created at the beginning of the artist's career in the 1730s. As I will demonstrate, the artist's early paintings reveal his investment in the past of Venetian painting. They also introduce his experimentation with various

[69] It has been suggested that the elderly, modestly dressed man depicted by Longhi in this painting represents Tomaso de Santi — a favourite servant of Zaccaria Sagredo who was placed in charge of keeping Zaccaria's collection intact after his death, which was inherited by Gerardo. See Magani, *Longhi*,170; Mazza, *I Sagredo*, 14.
[70] Orlandi and Guarienti, *Abecedario*, 427, trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 58.

pictorial devices and with the potential of painting to reflect upon itself, which he would develop in later small-scale works. I then turn to Longhi's engagement with his most devoted patrons — the Sagredo family, for whom the artist made both large and small-scale works. Examining primary sources and the art market in the third section, I will show that the shift in format and new topics in Longhi's art were responses to larger social, cultural and political changes that occurred in eighteenth-century Venice. I argue that the artist's turn towards depictions of contemporary life was largely dictated by his need to re-invent himself in the face of a complex Venetian art market. In the last section, I will consider why Longhi's genre scenes appealed to his noble patrons. Focusing on Longhi's interior scenes, in which paintings are depicted within paintings, I show how, after abandoning religious and mythological subject matters, he continued to draw on the history of Venetian painting. An important function of the artist's meta paintings, accordingly, was to allow patrons to express their noble lineage at a time of political and economic crisis.

1.1 "A False start?" — Pietro Longhi's early large-scale works and their critical appraisal

Longhi's large religious and mythological pictures have not been considered favourably by scholars. Most of them are barely discussed as if unworthy of attention, and those that are considered by modern critics are evaluated in negative terms. Most frequently cited are the frescoes in the Sagredo palace which, with their *trompe l'oeil* marble balustrades and Corinthian columns,

mirror the classical architecture of the staircase they surround. Philip Sohm, for example, writes that "young Longhi made his debut with a series of spectacular failures, the most notable being *the Fall of the Giants*."[71] Michael Levey is acerbic in his criticism, commenting that "Longhi painted some … feeble frescoes"[72] and noting his "poor oil paintings of historical or religious subjects."[73] Terisio Pignatti mentions Longhi's "false start" criticising the Ca' Sagredo frescoes by asking "whether he had ever raised his eyes towards the other Venetian artists' works."[74] Aldo Ravà believes that "Longhi had a lot of daring to deal with such a demanding task [execution of the frescoes], which was against his tastes and predispositions" concluding that "the artist did not succeed in this task."[75] For Vittorio Moschini, the preparatory drawings for the frescoes are "mediocre"[76] whereas Francis Haskell calls them "clumsy."[77] The conclusion of the majority of scholars is that Longhi's turn away from mythological and religious paintings to genre scenes was dictated by his lack of artistic skills which is largely manifested in his frescoes.

My analysis of the artist's paintings and primary sources proposes a revised account: his skills do not seem to have been reasons for abandoning grand-scale paintings. Close observation of the religious and mythological works attributed to Longhi demonstrates his technical competence and brings to light evidence of an artist who was already starting to experiment with pictorial devices developed fully in his career. The first known religious work by Longhi is an altarpiece, *San Pellegrino Condemned to Death,* in the Parish

[71] Sohm, *Longhi and Goldoni*, 256.
[72] Levey, *Painting,* 13.
[73] Ibid., 137.
[74] Pignatti, *Longhi,* 14.
[75] Ravà, *Longhi*, 4.
[76] Moschini, *Longhi,* 12.
[77] Haskell, *Patrons and painters,* 265.

Church of San Pellegrino, Lombardy, painted in 1732 (Fig. 7). Rarely discussed in detail, it presents San Pellegrino, the first bishop of Auxerre, at the moment of being seized and brought in front of the Roman emperor Gallienus.[78] The emperor, depicted in a red robe and crowned with a laurel wreath, stands at the top of the staircase. Pointing with his finger at San Pellegrino, he condemns him to martyrdom for converting people to Christianity. Dressed in a bishop's cope and mitre, the Saint is forced by a Roman soldier to climb the staircase.

Several elements of the altarpiece demonstrate Longhi's first-hand knowledge of sixteenth-century Venetian painting, and his ability to emulate it. For example, San Pellegrino's martyrdom bears a striking resemblance to Paolo Veronese's *Saints Mark and Marcellinus being led to Martyrdom*, the *laterale* that hangs on the left of the high altar in the Church of San Sebastiano, Venice, c.1565 (Fig. 8). Following his predecessor, Longhi used idealised architecture and a staircase to create an asymmetrical pyramidal composition in which the action is initiated by a figure on the upper left, and unfolds diagonally across the vast canvas. Women in Veronese's work, such as the one toward the top of the staircase, her arms outstretched, and the kneeling figure on the lower right, who we see from the back, are recast as men in Longhi's painting. The elderly bearded man in the earlier picture, who is restrained mid-way on the stairs, is echoed in the position, illuminated profile, and extended left arm of San Pellegrino. Although the gesture is virtually identical, its meaning changes from one of concern in Veronese's narrative, to a result of the force with which San Pellegrino is being pulled up

[78] Gian Pietro Galizzi, *Le Chiese di San Pellegrino* (Bergamo: Stamp Conti, 1942), 27.

the staircase by one of the Roman soldiers. Instead of following bodies angled toward the altar at San Sebastiano, the momentum in Longhi's painting is in the opposite direction, from the bottom right corner to the top left.

The diagonal staircase was a famous compositional element in numerous Venetian paintings, which Longhi purposefully acknowledges, by recalling examples such as Titian's *The Portrait of the Vedramin Family*, painted c.1540–45 and at the National Gallery, London (Fig. 9). The male members of the Vedramin family are represented on stairs that stretch across the whole picture plane.[79] The architectural structure leads viewers from Titian's patrons on the left to the relic of the Holy Cross mounted at the altar at the far right, while also elevating the family's donor to the Republic and their noble status. In view of numerous staircases in sixteenth-century pictures of sacred stories, it is less surprising that Giovanni Maironi da Ponte writing in 1819, would identify the San Pellegrino altarpiece as the work of Titian, and describe it as "[being] executed with great virtuosity and vivacity."[80] Longhi's large canvas exemplifies his historical approach to painting that was admired by many of his contemporaries. In 1732, for instance, in the payment made to the stucco-worker Francesco Camozzi for his work at the church of San Pellegrino, Longhi is identified as the painter of the altarpiece, and the canvas is said to have been "praised by Sebastiano Ricci and Gian Battista

[79] Other Titian's paintings with diagonal staircases include *The Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple* (1534–1538, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice), see http://www.gallerieaccademia.it/la-presentazione-della-vergine-al-tempio-con-i-confratelli-della-scuola-grande-della-carita and *The Pesaro Madonna* (1519–1526, the Church Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice), see Fig.12.
[80] Giovanni Maironi da Ponte, *Dizionario odeporico: o sia storico-politico-naturale della provincia Bergamasca* (Bergamo: Stamp. Mazzoleni, 1819), 71.

Tiepolo for its high value."[81] The note is evidence that the artist was recognised and praised by the most celebrated artists of the period who specialised in grand-scale painting.

Two figures in the background of the San Pellegrino altarpiece seem out of a place: a boy who stands behind the stairs next to the column on the left-hand side and holds wooden rods (Fig.10), and an adult man depicted between the sword and the knee of a half kneeling Roman soldier in the foreground (Fig. 11). Their physiognomies and contemporary attires clash with the idealised physiques of the Roman soldiers in classical togas. Both individuals face the viewer forthrightly and do not appear to be occupied with the event. The young boy might represent a lictor — a Roman civil servant who usually held the fasces — although it is hard to believe that the smiley juvenile, whose body contrasts the muscular bodies of the emperor and his army, would serve as a bodyguard to a magistrate.[82] The elderly man might be Giov. Paolo Sonzogno, the donor of the painting. The inclusion of a patron in an altarpiece was a convention in Venetian art. For example, Titian's *The Pesaro Madonna*, painted between 1519–1526, at the Church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice, audaciously and famously incorporated the patron and his male family members on the right side of the *sacra conversazione* (Fig. 12). Pesaro is dressed in red and kneels in prayer while one of his sons looks out toward the viewer. The family's contemporary clothes distinguish them from the vision of the holy community, rendered visible by their patronage. In Longhi's altarpiece, the elderly man who engages the viewer

[81] "Libro delle Sessioni dei Sindaci della Scuola del Ss. Sacramento di San Pellegrino," quoted in Gian Pietro Galizzi, *San Pellegrino Terme e la Valle Bergamescha* (San Pellegrino: Amministrazione Comunale di San Pellegrino Terme, 1971), 210.
[82] "Lictor," Encyclopaedia Britannica, accessed August 16, 2020, https://www.britannica.com/topic/lictor.

also wears contemporary attire, but there is an important difference between these two works. In *The Pesaro Madonna*, the patron who ordered the work is meant to be seen and recognized immediately by the viewer; he is a part of the larger composition of the picture. If Longhi's contemporary figure is the commissioner, his presence appears extraneous. The image of his face is hardly visible. It is only when we analyse the painting closely that we can notice an inscription *Soli Deo Onor et Glori* [a] (Glory to the only God) at the bottom of the stairs, which discretely alerts us to the old man's presence. Framed by the sword, the left leg of the Roman soldier, and the staircase, the silvery depiction of his head resembles an image in a mirror — a reflection that is at once the face of the viewer, the patron, and a portrait within the painting.

The young boy holding rods, who is also an incongruous figure in the San Pellegrino painting, indicates that the artist was already thinking about details as small-scale independent pictures. The figure's pose and features recall the model for Longhi's small-scale *Shepherd Boy*, dated soon after, c. 1735-40, at the Palazzo Leoni Montanari, Vicenza (Fig. 13). The small picture is one of many versions of country children holding sticks, depicted by the painter against dark monochromatic background. The similarity between the boys — from history painting in the large altarpiece and rural life in the small genre picture — who both turn to face the viewer holding sticks, are early examples of Longhi's experimentation with scale and format.[83]

Furthering these connections between history, format, and genre is a sheet in the Correr Museum with both a study for the emperor (on the top left

[83] Other works in the style of *Shepherd Boy* from the Montanari Collection include *The Standing Shepherd Boy* in Seminario Vescovile in Rovigo and *The Shepherd Boy* in Civic Museum in Bassano.

of the altarpiece) and a drawing of a country woman or a servant (Fig. 14). The drawings suggest that as early as the 1730s, whilst painting religious and mythological grand-scale works, Longhi also worked on depictions of contemporary figures.[84] This working practice explains his inclusion of contemporaneous individuals in the San Pellegrino canvas, and perhaps also why the young boy with fasces and the old man in the middle ground who faces the beholder act as surrogate viewers. Their involvement in the action of the painting is an interesting strategy on the part of the artist to involve the spectator. However, more significant is the way the artist has simultaneously concealed the figures in the background of the altarpiece and accentuated them by their different colouring, style and physiognomy, deliberately drawing our attention to the conceit. In this way Longhi shows himself to be a painter interested in experimenting with conventions as modes of addressing viewers in inventive ways.

The Adoration of the Magi, also painted around 1732, is another example of how Longhi reused well-known sixteenth-century artistic vocabularies (Fig. 15).[85] The painting, displayed in the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, is reminiscent of Venetian religious scenes such as Jacopo Bassano's painting of the same subject matter at the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh (Fig. 16). Both artists used diagonal compositions where the main focus of the picture — the Virgin and baby Jesus — is moved to the side with Mary being seated outside the manger on a marble step amongst the

[84] I have discovered the drawing in Adriano Mariuz, "Pietro Longhi: 'Un'originale maniera...' " in *Longhi*, eds. Mariuz et al., 32.
[85] Antonio Maria Zanetti in his *Della pittura* mentions that the canvas was initially displayed at the church of Santa Maria Materdomini. The work disappeared in the nineteenth century to be rediscovered by Edigio Martini in 1964 who suggests that it could have entered the Scuola during its restoration in 1857, see Antonio Maria Zanetti, *Della pittura veneziana e delle opere pubbliche de' veneziani maestri* (Venice: Albrizzi, 1771), 483.

ruins of classical architecture. Following Bassano, Longhi used complex foreshortened poses in *The Adoration*, such as the man in the left foreground, who we see from the back. However, only in Longhi's work does one of the sitters acknowledges the beholder. A young boy holding a basket with frankincense seems out of place as he does not engage in the miraculous event (Fig. 17). His pose is repurposed by Longhi in his later works for instance, in the stance of the young altar boy holding a candle in *The Baptism* from *The Seven Sacraments* series painted c.1755–57, at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, who fixates on the viewer in an unusually pointed way, partly because of our slightly higher vantage point; a view rare in the Venetian religious painting where the spectator is usually positioned looking up at the sacred scene (Fig. 18).

The third and the last extant large-scale work by Longhi, *The Fall of the Giants*, also demonstrates Longhi's inspiration with past Venetian examples and his interest in the self-reflexivity and illusion of visual art. The frescoes decorate a ceiling and walls on each side of the *scalone d'onore* — the monumental staircase in Ca' Sagredo.[86] The scene presents us with the battle between the Olympian Gods and the Giants. The ceiling represents Mount Olympus, in the middle of which Zeus throws thunderbolts while riding a black eagle (Fig. 19). He is surrounded by various mythological gods contained in the circular cloud formation. The work is further animated by *putti* flying amongst the gods echoing the two marble cherubs, which flank the staircase's balustrades. In the four corners of the ceiling, Longhi inserted

[86]The frescoes were finished in 1734 as indicated by the date on the wall facing the staircase. Later in his career, around 1744-45, Longhi executed frescoes on a smaller scale for the San Pantalon Church in Venice. In this thesis, I only focus on the painter's early large-scale mythological and religious works produced between 1720s and early 1730s.

a decorative scheme *en brunaille* (executed entirely in shades of brown) imitating architectural elements which features women dressed in a classical manner, most likely goddesses representing the four elements. The frescoes are an exercise in spatial illusion. The artist excels in the foreshortening of his figures. His *sotto in su* tricks the viewer by suggesting the Olympian gods are suspended overhead. On the walls, on both sides of the staircase, Longhi painted contorted bodies of giants falling from Olympus (Fig. 20). By echoing the architecture of the building, viewers are deceived into thinking that the event unfolds in the same space where they stand (Fig. 21). Some of the rocks thrown at the giants, visible at the bottom of the fresco, are made in plaster, thereby projecting literally into the three-dimensional world of the spectators (Fig. 22). Parts of the painted balustrade are depicted as if broken by falling *giganti*, which further increases the deception (Fig. 23). Longhi plays with the dramatic potential of the mythological story for this particular space, using its vertical orientation to intensify the effect. While going up the stairs, visitors encounter different scenes, beginning at the ground level where the giants lie conquered. Slowly progressing upward, as if climbing Mount Olympus, is a risky undertaking since glancing around to study the surrounding frescoes prompts fear of falling. Visitors take part in a spectacle in which they become actors within the drama ascending to the top where the gods reside.

With his monumental work, Longhi reinvented a theme of Mount Olympus used by many Venetian predecessors.[87] The extensive use of trompe

[87] The Fall of the Giants had been depicted by Longhi's first teacher Antonio Balestra in1694 for the competition at the Academy of San Lucca in Rome. Also, Longi's second master Giuseppe Maria Crespi painted Mount Olympus on the ceiling in Palazzo Pepoli Campogrande, Bologna. Perhaps Longhi paid tribute to his masters by depicting the same subject matter.

l'oeil effects in the depiction of the architecture that the artist used in his frescoes was not a novelty in Venice. In 1557, Lodovico Dolce, the Venetian theorist of painting, discussed the illusionistic effects that could be achieved with the aid of colour in his *Dialogo della pittura* (Dialogue on Painting).[88] *The Fall of the Giants* is executed in fresco, which was a medium that tested the artistic skills of the greatest artists and had been used by many Venetian masters, particularly on the facades of palaces. Longhi's subject matter of the mythical mountain and the emphasis on illusion and visual effects in his work recall for instance Paolo Veronese's *The Olympic Room* (*Sala dell'Olimpo*) in Villa Barbaro, Maser (Figs. 25). Both artists capitalise on meta-pictorial devices such as trompe l'oeil columns, balustrades and arcades to deceive the visitors into believing that they are surrounded by real architectural elements, and to invite their acute reflection on art and its making. Yet, the position of the beholder in Longhi's frescoes differs significantly from Veronese's. *Sala dell'Olimpo* is filled with an atmosphere of peace and harmony enhanced by the order and the symmetry of Palladio's architecture — reflecting the authority of the Barbaro family who look at us from the illusionistic balcony. In the Ca' Sagredo, Longhi destabilises our view — the large scale of the hall, the chaos in Olympus above us, and the dramatic poses of the falling giants around us create a sense of confusion and disorientation — we are challenged as viewers to make sense of this turmoil.

References to Venetian traditions of painting, praise from contemporary artists, and a prestigious commission for the entrance staircase to the Sagredo

[88] Lodovico Dolce, *Dialogo della pittura di M. Lodovico Dolce, Intitolato l'Aretino. Nel quale si ragiona della dignità di essa Pittura, e di tutte le parti necessarie, che a perfetto Pittore si acconvengono: con esempi di Pittori antichi, e moderni: e nel fine si fa menzione delle virtù, e delle opere del divin Tiziano* (Venice: Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari, 1557).

palace, signify that Longhi must have been considered a proficient painter, in contradiction to what modern scholars believe.

1.2 From large to small painting: Longhi and the Sagredo family

The prominence of the Sagredo in the political, religious, and intellectual life of the city, and as patrons of art was long-standing. The family came to Venice from Dalmatia in 840 and their status as patricians was confirmed during the *Serrata* in 1297 which meant that they were one of the most historical and influential noble families in the Republic. [89] In 1661, they bought the Palazzo Santa Sofia by the Grand Canal. During that time, Nicolò Sagredo (1606–1676) became the Doge of the Republic which was a source of great pride and prestige. Other illustrious members of the family included Saint Gerardo Sagredo (end of 10th c.–1046), a bishop who was martyred for spreading Christianity and canonised in 1083; Gianfrancesco Sagredo (1571–1620), a philosopher and close friend of Galileo Galilei; Giovanni Sagredo (1616–1691), a Procurator of San Marco and Venetian ambassador; Alvise Sagredo (1617–1688), a Patriarch of Venice; Zaccaria Sagredo (1653–1729), one of the most important collectors in the early eighteenth century, and Gerardo Sagredo (1662–1738), another Procurator of San Marco whose likeness in *The Sagrado Sisters* was discussed earlier (Fig. 2).[90]

[89] Francesco Schroder, *Repertotio genealogico delle famiglie confermate nobili e dei titolati noblili esistenti nelle provincie venete* (Venice: Alvisopoli, 1830), 232.
[90] Mazza, *I Sagredo*, 5-16.

In the eighteenth century, in contrast to many noble families, the Sagredo were still very prosperous. They owned numerous properties and vast lands on the mainland. Apart from Palazzo Santa Sofia, the family possessed a villa in Marocco (Veneto), various *casini* (small apartments where nobles organised informal intellectual encounters and entertained their guests), an apartment in Procuratia, and they rented out many houses around Venice.[91] They bought and renovated a chapel in the Church of San Francesco della Vigna where many patrician families of high importance already owned burial places. The chapel, with its elaborate stuccoes, sculptures and frescoes glorifying their ancestors, was chosen intentionally to make a statement about the noble status of the Sagrado, and the family's place within Venetian history.[92]

The circumstances that brought Longhi into the orbit of this prestigious family and allowed him to undertake the fresco decorations in the palace are unknown. It is possible that Zaccaria Sagredo, uncle of Gerardo and passionate collector of art, commissioned the painter before his death in 1729. Longhi could have met Zaccaria through his teacher Giuseppe Maria Crespi who had painted two works for the Sagredo.[93] However, it is more probable that it was Gerardo Sagredo who commissioned the artist to decorate the staircase as a part of his reconstruction works in the palace, which included all the halls of the building and a restoration of the façade, based on a design

[91] Ibid., 21-40. Procuratie are three connected buildings along the perimeter of Saint Mark's Square where the Procurators of San Marco used to have their apartments.
[92] For more information see William L. Barcham, "The Cappella Sagredo in San Francesco Della Vigna," *Artibus Et Historiae* 4, no. 7 (1983): 101-124.
[93]Luigi Crespi, *Felsina Pittrice Vite de' Pittori Bolognesi Tomo III che serve di supplement all'opera del Malvasia* (Rome: Stamperia di M. Pagliarini 1769), 215-216. Luigi Crespi writes that: "for the noble Sagredo of Venice he [Crespi] painted two pictures, in one the Nativity of Our Lord, in the other a Mission," trans. in Spike, *Giuseppe Maria Crespi*, 35.

by the architect Tommaso Temanza.[94] How the family became interested in Longhi in the first place is undocumented, but Gerardo would have been aware of his grand scale works, such as those discussed above from the early 1730s, before commissioning him for such an important and technically challenging project. Longhi's skills could also be seen at the Scuola di San Pasquale Babylon. According to the artist and collector, Antonio Maria Zanetti, in his book *Della pittura veneziana* (On Venetian Painting, 1797), the confraternity housed three paintings (now lost) by Longhi, *The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes*, *The Land of Canaan,* and *The Centurion*.[95]

There is no evidence that the frescoes in the Palazzo Sagredo disappointed the patron; on the contrary, the family continued to commission Longhi for new works. The payment confirmation for another large-scale project, *The Clemency of Titus* (now lost), indicates that the artist was paid a sum equivalent to the payments received by well-known and successful painters of the time.[96] Longhi was clearly perceived to be a reputable painter, a view supported by study of his draughtsmanship. Preparatory drawings for Longhi's *The Fall of the Giants,* housed in the Correr Museum, attest to solid technical skills (Fig. 25). He drew with great precision in charcoal on the buff

[94] Elena Bassi, *Palazzi di Venezia* (Venice: Stamperia di Venezia,1976),546. The new palace façade designed by Temanza was never begun.
[95] Antonio Maria Zanetti, *Della pittura veneziana: trattato in cui osservasi l'ordine del Busching, e si conserva la dottrina, e le definizioni del Zanetti* (Venice: Francesco Tosi, 1797), 158.
[96]Lino Moretti, "Asterischi longhiani," in *Longhi*, eds. Mariuz et al., 250-251. Lino Moretti cites a confirmation of payment written by Longhi to the count Pietro Giovanelli dated August 13, 1737 (Moretti thanks Alice Binion for receiving the photograph of the receipt but does not indicate where it was found). In the note, Longhi writes that he received twelve cecchini, equivalent to two hundred and sixty-four Lire, for his painting *La Clemenza di Tito* executed for Count Pietro Giovanelli. In the inventory of the Sagredo Collection, Longhi assessed the value of *The Adoration of the Shepherds* executed by his master Giuseppe Maria Crespi, at fifteen cecchini, see B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2193/1 (1762).Taking into account that Longhi was at the beginning of his career and received a payment similar to that of a successful painter such as Crespi, who received commissions from Popes and foreign and Italian royalty, the payment must be seen as respectable.

or greyish paper, using white chalk to illuminate the outlines of his figures to animate complex poses and gestures. Sources considered thus far lead to a significant reassessment of the artist's abilities and stature. Instead of attributing his change of subject matters and move to small format pictures as an abrupt decision taken on account of a lack of skill, following modern scholarship, the evidence indicates a gradual transformation that took place between c.1732–40.

The Ca' Sagredo frescoes initiated the artist's long-lasting relationship with the noble family, which provided him with consistent employment. After the execution of the frescoes and the death of Gerardo Sagredo in 1738, his wife Cecilia continued to commission the artist's works. The inventory of the family possessions from 1755 reveals that in her San Giobbe casino's *chiesetta* (small church), Cecilia possessed an altarpiece by Longhi.[97] Around 1740 she employed the artist to paint the small-scale portrait of her daughters, Marina and Caterina, depicted under a painting of their father Gerardo, which was briefly discussed at the beginning of this chapter (Fig. 2). The significance of *The Sagredo Sisters* has not been discussed in much depth by scholars. The picture of Gerardo, hanging on the wall in the painting is often seen as a decorative element or a piece of historical evidence helping to identify the sitters. However, the portrait of the Procurator within the National Gallery picture is not merely part of stylish furnishings of a noble house, but it forms an integral part of the canvas' message. The framed likeness of Gerardo Sagredo spatially connects the daughters with the father, as in a genealogical tree. The descendants of Gerardo are depicted under his

[97] B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750 bis/1 (1755).

portrait, their tilted necks recalling the boughs of a tree. The resemblance to the genealogical tree is strengthened by the fact that both daughters' faces are displayed on the same level in a linear manner. At the time that the painting was produced, Gerardo was already dead and there was no male to continue the family name, and thus the family's relative position within the Venetian social hierarchy was under threat. Longhi's portrait offered a dynastic narrative which the family needed in order to protect their position.

The inclusion of the image of a deceased head of the family within a portrait of his dependents was commonly used in the eighteenth century. In Great Britain for example, the depiction of a likeness of a husband in a painting of a widow with her children suggested the maintenance of proper family structures. This can be seen for instance in the work of Charles Jervas' *Elizabeth Howland, Duchess of Bedford, and her Children,* painted in 1713, now at Woburn Abbey (Fig. 26). The mourning widow is depicted with her children. The portrait of the deceased 3rd Duke of Bedford hangs on the wall beneath which is a group of three of the Duke's four children. Such representations of the head of the family would indicate a continuity of the clan — "the enduring presence of the patriarch even in death" as Kate Retford suggests.[98] Longhi's painting of the Sagredo sisters played a similar function for the family (Fig. 2). The young daughters depicted under the portrait of their father, with the oldest one facing the viewer, imply the continuity of the family line. Moreover, the representation of Gerardo in his official robe of a Procurator of San Marco underlines the status of the family and their integration in the history of the Republic. The daughters are presented as

[98] Kate Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 106-7.

heirs of the family's illustrious past. Even though the National Gallery picture shares many similarities with the Jervas' conversation piece, especially in the use of the painting within a painting, it possesses certain characteristics that are distinctive to Longhi's style. *The Sagredo Sisters* is small in scale, whereas the Bedford family portrait is a vast canvas, measuring 238.8 x 315 cm. Longhi compresses his group into a format that is neither life-size, nor miniature. Unlike Jervas' interior with an arcade which opens onto an outside world, Longhi's interior has no windows or doors. All the details condensed in this compact painting make it very apt to be studied close to the surface. The portrait on the wall, the curtain, the half-visible chair with a piece of jewellery on it, and the silk cloth on the floor provoke us to decode their meanings. With the enclosed room, partial views, these details further our intimate connection with the group.

Continuity of the family line is emphasised again in Longhi's *The Sagredo Family*, painted in 1752, in which the sisters are depicted in a rich interior together with their mother and children (Fig. 3). After the death of Gerardo in 1738, Cecilia inherited her husband's fortune and became entrusted in his will with governing the family affairs including the marriage of her two daughters.[99] Cecilia was a great patron of art who also shaped her daughters' artistic choices.[100] She possessed her own casino in San Giobbe which was renovated according to her designs.[101] She was an independent woman renowned for her taste who demonstrated proficiency in leading the family affairs. In Longhi's family portrait, the woman is represented on the far left. The pictorial order in the painting is surely not accidental. The sitters

[99] Mazza, *I Sagredo*, 288-92.
[100] Gabel, "Sisters Sagredo," 36-40.
[101] Ibid.

are positioned according to their status. The head of the Sagredo family — Cecilia, is seated in the foreground of the picture. The colour of her dress as well as the cap on her head and her three-quarter position resemble depictions of doges and other government members in Venetian painting – a bold message communicating Cecilia's status and lineage. On her lap, she holds a dog which symbolises pointedly her marital fidelity: she never re-married after Gerardo's death and faithfully fulfilled her duties as an heiress and an executor of her husband's will. Cecilia, who sits in the left foreground, faces the viewer whereas her daughters, who are depicted in the middle ground, look attentively at their mother. Marina, the younger of the two sisters, sits nearer the mother with her son Almoro II, born from her marriage with Almoro Alvise Pisani.[102] Caterina is portrayed on the right with her two daughters, Contarina and Cecilia (named according to the Italian tradition after her distinguished grandmother), from her marriage with Gregorio Barbarigo.[103] The young grandchildren, who stand in front of their mothers, play an important role in this intriguing picture of noble female lineage. Almoro II, the son of Marina on the left wearing a ceremonial jacket and boots, is holding the hand of one of his cousins. Rather than a sign of affection between two cousins, the gesture can be interpreted as a wedding promise between Almoro II and Contarina (which was never fulfilled as the boy died at the age of nineteen).[104] The painting would thereby be a statement of the continuing noble status of the family dynasty, which is traced in the bloodline of the father as well as the mother, of which three are rendered seated, plus the potential of the two grandchildren. The Latin stylised

[102] Magani, *Longhi*, 172.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Del Negro, "Amato," 231.

inscription at the bottom of the painting, which recalls the writing in portraits of Venetian state officials, refers to the Sagredo family as "illustrious splendours" of the Venetian Republic.[105] All the members of the family are richly dressed and are sitting in a lavishly decorated interior with walls covered with damask. The painting is clearly a statement about the enduring social status and financial success of the family, now managed by a matriarchy.

In *The Sagredo Family*, Longhi continues to look back to historical models, evidently reinventing the genre to specific Venetian ends. The stiff, motionless poses of the sitters, the lack of facial emotions, and the horizontal, rigid arrangement of figures recalls Byzantine icons with which the artist would have been familiar. A detail of the mosaic of *The Apparition of the Relics of Saint Mark* in the south transept of St Mark's Basilica exemplifies this affinity with its group of noblewomen on the left, who hold the hands of their children (Fig. 27). Their elaborate attire and the textiles rendered in the mosaic, the opening of the door, and the men on the right, are all evoked in Longhi's portrait.

Like their mother, the daughters of Cecilia were loyal patrons to Longhi. According to the inventory from 1753, Marina had twelve framed prints after designs of the artist in her casino in Trevisana, and in 1774 she ordered a painting in which the artist included himself depicting the noblewoman at the spectacle with the elephant — a part of the Venetian interest in the natural

[105] The inscription on the painting in Latin says: "En tibi SAGREDAE prestantia lumina Gentis,/Lumina quae Veneto clarius axe micant./CAECILIA est Auctrix CATHERINA MARINA quae Natae,/Haec Unum, us cernis, protulit illa Duas" (Here are the illustrious splendours of the Sagredo, the splendours that shine on the Venetian sky. Cecilia is the mother, Caterina and Marina the daughters, this one as you can see gave birth to a boy, the other one to two girls).

history (Fig. 28; discussed in Chapter Four). [106] In the 1750s, her sister Caterina commissioned the painter to portray her two daughters Cecilia and Contarina Barbarigo during a lesson of geography. In the painting known as *The Geography Lesson*, at the Civic Museum in Padua (Fig. 29), the two young noble women can be seen at the table in the centre of a simple room. The seated woman on the left holds a geographic atlas in her hands. The second woman, who stands on the right side of the table grasps dividers with which she examines a globe placed on the table, while turning pages of another atlas with her left hand. Behind the table, we can see a man dressed in black, probably a tutor of the young women. The picture has clearly humorous overtones. Rather than looking at the maps with his monocle, the man "studies" the seated woman's bosom, whose shape mirrors that of the globe. The chaperone seated in the foreground is unaware of the situation. She seems to be too engrossed in her embroidery to be checking the young ladies' conduct. The further significance of the monocle and the use of satire in Longhi's works will be discussed later in this thesis.

Relevant to family gatherings, lineage, and cultivating learning is the use in *The Geography Lesson* of a picture within a painting: the three-quarter length portrait of a cardinal attired in scarlet, hanging on the wall above the table.[107] Holding a book, and with the crucifix visible on the left-hand side, the likeness is taken verbatim from Jacob Frey's print of the Cardinal Barbarigo after an unknown artist (Fig. 30). The inscription and the coat of arms in the etching confirm the identity of Barbarigo. On the basis of this evidence, scholars have concluded that *The Geography Lesson* refers to the

[106] M.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750bis/12 (1753).
[107] Gregorio Barbarigo is also identified in this painting by Fabrizio Magani, in *Longhi*, eds. Mariuz et al., 104.

Palazzo Barbarigo; however, they have never focused on the significance of the Cardinal's portrait in relation to the issue of noble lineage.[108] Longhi employs this meta-pictorial device to convey a particular message about the sitters. Caterina Sagredo Barbarigo, like her mother, had only two daughters and therefore the longevity of the family name was at risk. The Barbarigo family generated many famous men — bishops, cardinals, two doges — but female members of the family went unrecognised. Accordingly, the painting can be seen to justify the young women's worth to the Barbarigo dynasty. Patricians were expected to live up to the achievements of past generations, which Longhi emphasises by comparing the education of the Barbarigo sisters to their learned relative hanging on the wall. Apart from being an ecclesiast, Gregorio was a known scholar. He was educated by his father in military and natural sciences, studied Greek, history, philosophy, mathematics and received a law doctorate.[109] The framed portrait, with the open book, attests to this intellectual reputation of the cardinal and at the same time conveys the erudite, noble and respectable lineage of the sitters, the descendants of this illustrious man. Such a representation of the sisters would definitely appeal to their mother Caterina who was herself a highly educated and progressive woman who engaged in contemporary intellectual pursuits.[110]

The painting constructs a self-reflective image of learning and taste. Maps displayed in open atlases act like paintings within paintings; the

[108] See G.L. Bertolini, "La Lezione a l'audizione di geografia," in *Ateneo Veneto*, 145 (1954): 9-13; Del Negro, "Amato," 233; Magani in *Longhi*, eds. Mariuz et al., 104.
[109] "Gregorio Barbarigo," Treccani La Cultura Italiana: Dizionario Biografico, accessed August 17, 2020, http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/santo-gregorio-barbarigo_(Dizionario-Biografico)/.
[110] See Bernardina Sani, *Rosalba Carriera* (Turin: Umberto Allemandi, 1988), 322; Mazza, *I Sagredo*, 17.

doorframe duplicates the frames of the painting; the gaze of the young woman holding dividers to measure the globe while leafing through a book, mirrors ours. The door, ajar on the right, and the nearby curtain, drawn back, provoke curiosity about what lies behind them, while inviting us into the pictorial space. The raising of the curtain iterates the voyeuristic pleasure of the man with a monocle who ogles the younger woman. Additionally, the curtain gestures to the staged, theatrical aspect of the scene — it calls attention to the performance by the sisters of their family's lineage and cultivated upbringing. Simultaneously, the semi-open door and lifted curtain might gesture to the future and the outside world in which the women will take part.

The genres, themes, mediums and dimensions of art that Longhi adapted and created throughout his career for the Sagredo, for a single noble family, raises questions about the market for pictures in the eighteenth century. Longhi did not paint for Grand Tourists — the principal buyers of art from the Venetian art market of the time. Why did the artist decide to paint only for old noble families and why did his small-scale works appeal to them? What were the reasons for the shift in Longhi's oeuvre from large devotional and mythological pictures to small-scale scenes of everyday life? If the lack of skills was not the impetus for this change, as I have argued above, then what was?

1.3 "An original manner": Longhi's reinvention of himself as an inventor of the large in the small

Alessandro Longhi, the son of the artist writes in 1762: "seeing that it would be difficult to distinguish himself as a painter of History, [Pietro Longhi] altered his aim … and he set about painting small pictures of everyday matters such as conversations and entertainments."[111] Contending with a raft of history painters, according to his son, Longhi decided to change his subject matters to better distinguish himself. The eighteenth-century art market was extremely competitive and filled with painters executing mythological and religious scenes. As Levey writes, "history painting" in the period's terminology "loomed large on the Venetian scene."[112] When Longhi entered the artistic milieu (late 1720s–early 1730s), many painters such as Niccolò Bambini (1651–1736), Gregorio Lazzarini (1657–1730), Sebastiano Ricci (1659–1734), Angelo Trevisani (1669–1753), Silvestro Manaigo (c.1670–c. 1734), Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini (1675–1741), Giambattista Piazzetta (1682 or 1683–1754), Jacopo Amigoni (c.1685–1752), Giovanni Battista Pittoni (1687–1767), and Giovanni Battista Mariotti (1690–1749) were already established and known for painting in the grand-scale manner in Venice. Adding to this saturated market were Longhi's contemporaries such

[111] Longhi, *Compendio*, trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.
[112] Michael Levey, "Introduction to 18th-Century Venetian Art," in *Glory of Venice*, eds. Jane Martineau and Andrew Robison (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 29. Derived from the Italian word *istoria* (story), in the 15th and 16th century, the term "history painting" described a narrative picture with many figures. In the 17th century, the term was introduced by the French Royal Academy. Although initially it was used to described paintings with subjects drawn from ancient Greek and Roman (classical) history, classical mythology, and the Bible, towards the end of the 18th century the history painting included modern historical subjects, see "History Painting," Grove Art Online, accessed August 18, 2020, https://www.oxfordartonline.com/groveart/view/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.001.0001/oao-9781884446054-e-7000038306#oao-9781884446054-e-7000038306.

as Mattia Bortoloni (1696–1750), Giambattista Tiepolo (1696 –1770), Gaspare Diziani (1689–1767), Francesco Fontebasso (1707–1769), to mention only a few, who were also trying to establish themselves by executing grand history and religious works.[113] For instance, by the mid-1720s, Tiepolo was already celebrated as a master of fresco painting and although many contemporary artists including Longhi were trying to emulate the painter, no one could surpass him in this medium. Making a name for oneself with large-scale mythological and religious scenes was therefore particularly difficult in Venice during this period. To be recognised in this genre required adhering to certain and high standards of painting set down by such great masters as Titian, Veronese and Tintoretto. As Sohm writes, by the 1730s there was a general perception that art "entered a new dark age" with the death of the last Old Master Tintoretto in 1589.[114]

The deteriorating economic situation of the Republic also meant that it was difficult to obtain public commissions. Throughout most of the seventeenth century, Venice had been losing its economic and political power. The discovery of ocean routes to the Indies by the Portuguese, and the shift in commercial dominance from the Mediterranean to north-western Europe contributed to the decline of Republic's role in foreign trade.[115] In

[113] In 1722, the Venetian patrician Andrea Stazzio left a sizeable sum in his will to produce paintings on the lives of the twelve apostles. The scenes were executed by the twelve most known eighteenth-century Venetian artists who specialised in religious and mythological painting: Antonio Balestra, Nicolò Bambini, Gregorio Lazzarini, Silvestro Manaigo, Giambattista Mariotti, Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini, Giambattista Piazzetta, Giambattista Pittoni, Sebastiano Ricci, Giambattista Tiepolo, Angelo Trevisano and Pietro Uberti.
[114] Philip Sohm, "Venice," in *Painting for Profit: The Economic Lives of Seventeenth-Century Italian Painters*, eds. Richard E. Spear and Philip Sohm (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 206.
[115] Randall Lesaffer, "*Emulatio* (The Early Modern Age, 1453-1648)," in *European Legal History: A Cultural and Political Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 293; Luciano Pezzolo, "The Venetian Economy," in *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400-1797* ed. Eric R. Dursteler (Leiden: BRILL, 2013), 255-290.

addition, at the beginning of Settecento, Venice was burdened by debt from its wartime expenses and no longer held its former authority in the international political arena. War with the Ottoman Turks — the War of Crete (1645–69) and the Wars of Morea (1684–1699 and 1716–1718) — drained the state's financial reserves.[116] Only a few large-scale artworks were being ordered by the state and church, which resulted in financial insecurity for many artists forced to seek employment among foreign courts and rulers.[117] The lack of an Academy of Art, which would protect artists and help them to forge links with international artists, gain employment, and above all to raise their status must have also exacerbated the already difficult situation of local artists.[118] By the eighteenth century, artists largely depended on tourists who became the main commissioners of Venetian artworks. Their demand for souvenirs from the city was met with *vedute* – the wide-open vistas produced by artists such as Luca Carlevarijs (1663–1730), Antonio Visentini (1688–1782), Canaletto (1697–1768), Michele Marieschi (1710–1744), and Francesco Guardi (1712–1793).[119] The decline of State patronage of the arts offered an opportunity to a few noble families to assume this role.[120] Apart from them, a few foreign collectors who settled down in Venice such as

[116] Ibid. On the economic history of Venice see Frederic C. Lane, *A Maritime Republic* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University, 1973); John Julius Norwich, *A History of Venice* (London: Penguin, 1982); Frederic C. Lane, S*tudies in Venetian social and economic history*, eds. Benjamin G. Kohl and Reinhold C. Mueller (London: Variorum Reprints, 1987); John Jeffries Martin, and Dennis Romano, eds. *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City-state, 1297-1797* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 2000); Paola Lanaro, ed. *At the Centre of the Old World: Trade and Manufacturing in Venice and the Venetian Mainland, 1400-1800* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2006); Elizabeth Horodowich, *A Brief History of Venice*, (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2009); Joanne M. Ferraro, *Venice: History of the Floating City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
[117] Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 246; Sohm, "Venice," 231-233.
[118] The Venetian Academy of Fine Arts was established only in 1754.
[119] See Spadotto, *Io sono '700*, 13; Liana Amanda Bellon, "Souvenirs of Venice: Reproduced views, tourism, and city spaces," (PhD Diss. McGill University, Montreal, 2016).
[120] Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 247.

Marshal Schulenburg, Joseph Smith, and Sigismund Streit served as patrons to artists and intermediaries, although they mostly focused on a small number of favourite artists.[121]

No longer able to rely on lucrative commissions from the state and church, Venetian painters had to be entrepreneurial. Many began to occupy themselves with making copies, restoring, and evaluating works.[122] Others advertised their work on the open market. Exhibitions of art, often during public holidays and ceremonies at fairs, in the streets and in squares, offered the possibility of finding potential buyers.[123] In Piazza San Marco, for instance, artists could promote, sell, and hear criticism from an audience. This was an important opportunity for painters and the wider public to compare works, and to become familiar with trends and buyers' preferences. Canaletto's *The Feast Day of San Roch,* c.1735, with the procession of a doge, state dignitaries, and foreign ambassadors celebrating the Saint's feast, offers an interesting record of the exhibition at Campo di San Rocco (Fig. 31). The artist has depicted a variety of paintings displayed on the Scuola and adjacent buildings. Although portraits, landscapes, views, and large historical and religious works are identified, Canaletto does not make references to specific artists.

Public exhibitions proved useful in helping young artists to establish themselves.[124] For instance, a young Piazzetta exhibited his work *Angelo*

[121]Ibid., 299-316. For instance, Smith's favourite artist was Canaletto and his work dominated his collection; see Rosie Razzall, "Consul Smith and his Circle," in *Canaletto*, 21-31.
[122]Philip Sohm, "Venice," 218-219.
[123] See Francis Haskell and Michael Levey, "Art Exhibitions in 18th Century Venice," *Arte Veneta* 12 (1958): 179-185; Borean and Mason, *Il collezionismo d'arte a Venezia*, 157-171; Sohm, "Venice," 233-234; Stefano Marson, *Allestire e mostrare dipinti in Italia e Francia tra XVI e XVIII secolo* (Rome: Edizioni Nuova Cultura, 2012), 15-21.
[124] Ibid.

Custode (c.1715–18; now lost) at San Rocco which was bought by the well-known collector Zaccaria Sagredo.[125] Alessandro Longhi promoted his early work in 1760 at San Rocco.[126] In 1777, his father's work is recorded in Piazza San Marco during the Festa della Sensa (Feast of the Ascension). Longhi exhibited his *Confession*, from *The Seven Sacraments* series, painted c.1755–57, when he was already well-established (Fig. 32).[127] Although speculative, Longhi may have exhibited his work in public earlier, perhaps capturing the attention of Zaccaria or Gerardo Sagredo on the public market.

Ongoing economic difficulties and fewer local patrons compelled artists to find other means of support. They could promote their work via print technology, making use, as Longhi did, of various shops around town. Painters were often employed by art dealers who acted as intermediaries between collectors, but such an arrangement was largely seen as an exploitation of poor artists.[128] For example, the analysis of tax records demonstrates that in 1717 art shopkeepers earned on average over twice as much as painters.[129]

In view of a scarcity of patrons combined with a large number of painters specialising in grand scale religious and mythological pictures, and a thriving industry and market for prints (an aspect I discuss in detail in the next

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[125] Haskell and Levey, "Art Exhibitions," 182.The fragment of Piazzetta's painting called *Madonna and Child with an Adoring Figure* also known as *Sagredo Altarpiece* is kept at Detroit Institute of Art and the oil paint preparatory sketch for the painting *The Virgin Appearing to the Guardian Angel* can be found in Los Angeles County Museum of Art.
[126] Ibid. 182.
[127] Gino Fogolari, *Venezia, i disegni delle Re. Gallerie dell'Accademia* (Milan: Alfieri & Lacroix, 1913), 391.
[128] Richard A. Goldthwaite, "The Painting Industry in Early Modern Italy," in *Painting for Profit*, 289-290.
[129] Art shopkeepers paid 28 lire in taxes in comparison to painters who paid 11 lire, the average tax for painters. Even when the 30 per cent top earners amongst painters are compared with the dealers, the painters still earn less (21 lire against 28 lire); see Federico Montecuccoli degli Erri, *Michele Marieschi: La vita, l'ambiente, l'opera* (Milan: Bocca editori, 1999), 19-20; Sohm, "Venice," 216-217.

chapter), it is not surprising that Longhi began to experiment with the style and format of his works. His representation of scenes from contemporary life, such as *The Geography Lesson,* is also in keeping with wider European beliefs, promoted by eighteenth-century intellectuals, in the primacy of reason over imagination in the arts.[130] At the time when Longhi was establishing himself as an artist, conservative cultural traditions that had long characterised the Venetian Republic were being challenged by intellectuals inspired by Enlightenment ideas. This was evident in literary and philosophical circles and in scientific approaches to nature and humanity that refuted supernatural occurrences, superstitions and fantasy. [131]

The preference for rationality, naturalism, and historical accuracy was also expressed in relation to art. In Voltaire's *Candide,* for example, the main protagonist visits the art gallery of the Venetian Procurator who remarks: "I approve of no paintings save those wherein I think I behold nature itself" indicating his predilection for pictures depicting scenes from everyday life rather than fanciful allegories.[132] In 1760, Gasparo Gozzi, a Venetian critic and writer, in the *Gazzetta Veneta* (the Venetian Gazette), compared Longhi and Tiepolo and suggested that the grand-scale paintings of Tiepolo are in no way better than Longhi's small-scale scenes of everyday life.[133] In 1761, in the *Osservatore Veneto* (the Venetian Observer), Gozzi compared the two artists again, but this time he expressed his preference for Longhi's scenes because the artist "omits … figures dressed in ancient fashion and characters

[130] See for instance Dorinda Outram, *Panorama of the Enlightenment* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2006).
[131] Haskell, "The Enlightenment," in *Patrons and Painters*, 317-331.
[132] Voltaire, *Candide: A Dual Language Book,* trans. and ed. Shane Weller, Chapter XXV (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 1993), 132-133.
[133] Gasparo Gozzi "Gazzetta Veneta," No. 55, 13 Agosto 1760 in *Opere di Gasparo Gozzi*, vol.1, 480.

of fancy and portrays in his canvases what he sees with his own eyes."[134] The journalist was clearly fond of contemporary subject matters. In the *Gazzetta Veneta* and *Osservatore Veneto* he acted as a chronicler of Venetian life, and it is not a surprise therefore, that he praised the art of Longhi, who was also seen as a type of social recorder of the time. [135]

A similar tendency was expressed in theatre by Carlo Goldoni, the Italian playwright, who often attacked the irrational in the arts and praised scenes taken from everyday life. He revolutionised the theatre in Venice by replacing imaginary masked stock figures with more realistic, contemporary characters. Goldoni's comedies represented the actual life and manners of Venetians.[136] Significantly, the playwright was involved in a famous debate in Venice on realism versus fantasy with the playwright Carlo Gozzi, who in contrast to Goldoni opposed rationalism and observation and was an exponent of the fantastical elements of the *commedia dell'arte*.[137] Scholars have often noticed similarities between the subjects chosen by Longhi and Goldoni.[138] Goldoni hailed Longhi as a man who, like himself, sought the truth in art and admired his "manner of representing on canvas the characters and passions of men."[139] The fantasy and reason debate permeated the public sphere in Venice and was discussed in the city's erudite circles attended by nobles, scholars, and artists. Longhi's paintings attest to his patrons' investments in intellectual pursuits,

[134] Gasparo Gozzi, "Osservatore Veneto," 14 Febbraio 1761 in *Opere di Gasparo Gozzi*, vol.1, 83, trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.
[135] Gaetana Marrone and Paola Puppa, eds., *Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies* (New York and London: Routledge, 2007), 884.
[136] Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 323.
[137] Ibid., 146-150.
[138] See Sohm, "Pietro Longhi and Carlo Goldoni," 256-273.
[139] Carlo Goldoni, *Componimenti poetici per le felicissime nozze di Sue Eccellenze il Signor Giovanni Grimani e la Signora Catterina Contarini* (Venezia: Carlo Pecora, 1750), trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 58.

as introduced above; in some cases, as we will see, the artist even gestures to both sides of the argument.

The artist's shift to contemporary secular themes, domestic interiors, and intimate public spaces was also in concert with genre scenes, which were by no means new to European patrons. It has been noted by many scholars that Longhi's paintings draw on genre paintings from the Low Countries, as well as aspects from English conversation pieces and French *fête galante* scenes which circulated in Venice in the form of prints.[140] In Italy, the tradition of genre pictures was established in the north by the end of the sixteenth century.[141] However, it took its subject from people of lower status — labourers, trades, pedlars — rather than from aristocratic life. Longhi's early pastoral scenes clearly draw on those of his teacher Crespi and Piazzetta.[142]

Scholars have long cited the influence of foreign artists on Longhi, but what has been overlooked is the novelty of scenes of everyday life in Venice, and that the protagonists, after the 1740s, had become his nobles, and his patrons. It is therefore unsurprising that the originality of Longhi's style and subject matters was noticed by many of his contemporaries. Goldoni hailed Longhi for "discover[ing] an original manner of [painting]"[143] and Orlandi spoke of "an individual style of painting" that the painter forged for himself.[144] Longhi's son Alessandro claimed "it was a way not trodden nor

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[140] See Pignatti, *Longhi*; Levey, *Painting.*
[141] For the development of genre painting in Italy see Spike, *Giuseppe Maria Crespi*; Petra Stammen, *Pietro Longhi und die Tradition der italienischen Genremalerei* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: P. Lang), 1993; Francesco Porzio, *Pitture ridicole: scene di genere e tradizione popolare* (Milan: Skira, 2008); Sheila McTighe, *The Imaginary Everyday: Genre Painting and Prints in Italy and France, 1580-1670* (Reading: Periscope Publishing: 2008).
[142] See Mariuz, "Un originale maniera," 31-48.
[143] Carlo Goldoni, "Il frappatore," in *Le Commedie del Dottor Carlo Goldoni Avvocato Veneto* (Venice: Bettinelli, 1750-5), Vol.10, trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 58-59.
[144] Orlandi and Guarienti, *Abecedario*, 427, trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 58.

sought by any before him."[145] A distinctive aspect of these innovative pictures, then, and of Longhi's career, is its noble patronage.

1.4 Reminders of Venetian past: Longhi's paintings within paintings in the hands of his noble patrons

Surprisingly for a painter in eighteenth-century Venice, Longhi did not make pictures for tourists, who fuelled the city's art market, but instead, as the primary sources indicate, his paintings were commissioned by a small group of old noble Venetian families. In his letter to Giambattista Remondini, the printmaker with whom he would collaborate, the artist acknowledged that his works "for the most part were [are] in possession of noble families."[146] Longhi's son, Alessandro, wrote in 1762 in his *Compendio delle Vite de' Pittori Veneziani* (Compendium of the Lives of the Most Celebrated Venetian Painters) that his father's paintings were "desired by all noble houses" and that he [Longhi] was "loved by all the nobility."[147] Luigi Lanzi also tells us in his *Storia pittorica dell'Italia* (The History of painting in Italy; 1795–96) that Longhi's paintings "are to be seen in noble houses."[148] It is difficult to trace with certainty which noble houses requested Longhi's pictures. The disappearance of many important patrician families and the economic failure of many others precipitated a significant increase in the appearance of Longhi's works on the international market, which blurs the picture of

[145] Longhi, *Compendio*, trans. Pignatti, Longhi, 60.
[146] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, December 7, 1748, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3543, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 397-398, English trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 52.
[147] Longhi, *Compendio*; trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.
[148] Luigi Lanzi, *Storia pittorica dell'Italia* (Bassano: Remondini, 1795-96), 218-219, trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.

Venetian collecting. In the mid-nineteenth century, only one important patron of Longhi remained in the city — the Querini family at Santa Maria Formosa.[149] These circumstances make it difficult to identify specific patrons; however, careful study of various inventories of noble families as well as collections in private and public institutions allows us to single out some of them. Longhi's works were executed mostly for local and well-established noble families such as the Sagredo, Venier, Grimani, Pisani, Mocenigo, Michiel, Querini, Ruzzini, to mention just a few.[150] The noble owners of some of the artist's canvases can be identified through the paintings of doges or high-ranking members of government hanging on the walls of interiors. Other indications are families' coats of arms, such as the one seen on the curtain on the left-hand side in the *The Michiel Family*, at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia (Fig. 33). Three generations of the Michiel are depicted in this family portrait — the matriarch Elena Corner Michiel wearing a yellow dress, her three children seated next to her, and grandchildren including a newborn held by a servant. In the painting, we can also identify a framed portrait of the Michiel ancestor in a state robe, placed on the far right at the top as if to match the family arms, which underlines further the family's noble lineage. The trompe l'oeil pieces of paper on which the names of patrons are written, such as in the previously mentioned picture of Marina Sagredo commemorating her visit to the exhibition of the elephant (Fig. 28), are another recurrent stylistic feature in Longhi's works which allow us to name the noble families depicted.

[149] Del Negro, "Amato," 228.
[150] Ibid., 225-241.

Although the origins of Longhi's relationships with the nobility remain speculative, as noted earlier, evidence indicates that he secured commissions not through normal channels employing the apparatuses of the marketplace but mostly through the cultivation of personal connections. By generating a network of close relationships with patricians he was well placed to capitalise on opportunities for employment, not only selling and promoting his work, but also teaching, consulting, and evaluating noble collections. For instance, through Gerardo and Cecilia Sagredo's daughters who married aristocrats, Longhi greatly expanded his network of noble patrons. Around 1765–70, the artist was hired by Caterina's husband Gregorio Barbarigo to depict him hunting in the lagoon.[151] Between 1763–1766, Longhi was employed by the Pisani family as a director of their Academy of Drawing and Engraving in their palazzo in Santo Stefano where Marina's son Almoro was taught.[152] In 1762, importantly, the Sagredo employed Longhi to evaluate their art collection, which demonstrates how highly the family valued the artist's expertise.[153] The Barbarigo, allies of the Sagredo, were in close contact with the Emo and Michiel families who also patronised Longhi. Contacts with the Pisani must have opened the doors to the Doge's Palace. Maria, Marina Sagredo's sister in law married Marc'Antonio Grimani, who was related to Doge Pietro Grimani whom the artist depicted c. 1750. [154]

[151] I refer here to a series of Longhi's landscape paintings with figures hunting in the lagoon known as *Caccia in valle* c. 1765-70, located at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, see http://www.querinistampalia.org/eng/uploads/Schede%20Museo_eng.pdf.
[152] Rodolfo Gallo, *I Pisani ed i Palazzi di S. Stefano e di Stra* (Venice: Reale Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Venezie, 1945), 53-54.
[153] M.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2193/1 (1762).
[154] See Del Negro, "Amato," 232. Caterina and Gregorio's casino in Giudecca was frequented by various members of nobility including Morosini, Emo, and Michiel families. For the portrait of the Doge Grimani see http://www.archiviodellacomunicazione.it/sicap/OpereArte/2279/?WEB=MuseiVE.

Developing rapport with patricians required professional skill and entrepreneurial acumen from any painter; one needed to enter into their world — to become, or better, to act like one of them. In several of his works, Longhi painted his likeness amongst noble patrons, for instance in Marina Sagredo's picture of *The Elephant* (Fig. 28), and *The Conversation* at Cantor Art Centre, Stanford University (Fig. 34).[155] In the first example, Longhi depicted an artist sketching the exotic animal who most likely stands in for him. He is dressed in a *bauta* attire (black cape, tricorn hat and a white mask) largely worn by the nobility.[156] In *The Conversation*, he represented himself in an equally à la mode three-piece suit of deep green, in an interior fashionably decorated in Chinese style where the patricians would take part in genteel discussion. Longhi rests his hand on another man's shoulder — a gesture which communicates to the viewer the closeness of his friendship with the noblemen. However, in both paintings the artist stands in the background of the composition, which suggests his subservient position to the aristocracy. As the son of a metal caster, Longhi would never have been able to formally enter the ranks of the nobility, but he was able to fashion himself as one of their circle. Although it is unsurprising for an artist to present himself in the company of elites, posing as a well-dressed gentleman who possesses manners and a natural ability to take part in the discussion within noble circles, in Longhi's case, it is evidence of the artist's self-awareness, in the face of a challenging contemporary art market, of strategic ways to

[155] We know how Longhi looked like thanks to the portrait of the artist executed by his son Alessandro Longhi for his *Compendium...* (see Fig. 132). Longhi also depicted an artist sketching his patrons in *Sketching an Elegant Company* painting known as *Il Café*, at the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena; see https://www.nortonsimon.org/art/detail/M.2012.1.P/.
[156] On the Venetian masks see for instance Johnson, *Venice Incognito* and Marie Ghisi, *The Venetian Mask: The 'Bauta' as a political asset* (Venice: La Toletta edizioni, 2013).

manipulate one's position through performing roles. In Longhi's lifetime, painters were still advocating for a distinction between the mechanical and the liberal arts. His self-portraits would have been recognised by patrons familiar with enduring struggle of Venetian artists to distinguish themselves from craftsmen, with whom they were grouped in guilds, by elevating the intellectual status of their craft.[157] Having received several complaints from the dissatisfied artists, the Senate formed a *Collegio dei Pittori* in 1682 but this *Collegio* was only transformed into the *Accademia di Pittura e Scultura* (the Academy of Painting and Sculpture) in 1754, long after other Italian and European cities had established artistic academies. Longhi was a member of both institutions, and surely participated in the painters' endeavour to elevate their status.[158] The competition on the Venetian art market presented a dynamic that encouraged artists to use various self-advertising strategies.

The diverse forces — markets, discerning buyers of pictures, diverse genres, economic factors, competition — led to value being ascribed to artistic styles and originality in new ways. Longhi's unusual style, in its combination of portraiture and genre painting, and receptiveness to new ideas, among other aspects, enabled the artist to promote himself as both original and attuned to current interests. Longhi's patrons were keen to present themselves as aware and participating in the current trends and fashions in all aspects of genteel living. The novelty of Longhi's works was therefore surely a reason why the artist's works appealed to his noble clients, in a similar way to how Goldoni's innovations in theatre attracted noble

[157] Goldthwaite, "Painting industry," 287.Until late seventeenth century, the Venetian painters still belonged to a guild (Arte dei Depentori) that encompassed gilders, textile designers and embroiders, leatherworkers, makers of playing cards, mask makers, sign painters and illuminators. The painters left the Arte to form the Collegio de' Pittori in 1682.
[158] See Elena Bassi, *La Regia accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1941).

patronage.[159] But apart from acting as a signifier of advanced taste, what other functions could his small-scale pictures have in their lives?

Although the history of the nobility in Venice will be familiar for some readers, a quick review is relevant to Longhi's paintings because his patrons were trying to capitalise on the long tradition of noble lineage at the moment when their long-established position was threatened by the rich businessmen and merchants, who could buy their way into the noble class. The Venetian nobility's status had been guaranteed by familial lineage for centuries.[160] In 1297, a law known as Serrata or "closing" of the Great Council was passed, restricting the membership of this body, which was followed by other legislations introduced in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries redefining further this caste-like hereditary group.[161] In 1506, the Venetian government began to keep records of births and marriages of all nobles in a register called the Golden Book, to exclude newcomers by ensuring blood lineage of both fathers and mothers.[162] From a legal perspective the Venetian nobility was divided into three orders such as *case vecchie*, *case nuove*, and *case nuovissime*. [163] The "old houses" consisted of twenty-five of the oldest and therefore the most powerful and prestigious families, serendipitously also referred to as *longhi*. The second group, the "new houses," included fifteen

[159] For instance, the noblemen Antonio and Francesco Vedramin employed Goldoni in their San Luca Theatre and the Grimani family appointed Goldoni as the director of their San Samuele Theatre.
[160] See note 55 in *the Introduction* for the literature on the Venetian nobility.
[161] Cowan, *Marriage, manners and mobility*, 5-6. See also Stanley Chojnacki, "Social Identity in Renaissance Venice: The Second Serrata," *Renaissance Studies* 8 (1994): 341–58; Stanley Chojnacki, "Identity and Ideology in Renaissance Venice: The Third Serrata," in Martin and Romano, eds. *Venice Reconsidered*, 263–94.
[162] Davis, *Decline*, 19; Stanley Chojnacki, "Daughters and Oligarchs: Gender and the Early Renaissance State," in *Gender and Sexuality in Renaissance Italy*, eds. Robert C. Davis and Judith C. Brown (New York: Longman, 1998), 63-86; Stanley Chojnacki, *Women and Men in Renaissance Venice: Twelve Essays on Patrician Society*, ed. by Anonymous (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 2000).
[163] Alberto Toso Fei, "Il patriziato veneziano," in *La Venezia segreta dei dogi* (Rome: Newton Compton, 2015).

families which were younger than the *case vecchie* and often referred to as *case ducali* because by the sixteenth century they had each managed to produce at least one doge of the Republic. These three groups were the main nucleus of the noble class and although wealthy families managed sporadically to gain the membership into the Great Council.[164]

The fallout from restrictive policies protecting the noble class led to its demographic and economic decline which became particularly evident in the eighteenth century. In order to mitigate this problem, between 1646 and 1718, the state started to accept new members into the ranks of the noble class in an unprecedented number. During this period, 127 families were admitted into the nobility upon the payment of an entry fee of 100,000 ducats.[165]

The admission of new families into the noble class, which depended purely on wealth (the newly ennobled families were known as *case fatte per soldo* (lit. houses made for money) met with disapproval from the well-established nobility, who were now anxious to assert their claims to social superiority via displays of their ancestry.[166] At the same time, the new-comers sought to disguise their mercantile origins and assimilate themselves amongst the patricians.[167] Art patronage proved to be an effective way in which to achieve this. Thus, eighteenth-century Venetian art patronage was largely moulded by the various needs and tastes of the nobility. Desiring to legitimise their status, the new noble families began to buy palaces along the Grand Canal, decorating them with large paintings of historical, mythological or

[164] See Cowan, *Marriage, manners and mobility*, 5; Frederic C. Lane, "The Enlargement of the Great Council of Venice," in *Florilegium Historiale: Essays presented to Wallace K. Ferguson*, eds. J.G. Rame and W.N. Stockdale (Toronto, 1971), 237–74.
[165] Davis, *Decline*, 109-110. Cowan, *Marriage, manners and mobility*, 6.
[166] Tosso Fei, "Il patriziato veneziano."
[167] Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 247.

religious themes, and amassing collections. In their emulation of older families, they were particularly interested in sixteenth-century painters that could be found in the galleries of older families. Purchasing such works created a connection or potential lineage between the old and new families.[168] However, the price of Renaissance paintings and their scarcity meant that contemporary painters were often commissioned to produce copies or works in styles resembling Cinquecento paintings.[169] This was the case with the Zenobio family who ordered a series of canvases from contemporary artists such as Louis Dorigny, Gregorio Lazzarini, and Giovanni Battista Tiepolo to adorn their newly bought palace on the Rio dei Carmini in Venice. The Zenobio were rich landowners from Verona and they acquired the status of Venetian nobility in 1646.[170] Between 1718–1720, the main hall of Ca' Zenobio was decorated with Tiepolo's series of episodes from life of Queen Zenobia of Palmyra.[171] Because of the similarity in name, the Zenobio family may have wished to suggest their ancestral connections to Queen Zenobia, in an attempt to bolster the authenticity of their newly acquired status. Other new families such as the Baglioni (prominent members of the printing industry who were admitted in 1716), the Sandi (a family of lawyers from Feltre, admitted in 1685), and the Labia (merchants of Catalan origin, admitted in 1646) also commissioned Tiepolo to lavishly decorate their palaces with painting and frescoes in the style of Renaissance masters.[172]

[168] Sohm, "Venice," 212.
[169] Ibid.
[170] George, Knox, "Giambattista Tiepolo: Queen Zenobia and Ca' Zenobio: 'una Delle Prime Sue Fatture'." *The Burlington Magazine* 121, no. 916 (1979): 410.
[171] Ibid., 409-18.
[172] Mariuz, "Giambattista Tiepolo," in *Glory in Venice*, 171-133.

Patricians who could trace their ancestors to the early history of the Republic perceived themselves as different from these new members, seeing their status as being deeply rooted in the past and continuing into the future. Historically, because public displays of noble status through palace design, costumes, and other forms of distinction were regulated by sumptuary laws, Venetian nobles commissioned large-scale works of religious or historical themes for their palaces or for churches that would impress visitors and associates. The newly ennobled Grassi (1718), the Widmann (1646), and the Soderini (1656) started to order paintings in their palaces depicting the heads of their families, in a manner mirroring the fashion of established patricians.[173] The old families also continued to commission large-scale works in the eighteenth century but at the same time they were looking for a way to distinguish themselves from the nouveaux riches. In contrast to the new-comers, they could express their ancestry by using images of distinguished relatives going back into history and legitimising the family's role in Venetian politics. Subjects such as these were beyond the reach of new families. Longhi's paintings within paintings were ideally suited for this purpose. The artist's pictures demonstrated the noble descent of his sitters and simultaneously emphasised their relevance to the present moment with their images of contemporary scenes, and their ability to continue their family legacy into the future.

Longhi's pictures within pictures as a statement of family status appealed to other old patrician families such as the Venier who were anxious about the acceptance of new members into their aristocratic circles. In the picture

[173] Ibid., 245-267.

known as *The Tutors of the Venier Family*, c.1754, displayed at the Palazzo Leoni Montanari, Vicenza, the artist depicts a young member of the Venier in his family house together with his tutors (Fig. 35). We might presume that the man seated on the far left is a geography teacher as there is an atlas and a map on a table in which one can read a title in French 'Mer Me[diterra]jn[e]. Another man who stands in the background near the piano, with a music score on it, is surely a music tutor. The third man who holds a hand of the young boy in the middle of the composition must be a dance instructor. We can also see on the right-hand side, a man with a book under his arm, a servant who brings food on the tray, and a seated old woman with a baby on her lap. The boy, the only person in the painting who addresses the viewer directly, stands immediately under the portrait of the doge. The framed painting on the green damask wall depicts the Doge Sebastiano Venier as indicated by the Latin inscription: *Sebastianus Venerius dux ven. MDLXXVII opu jad MDLXXVII annos natus LXXXI* (Sebastian Venier Venetian Doge elected in 1577 painted in 1577 at the age of 81). The Venier were a prominent dynasty in the Republic of Venice who entered the nobility in the fourteenth century. They belonged to *case ducali* since they produced three doges. In 1570, Sebastiano was elected to be a Procurator of San Marco and, in the same year, he was appointed Capitano Generale da Mar (captain of the sea) of the Venetian fleet in the war against the Ottoman Turks. His victory over the Ottomans at the battle of Lepanto (1571) made him a hero amongst the Republic's population.[174]

[174] "Sebastiano Venier," Treccani La Cultura Italiana: Dizionario Biografico, accessed August 17, 2020, http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/sebastiano-venier/.

Even though it cannot be said with certainty which painting of the Doge inspired Longhi, it is evident that with the likeness of Sebastiano in the *corno ducale,* the artist draws on the Venetian artistic tradition of painting formal portraits of city rulers dressed in state robes. Crucially, Longhi reinterprets the convention of sixteenth-century portraiture in which, a doge or a procurator would be often depicted against a window with a view on the lagoon. Elements such as curtains and brocades — another common motives in the portraits of the state officials, can often be seen in Longhi's works, whereas the window device is cunningly replaced by the artist with framed pictures and ajar doors. Longhi could have seen such portraits in his noble patrons' houses or could have witnessed their reproductions in printed books of Venetian artists such as Giacomo Franco (1550-1620).[175]

The young boy in *The Tutors of the Venier Family,* in elegant attire who stands just below the portrait of his relative, recalls again the idea of a family tree (Fig. 35). Although we do not know which member of the Venier family he is, the message of the painting is clear: he is a descendant of the heroic Doge Sebastiano Venier. His noble and sophisticated upbringing is illustrated by the presence of his tutors. The child is educated in variety of subjects; the map of the Mediterranean Sea alludes to Sebastiano's victorious maritime battle and might indicate that the boy is being prepared to follow the example of his great ancestor by learning topography and sea navigation. Longhi's meta-picture is not only a *memento mori* but also stresses the importance of the family's history and past family members — the bedrock of the prestige

[175] For Giacomo Franco's prints of city rulers see "Giacomo Franco," Royal Academy, London, accessed August 17, 2020, https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/name/giacomo-franco.

of following generations which were ready to continue the dynasty into the future.

Crucially, still important in the eighteenth century was female lineage as well as men's which is manifested in many of Longhi's meta-paintings for instance *The Hairdresser* held at the Ca' Rezzonico, painted c.1760 (Fig. 36). Rather than a portrait of a family, we can see here a depiction of an intimate moment from a young female patrician's life. The noblewoman sits at her toilette table with nonchalantly distributed brushes and other accessories. Her hair is being arranged by the hairdresser. She is also accompanied by a servant who most probably holds her baby. Yet, the painting is more than just a trivial representation of an everyday life event in a noble household, as often perceived by scholars. Longhi uses the painting within a painting technique to impress upon the viewer the noble status of the lady. On the wall, we can see a portrait of Doge Carlo Ruzzini with the inscription *Carolus Ruzini Dux Ven.m CXIII/ Creatus Junii/ MDCCXXII* (Carlo Ruzzini 113th Venetian Doge elected June 1732) and therefore the lady most probably comes from the Ruzzini family. Del Negro suggests that the sitter might be Paolina Venier, daughter of the Procurator Nicolò, who married in 1740 Zuanne II Ruzzini. What the scholar does not focus on is the fact that the union between these two old Venetian families secured the prolongation of the Ruzzini dynasty.[176] The female sitter sits directly under the portrait of her "new" relative; her three-quarter pose mirrors that of the Doge. Her status is clearly reinforced by her fashionable and luxurious dress with ermine fur, worn by high ranking people and royalty, which mirrors the Doge's attire.

[176] Del Negro, "Amato," 229.

The deliberate inclusion of her baby into the scene suggests her important marital and familial role in the prolongation of the noble name.

The standing man facing the viewer in *The Hairdresser*, together with the framed mirror on the table and a painting on the wall, evokes a painter with a brush working on his canvas. In this way, Longhi might be promoting his status by indicating that he too works for the descendants of doges in their noble houses. At the same time, the inclusion of the figure facing the spectator, a curtain on the right-hand side, and an array of props lying on the table in this small-scale windowless room with its high viewpoint, emphasise the staged character of the scene.

The portraits of state officials were not the only paintings within paintings in Longhi's works which made use of examples from Venetian history. For instance, the picture known as *The Tickle*, at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid, shows three young noblewomen and a man in the elegant interior in which a framed mythological picture with three nude women hangs on the wall (Fig. 37). The woman in the centre of the composition tickles a young man resting on a chair while her two female companions observe the amusing situation. His eyes are slightly open as if he were pretending to be asleep which adds to the playful character of the scene. Details such as the informal attire of the young man, the bowl of fruit on the floor, the shawl and fan left on the sofa, the ribbon around the man's ankle, and a curtain in disarray indicate an informal and leisurely atmosphere. The story of the framed mythological painting is unidentifiable, but the composition of three nude women alludes to the Three Graces. Depicted in the heavenly realm, each of the goddesses faces a different direction. The

picture conjures Venetian mythological precedents to mind, such as Pietro Liberi's *The Three Graces*, c. 1670–80.[177] But if Longhi makes use of Liberi's picture, this is because his predecessor was gesturing to a specific example, Tintoretto's *Mercury and the Graces*, c.1576–77 (Fig. 38). The distinctive diagonal pose of the figure in the foreground, her back turned towards the viewer, prompts recognition not only of the general idea but of Tintoretto's canvas. The reference is apposite given its location in the Palazzo Ducale, where patrician men could imagine themselves as Mercury, encountering three nude women. Both Liberi and Longhi likely used Agostino Carracci's engraving, and both reverse the composition of Tintoretto's picture.[178] However details in Longhi's miniature version deliberately refer viewers to the sixteenth-century painting, in order to recast the players. In Longhi's interior tableau, each of three women surrounding the man alludes, at least initially, to one of the Three Graces, since specific details of their hair, poses, and gestures echo one of the goddesses. But notice that the woman in the centre — being undressed (or dressed) by the woman to her right — corresponds to the divine beauty rendered on the left. Similarly, the hair covering and profile of the contemporary woman on the right, matches the head of the goddess on the right. Furthering this contemporary reinterpretation of Tintoretto, it is the drowsy male protagonist reclining on the divan (recalling Mercury after his amorous pursuits) who resembles the lounging posture of the goddess in the foreground. In this way, *The Tickle* is not simply an amorous, erotically charged reference to an erection —

[177] For Pietro Liberi's *The Three Graces* (c.1670-80) at the Royal Collection, see https://www.rct.uk/collection/405704/the-three-graces.
[178] For Agostino Caracci's engraving after Tintoretto *Mercury and the Graces* (1589, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco), see https://art.famsf.org/agostino-carracci/mercury-and-three-graces-1963303174.

although it is that, given the title of the painting (the Italian verb tickle, *titilare*, also means to arouse) and the angled handle of the fan on the chair.[179] Longhi incites us to follow the intrigue of his figures as they act out diverse, and sometimes unexpected even transgressive roles. The lady tickling the man looks out at us and makes a gesture of complicity — we are asked to remain quiet too. That gesture to be quiet is surely an ironic one, since the painting provokes conversation: the artist's savvy references to mythology, to the history of Venetian pictures, and to where they are seen and by whom — recall that the Palazzo Ducale was the preserve of noble men — instigate social intercourse.

The primary sources reveal that Longhi's small-scale works were ideally proportioned for the new social spaces that emerged during the period, such as the small informal and progressive casini and other intimate spaces where the interior decorations such as elaborate stuccoes limited the wall space, and where one could engage in intellectual conversation.[180] Longhi's canvases with the array of mythological and religious subject matters, drawing on Venetian Renaissance painting, provided ideal topics for discussion and entertainment in noble circles. Educated in art, mythology and biblical stories, Longhi's patrons would surely have possessed adequate knowledge

[179] Sohm, "Longhi and Goldoni," 271.
[180] Gabel, "Sisters Sagredo," 37.
See Mariuz, "Un Originale maniera," 44. As previously mentioned Marina Sagredo Pisani had Longhi's works in her small apartment in Procuratia, see A.S.V. Giudizi di Petizion, b.463/128, n.98 (1776), and her casino in Trevisana, see B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750bis/12 (1753). Cecilia possessed Longhi's work in her Casino di San Giobbe, see B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750bis /1 (1755). How and where would Longhi's works have been displayed we can imagine on the example of the Palazzo Barbarigo. Longhi's *Caccia in Valle* was hung in a small salon of the palace which still contains the ceiling's paintings with birds. On the floor, there is a mosaic representing coats of arms of the Barbarigo and the Sagredo families. On the walls, between floral stuccoes' and gold birds' decorations, there is enough space for Longhi's small-scale works. The Ca' Barbarigo is inaccessible to the public but a small photo of the salon can be seen in Mariuz, "Un Originale maniera," 44.

and refinement to interpret his paintings. The deciphering of the meaning of the pictures within pictures and its relevance to the scene below, along with recognition of its iconography, its artist, its reproductions and its reinventions, and where it hung, would have provided his noble patrons with an opportunity to exercise their taste, learning, and skills of connoisseurship.

Evidently Longhi did not abandon the past when he changed the subject matters and format of his paintings in the late 1730s. History resurfaces in the backgrounds of his paintings. In several of his interior scenes Longhi incorporated various pictures within pictures, creating a dialogue between Venetian art history and the everyday dramas of contemporary life. These meta-paintings suggest that Longhi was strategically distinguishing his own inventions from his predecessors by soliciting his patrons' knowledge of his artistic precursors. Negotiating between the past and present in his pictures, Longhi would have surely felt an affinity with his patrons' anxieties about their notable ancestors amid a present marked by political and economic crisis. Like his patrons with their art collections writing their own history, the artist shapes his own history. In his works, he stages how pictures record and make history.

Chapter 2. Pietro Longhi and the printing industry in Venice

On 13 May 1749, Longhi wrote to the publisher Giambattista Remondini informing him of necessary corrections to the print proof that he had received from an engraver.[181] Longhi's meticulous description in his letter of certain details in the engraving that needed improving, such as *un barcarolo* (boatman), *un cavagliere* (gentleman), *un cameriere* (servant), *un tavolino con una bottiglia* (a small table with a bottle), *una putta* (prostitute) and *una vecchia* (old woman) indicate that the artist was referring to a print made after his *Visit to the Lord* (Fig. 39). Also known as *The Temptation*, it was painted in 1746, and is located in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The painting presents a noble man who sits by the table in his morning clothes, drinks coffee and is served breakfast. In the middle of the composition, a boatman depicted with his back towards the viewer announces the arrival of two women standing by the doorway on the right-hand side. The young woman is most probably the prostitute to whom Longhi referred in his letter, and the older one is a procuress. The scene takes place in a Venetian palace whose walls are covered with green brocade. On the wall above the seated nobleman hangs a mythological painting showing the Three Graces (the same miniature picture discussed at the end of Chapter One).

[181] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, May 13, 1749, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII 25.3544, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 398-399, English trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 52-53.

A print of *The Temptation* was produced by the German engraver Johann Balthasar Gutwein in Giambattista Remondini's publishing house (Fig. 40). A caption provides verses, together with the names of the artist, the engraver, and the publisher.[182] The inscription describes the iconography of this rather ambiguous image: a young woman's modesty quickly disappears and she gives in to temptation as soon as the nobleman looks at her. Prints were often accompanied with *didascalia* (captions), which would explain their meanings, enhance their marketability — as in this case with a humorous rhyme and sexual overtones, and provide an address for interested buyers. In his letter to Remondini, Longhi gave the publisher detailed advice on how to prepare the captions,[183] noting the prints needed to be "amusing and give pleasure."[184] The artist instructed that they should be the same as in Giuseppe Wagner's engravings, who made a lot of money by accompanying his prints with verses by Giovanni Pinali of Padua.[185] Longhi's correspondence demonstrates he was particularly invested in the project of turning his pictures into prints. He monitored Gutwein's work closely and applied many corrections to the print's proof as evident in his letter to Remondini:

> I have seen the proof, and so that it may be correct I have indicated all the points with pencil, especially the background which must be darker

[182] The inscription on the print reads "Di Grandezza il disio, la Vecchia, il Messo/ Di semplice fanciulla al cor fan guerra/ Ma la vista del Lord a un punto istesso /Del pudor vacillante il scudo atterra. Petrus Longhi pin. Gutwein sculp. / Ex typographia Remondini Bassani," (The longing for grandness, the old woman, the messenger/ War upon the simple girl's heart:/ But the sight of the lord all at once/ Brings down the shield of wavering modesty), trans. in Bagemihl, "Pietro Longhi," note 24, 246.
[183] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, December 7, 1748, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3543, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 397-398.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Giovanni Pinali was a priest and an author of two books: *Saggi di poesia* (Verona: Pierantonio Berno, 1725) and *Componimenti poetici* (Venice: Orlandi, 1754).

> so that the figures stand out more and so that all the working that was badly done and spoiled the composition cannot be seen.[186]

The painter was very precise when it came to pointing out the mistakes in the engraving, starting with the lighting, the figures' silhouettes, and the need for foreshortening of the boatman's legs, concluding with such close details as the gentleman's squinting eye, outline of the chair, and the boatman's hair.[187]

Nevertheless, Gutwein introduced some changes into the engraving. The Three Graces on the wall of *The Temptation* is replaced by a scene closely resembling Jacopo Amigoni's *Jupiter and Callisto*, now in a private collection (Fig. 41).[188] In both works, in the centre of the composition Jupiter, disguised as Diana, embraces Callisto. The couple is seated in an arcadian landscape surrounded by hunting dogs. Only the *putti* present in Amigoni's picture are absent from Gutwein's print. As demonstrated in Chapter One, Longhi often incorporated pictures by other Venetian artists into his paintings. Significantly, in this instance *The Temptation* is translated into a print, and the engraver has substituted Longhi's variation on another artist (Tintoretto et. al.), with the work of another painter (Amigoni).[189] This example attests to ways in which Longhi's artistic practice, with its reduced and reinterpreted versions of paintings, was intertwined with his professional relationship with the Venetian printing industry, which was experiencing a renaissance in the eighteenth century.

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[186] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, May 13, 1749, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII 25.3544, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 398-399.
[187] Ibid.
[188] G. M. Pilo, "Longhi allievo del Balestra," *Arte figurative* 9, no. 49 (1961): 34.
[189] See my discussion of the Three Graces in this thesis, 84-86.

The translation of Longhi's picture into print highlights ways in which the medium calls attention to its own making. For instance, the forms and iconography of the mythological picture in Gutwein's print are more distinctive than in the painting because of their delineation in black ink on white paper. The engraving's strong curvilinear pattern of cross-hatching from the burin, which can be seen in the decorative wall damask echoes the script used for the verses in the captions. Other elements introduced by Gutwein that accentuate the technology of print include the floor tiles, which resemble sheets of paper, and the diagonal shadow that cuts across the bottom of the visual image and looks like a folded edge of paper. *The Temptation* and Longhi's involvement in its printing, introduce how print technology informed his thinking about paintings, and vice versa — my focus in this chapter.

In what follows, I demonstrate how Longhi experimented with the potential offered by printmaking and how this technology was used by the artist to reconceptualise his art. This chapter complements my discussion of the Venetian art market in Chapter One, as I will take a critical look at Longhi's engagement with the publishing industry, considering prints produced by various artists in the Republic as well as those that were brought to and collected in the city. Scholars have largely set aside Longhi's interests in print culture, and yet this was vital to his art. The technology continuously informed his oeuvre. During his formative years print played a crucial role in the artist's decisions about the kinds of pictures he was making, their subject matters and formats. In his later career the technology became integral to the making of his paintings; Longhi was thinking of painting through print. The

artist was drawn towards the implications and possibilities offered by the translation of images into different media, through their individual techniques, and the effects these media could produce for the viewer. Moreover, in 1750s Longhi experimented with the print medium exploring how he could capitalise on engravings to sell prints after his pictures. The artist's advertising strategies are analysed in the last section of this chapter, which studies the collection of seven letters he wrote to the publisher Giambattista Remondini (November 1748 – January 1753) and letters between the engraver Giuseppe Wagner and Remondini (February 1751 – June 1764).[190] This correspondence provides a rich source of information on the printing industry in Venice at the time and Longhi's involvement with it.

2.1 The influence of print technology on Longhi's early small-scale paintings of everyday life

The print industry experienced a revival during Longhi's lifetime and greatly impacted the artist's oeuvre and career. Working with the trade was not unusual for Venetian painters, most of whom were providing designs for or producing prints themselves.[191] However, Longhi not only collaborated with several print workshops in Veneto, such as Remondini (Bassano dell'Grappa) and Wagner (Venice), he was also the director of Pisani's Academy of Drawing and Engraving, which indicates he was considered to be an expert in this medium. His biographers also mention this aspect of Longhi's career: in

[190] For the letters see Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 378-413, English trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 51-56.
[191] Wiener, "*Eighteenth-Century Italian Prints*," 203.

1753, Pellegrino Antonio Orlandi wrote that "the artist's works fetch high prices; many of them are engraved by more than one artist and prints are made from them," and in 1762 the artist's son Alessandro stated that his father's paintings were "engraved on copper by the most famous engravers."[192]

Why Longhi became interested in printing and where he learned how to make them is undocumented, but he could have been introduced to the technology by his father Alessandro. His father was a *gettatore d'argento,* according to Longhi's contemporaries (including his son).[193] From the Italian *gettare* (to throw, pour), *gettatore* is a person who "pours metal, plaster, cement, etc. in a liquid form into a mould to obtain a needed form."[194] In the dictionary of Venetian dialect, gettatore is also called *fondatore* from *fondere* (to cast) and is described as "a maker who casts metal."[195] This suggests that Longhi's father was a caster of precious metals such as silver (in Italian *argento*). In eighteenth-century Italy, some engravers such as Giorgio Placho who owned a print shop in Rome, were also typesetters, in Italian *gettatori di caratteri,* which indicates that the profession of gettatore was linked with the printing industry. It is possible that Longhi learned something of print making through these professional connections between the metal casting and printing industries.

Certainly, Longhi was interested in prints during the early years of his career. His first small-scale paintings produced c.1735–1740, when he had set

[192] Orlandi and Guarienti, *Abecedario,* 427, trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi,* 58; A. Longhi, *Compendio,* trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.
[193] A. Longhi, *Compendio,* 60; Pierre Jean Mariette, *Abecedario di P.J. Mariette et autres notes inedites de cet amateur sur les arts et les artistes 1694-1774* (Paris: J. B. Dumoulin, 1856), 221.
[194] "Gettare," Treccani La Cultura Italiana: Vocabolario, accessed August 17, 2020, https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/gettare/.
[195] Giuseppe Boerio, *Dizionario del dialetto veneziano* (Venice: Giovanni Cecchini, 1856), 279.

aside large-scale mythological and religious works, were largely influenced by prints by artists such as Giambattista Piazzetta. From the 1720s, Piazzetta collaborated with various engravers such as Marco Alvise Pitteri, Fabio Berardi, Francesco Bartolozzi and publishers including Giuseppe Wagner, Giambattista Albrizzi, and Giovanni Battista Pasquali by providing his drawings for prints and books. This type of work remained vital to Piazzetta's oeuvre until his death in 1754.[196] The artist's prints circulated widely in Venice and were sought by collectors both in the city and internationally. In his early bucolic scenes, Longhi evidently drew on prints made by Fabio Berardi in Wagner's publishing shop after Piazzetta's drawings of pastoral characters based on various Italian, Dutch and French idyllic scenes.[197] The artist lifts almost *verbatim* the figure of a sleeping woman from the print after Piazzetta's *The Sleeping Peasant Woman* (Fig. 42), into his painting of the same title at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia (Fig. 43). Longhi painted his countrywoman in the exact same position as Piazzetta, napping on a chair with crossed arms and her head tilted to one side, framed by two men. Similarly, the composition of Longhi's *Spinners,* also at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia (Fig. 44) — the young reclining peasant man holding a stick in the painting's foreground and the standing woman in the centre — is inspired by Berardi's engraving of Piazzetta's *Peasant Woman Giving a Fruit from her Basket to a Beggar* (Fig. 45).[198] By using engravings as sources for small rustic pictures, Longhi inverted the conventional practice of using the

[196] Boorsch, *Venetian Prints*, 18-20.
[197] Longhi collaborated with Wagner from around 1748 so he would probably know Piazzetta's prints from Wagner's publishing house.
[198] The similarities between Piazzetta's and Longhi's works are discussed by Mariuz in "Un Originale maniera," 34-35.

medium to reproduce paintings. Accordingly, he must have been aware of important commercial aspects of the medium of print.

Longhi's early pastoral scenes also show the impact of contemporary French *fête galante* pictures which appeared in the Venetian art market through prints. For instance, the composition and the title of Longhi's *Furlana* (furlana is a folk dance from the Veneto region) in Ca' Rezzonico, are akin to the print of Jean-Antoine Watteau's painting, *The Feast of Venice* also known as *Festa Veneta* c.1732 (Figs. 46 and 47). Some of the figures in Longhi's *Furlana* echo those in Watteau's design, but the differences are notable. In contrast to the French artist's picture of elegantly dressed men and women placed in an open arcadian parkland, decorated with classical sculptures, Longhi's picture is a humble peasant interior, viewed close up, with a few simple objects scattered around. The woman on the left playing the tambourine turns towards us with her intense gaze whereas in the French print no one from the cheerful company addresses the spectator. Instead of aristocratic amor, the Venetian painting is carnal, even salacious, given the prominence of the codpiece of the male dancer on the right, the seated woman's stare, and phallic necks of bottles. The furlana is one of the erotic dances, as Bianca Galanti writes, that "convey flirtation, philandering, choices, sighs, playing-up."[199]

The contemporaries of Longhi emphasised the affinities between both artists. In his *Abecedario* (1694-1774), Pierre-Jean Mariette, collector and art dealer of old master prints, described Longhi as "another Watteau."[200] Several decades later, the book publisher Edmond de Goncourt also pointed out that

[199] Bianca M. Galanti, *Dances of Italy* (London: Max Parrish 1950), 10.
[200] Mariette, *Abecedario*, 221; trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.

Longhi's oeuvre, in particular his drawings, which he saw in the Correr Museum in Venice, had been inspired by the technique of Nicolas Lancret and Watteau.[201] A striking example is the oldest known drawing by Longhi at the Morgan Library in New York (Fig. 48). It presents an idyllic landscape with figures, an unusual subject matter for the artist taken from prints of Watteau's artworks that were circulating in Venice in the 1730s. Longhi's emulates the fête galante subject matter, the composition, and the French artist's handling of foliage.[202] Pignatti has noted that books of French literature, with engravings by contemporary artists such as Watteau, François Boucher and Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, were sold in Italy during the eighteenth century.[203] The French painter and engraver Charles Joseph Flipart, who was active in Parisian studios, probably brought prints with him when he went to Venice in 1737.[204] We know that Longhi and Flipart knew each other as the Frenchman engraved some of the Venetian artist's paintings while working in Wagner and Amigoni's workshop.[205] Rosalba Carriera, the Venetian portraitist, also contributed to knowledge of French prints. When she was in Paris between 1720 and 1721, she befriended Watteau and received engravings after the artist's works from the art collector and print publisher Jean de Julienne[206]

Venetian artists who travelled to England led to the dissemination of English prints when they returned. Many artists of the period such as

[201] Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, *L'Italie d'hier, Notes de voyages 1855-56* (Paris: G. Charpentier et E. Fasquelle, 1894), 40, trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi*, 62.
[202] Both artists used white chalk and charcoal on buff paper to model individual figures in various poses and they both used sanguine in their drawings to create light and shadow effects.
[203] Pignatti, *Longhi*, 14-20.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Marini, "Longhi and his Engravers," 403.
[206] Sani, *Carriera*, 22.

Sebastiano and Marco Ricci, Giovanni Antonio Pellegrini, Canaletto and Jacopo Amigoni went to England to paint. Longhi could have become acquainted with prints after English conversation pieces by artists such as William Hogarth, Joseph Highmore and Francis Hayman through Amigoni, with whom he has been in close contact since the painter became the godfather to his son.[207] Hogarth's series of prints, which were fashionable in Italy,[208] were likely a source for the serial character of some of Longhi's paintings.[209] Surely, the medium of print offered exposure to domestic and foreign artists, styles and fashions, and copying prints ensured that artists understood the medium's graphic idiom.[210]

2.2 The renaissance of the print industry in Settecento Venice: print dissemination and the translation of paintings into prints

The print industry experienced a re-birth during Longhi's career.[211] Although Venice had remained a significant centre of book and map printing since the late fifteenth century, it is important to discuss its revival in the eighteenth century to understand how it impacted the art market, Longhi's artistic practice and his patrons' interests. The resurgence of print technology can be largely credited to Padre Vincenzo Coronelli, active in Venice between 1660–

[207] Venice, Archivio Storico del Patriarcato, Lib.Bapt.: 28 April 1746, the registration of the baptism of Pietro Longhi's son Giacomo Andrea in the parish church of San Pantalon.
[208] Frederick Antal, *Hogarth and his place in European art* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962).
[209] Pignatti, *Longhi*, 20-24. The influence of English paintings and prints on Longhi has been discussed by several authors: Antal, *Hogarth*, 1962; Moschini, 1956; Mariuz et al, 1993; Pedrocco, 1993; Pignatti, 1969 just to mention but a few.
[210] Lelia Packer, "Monochrome Painting and Printmaking" in *Monochrome: Painting in Black and White*, eds. Lelia Packer and Jennifer Sliwka (London: National Gallery Company: 2017), 137.
[211] R. Razzall, "Printmaking and Book Illustration," in *Canaletto*, 332.

1718, whose Laboratory of the Friars produced maps, views and battle scenes in large quantity.[212] Coronelli's workshop was where many local artists learnt the art of engraving and its associated techniques. The friar also collaborated with Italian and foreign painters and engravers.[213] Although the prints from his workshop were sometimes produced expediently, Coronelli invigorated the industry in practical and commercial terms, and prepared the ground for the publishing firms of Albrizzi, Pasquali, and Zatta, as well as the print sellers Wagner and the Remondini.[214]

The mobility of print made it ubiquitous in the city. Print material could be seen and purchased in several places in Venice such as bookshops. Bookshops were centres of cultural life in the city where Longhi and his patrons could become informed on what was happening in other countries around Europe in terms of politics, literature and art.[215] As Goethe writes in his journal from his trip to Italy, Venetian bookshops "were full of ecclesiastics, nobles, artists and everybody who had in some way something to do with literature."[216] Printers, publishers, bookshops, and stalls were clustered in public spaces and streets — along the Merceria, in Frezzeria, at Rialto and in Piazza San Marco.[217] In 1735, there were twenty-six registered printshops in the city with a total of ninety-six working presses.[218] Book

[212]Leslie Hennessey, "Notes on the formation of Giuseppe Wagner's bella maniera and his Venetian printshop," *Ateneo Veneto* 28 (1990): 212.
[213] Trentin, "Appunti," 342-343.
[214] Hennessey, "Notes," 212; Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 334.
[215] Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 332.
[216] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Viaggio in Italia* (Italienische Reise), Italian trans. Prof. G. Schwarz (Genova: A. Donati, 1895), 186.
[217] Michael Bury, *The Print in Italy 1550-1620* (London: the British Museum Press, 2001), 170; Rosa Salzberg, "Per le piazze e sopra il ponte: Reconstructing the Geography of Popular Print in Early Sixteenth-Century Venice," in *Geographies of the Book*, eds. Charles W. J. Withers and Miles Ogborn (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).
[218] Walter Panciera, "The industries of Venice in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries," in *At the centre of the Old World. Trade and Manufacturing in Venice and the venetian mainland,*

publishers were also important as art patrons. They commissioned drawings and sometimes paintings from artists for prints.[219]Artists also published books, such as Piazzetta's famous drawing manual, *Studi Di Pittura* (Painting Studies), engraved by Marco Pitteri. In 1760, Longhi purchased a subscription for this copiously illustrated book.[220]

Prints could also be acquired directly from itinerant sellers and mountebanks. A sophisticated system of print acquisition and exchange developed between the publishing house of Remondini in Bassano del Grappa and itinerant peddlers in Venice (I return to this matter later in this chapter).[221] Purveyors of flowers and fruit also sold cheap prints.[222] The contemporary Venetian editor and writer Gaetano Volpi informed readers of his encyclopaedic guide for bibliophiles, *Del furore d'aver libr* (The Fury of Owning Books, 1756), that they should visit vendors of cheese and cold meats if they were looking for books because these sellers would buy and use printed paper and manuscripts to wrap up their goods, but sometimes they would resell undamaged items.[223]

These manifold locations in which print material circulated from the street to the bookshop, also included private collections. There were several collectors of prints in the city who socialised in the same circles as Longhi

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1400-1800, ed. Paola Lanaro (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2006), 205.

[219] Haskell, *Patrons and Painters*, 333.

[220] *Studi Di Pittura Già Dissegnati Da Giambatista Piazzetta Ed Ora Con L'Intaglio Di Marco Pitteri Pubblicati A Spese Di Giambatista Albrizzi Sotto Gli Auspicj Di Sua Eccellenza Carlo Conte, E Signore De Firmian* (Venice: Albrizzi, 1760); see Adriano Drigo, "Regesto," in *Longhi*, eds. Mariuz et al., 264.

[221] Massimo Negri, *I Tesini, le stampe, il mondo: uomini e immagini in viaggio* (Milan: Mazzotta, 2014).

[222] Laura Carnelos, "Cheap Printing and Print Sellers in Early Modern Italy," in *Cheap Print and the People: European Perspectives on Popular Literature*, eds. David Atkinson and Steve Roud (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing: 2019), 324-353.

[223] Gaetano G. Volpi, *Del furore d'aver libri. Varie Avvertenze Utili, e necessarie agli Amatori de' buoni Libri, disposte per via d'Alfabeto*, (Pallermo: Sellerio, 1988), 86.

and therefore the artist could have seen their collections. One of them was Antonio Maria Zanetti, who, apart from being a known collector and art dealer, was himself an engraver. Zanetti was very active in cultural and artistic circles and he often acted as an intermediary between Venice and the rest of Europe.[224] While travelling around Europe, he amassed a great collection of prints by Jacques Callot, Rembrandt, Marcantonio Raimondini, Lucas van Leyden, books of Edme Bouchardon, and engravings known as the *Cabinet du Roi*.[225] Zanetti's collection of prints was a source of great pride, as he writes: "I have assembled a collection of prints in Italy and on my travels which exceeds anything that might be expected of a private citizen. Indeed I can hope to be able to show you any rare print by an artist you ask for."[226] It was of great importance to eighteenth-century collectors to assemble as comprehensive a collection of prints as possible. Longhi probably knew Zanetti: both were taught by Antonio Balestra, and they could have met through Longhi's patrons, since Zanetti was a friend of Zaccaria Sagredo.[227]

Zaccaria was also an avid collector of prints, and it is this collection that must have had the biggest impact on Longhi, who worked in the Sagredo house from the 1730s. The collection, hailed by a British visitor in 1738 as "the largest collection of prints of any man in Europe," contained over twenty-two thousand prints.[228] Zaccaria's print collection was inherited by

[224] Haskell, "Patrons and Painters," 342.
[225] Alessandro Bettagno, "Gusto e Privilegio: Collezionismo a Venezia nel Settecento," *Ateneo Veneto* 22 (1984): 13.
[226] Antonio Maria Zanetti to A.F. Gori, December 22, 1752, Biblioteca Marucelliana, Florence, Mss. B. VIII, 13, 400, quoted in Haskell, "Patrons and Painters," 342-43.
[227] Haskell, "Patrons and Painters," 266.
[228] J.Breval, *Remarks on several parts of Europe relating chiefly to their antiquities and history, collected upon the spot in several tours since the year 1723*… (London: Printed for H. Lintot, in Fleet-Street, 1738), 230.

Gerardo, who appointed Longhi to evaluate it in 1762.[229] Importantly, when we view the inventories of the Sagredo collection from 1738–1762, we can notice that prints are grouped either according to the school of painting they represent or by artist.[230] Giorgio Marini has noted that the Italians, including Zaccaria Sagredo, collected prints as "images of other images rather than as works of art in their own right."[231] This might explain why there were many engravings "not worth a penny" in the collection of Zaccaria, according to Giuseppe Maria Crespi.[232] Eighteenth-century collectors would not differentiate between original print designs created by so-called *peintre-graveur* artists, and reproductions after other original works of art in different media.[233] They would even put some notes or comments on the prints covering the images which further illustrates that the prints were valued more for their documentary aspect rather than their aesthetic quality. As Marini writes, classifying print collections in this manner supported the "historio-artistic aspirations of collectors."[234] This art historical taxonomy was a product of collectors' ambitions to re-write their own history of art through their collections. As discussed in Chapter One of this thesis, Longhi used paintings within paintings in a similar manner, to formulate his own history of Venetian painting, as it bore relation to him as an artist. This interest in prints after paintings as art historical records helped to stimulate the art

[229] Mss. P.D. c.2750bis/ 4 (1762).
[230] *Inventory of drawings and prints at the time of death of Proc. Sagredo,* B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c 2193/4 (1738); *Inventory and estimate of collection of drawing and prints in the palace Santa Sofia* (estimate by Pietro Longhi) B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c 2750bis/4 (1762).
[231] Giorgio Marini, " 'The largest collection of prints of any man in Europe': Note sulle stampe della raccolta Sagredo," in *Il collezionismo*, eds. Aikema et al., 260.
[232] Giuseppe Maria Crespi to Stefano Conti, Bologna, July 4, 1729, Biblioteca Governativa, Lucca, Mss. 3299, quoted in Haskell, "Patrons and Painters," 265 and note 6.
[233] Marini, "The largest collection," 260.
The term peintre-graveur was coined by Bernhard von Bartsch to emphasise the exclusive status of painters producing their own prints.
[234]Ibid., 261.

market, leading to the expansion in the 1730s of the print making and book industries, at the same time influencing artists. All around Europe volumes with collections of engravings documenting Italian masterpieces were being published to cater to this demand, such as *Descrizione di tutte le pubbliche pitture della città di Venezia* by Marco Boschini (Description of All the Public Paintings of the city of Venice, 1733), and *Della pittura veneziana* (On Venetian Painting, 1771) by Antonio Maria Zanetti in Venice; *Schola italica picturae* (The Italian School of Painting, 1773) by Gavin Hamilton in Rome; *Theatrum artis pictoriae* (Theatre of Pictorial Arts, 1728–37) by Anton Joseph von Prenner in Vienna; *Recueil d'estampes* (Collection of Prints; 1729–42) by Pierre Crozat in Paris.[235] What was important about the collecting of volumes with prints after various painters was the fact that it allowed people to refine their knowledge by being able to compare various artists' works. Due to the high demand for books with prints produced after paintings, many artists contributed to their production as book illustrators.[236]

Although the process of producing prints in eighteenth-century Venice might be familiar to many readers, I will discuss it briefly in order to underscore its complicated and time-consuming nature as well as its artistic aspect. A contemporary engraving known as *The Study of Copper-plate Etching* after Venetian painter Francesco Maggiotto shows an interior of a print workshop (Fig. 49). The picture demonstrates the different phases of etching production. Using an etching needle, the printmaker would draw lines on a copperplate covered with a waxy ground resistant to acid thereby

[235] Michel Delon ed., *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment* (London: Routledge, 2013), 455.
[236] Haskell, "Patrons and Painters," 332.

exposing the metal beneath (this part of the process was called *l'intaglio*).[237] In Maggiotto's print, this is done by the men who sit at the two tables. The plate would then be immersed in an acid bath and the exposed metal was "bitten" producing incised lines — an action performed by the man on the right-hand side in Maggiotto's image. The acid-resistant varnish would be removed, and ink applied to the sunken lines. The plate would then be placed against paper and passed through a printing press to transfer the ink from the recessed lines. Significant in this illustration of the printing process is the emphasis on the large-scale artistic etching. The etching was particularly favoured by the artists because it allowed more freedom of expression in contrast to engraving, which required expertise in the handling of a burin, with which an engraver would incise directly onto a plate. In fact, in Maggiotto's print, both tools — an etching needle and a burin — can be seen lying on the table on the left-hand side which implies that different techniques of printing were practised at this workshop. Crucially, certain details in *The Study of Copper-plate Etching* such as the shelf with busts hanging above the table on the left, the men's use of light coming from the window and their close scrutiny of the surfaces of their copper-plates, suggest that they are in fact artists rather than professional engravers. Also worth noticing is the way in which the standing woman holds a finished etching before the artist sitting on the chair as if displaying a painting to someone in the market. Because engraving was a specialised skill, involving turning the plate, Longhi did not execute his prints himself but delegated this task to draughtsmen and printmakers. However he supervised the production of

[237] Pallucchini, *Gli Incisori Veneti*, 11.

prints after his paintings closely, as introduced at the beginning of this chapter. The artist would have been aware of how draughtsmen, engravers, and etchers translated between media, making adjustments and compromises in the process.

The aesthetic and technical pressures exerted by the transformative process, which sought to convert a painted work of art into monochromatic prints, can be better understood through analysis of the etching after Tintoretto's *Ecco Homo* painting at the Scuola di San Rocco, c. 1566–67, in Domenico Lovisa's *The Great Theatre of Venice* (1720), that contained prints after the most famous Venetian painters (Figs. 50 and 51). [238] The etching is executed with great skill, yet when comparing the painting with the print we can notice that the etching process has forced certain changes in line and overall emphasis to the original. The artist has adapted the width to height ratio in order to satisfactorily fit the image to the size of the paper, consequently altering the poses of the figures slightly to accommodate this. These adjustments are specific to Longhi's period, when the size of the pages were determined by the printed book. The physically close attention that the scale and status of the print encouraged, allowed the engraver to create more clearly defined details, such as in the broach on the cape of the apostle on the right, at the expense of some of the overall expressive and dynamic quality, which is communicated by the original's painterly texture. By circumscribing the individual forms, the engraver has lost some of the nuance in the shading, which created the original's sense of depth. Importantly, prints initiated a certain way of looking for audiences, by providing a very direct and intimate

[238] Domenico Lovisa, *Gran teatro delle pitture e prospettive di Venezia* (Venice: Domenico Lovisa, 1720).

experience. Due to their size, one had to approach them very closely in order to see all the details and appreciate their execution. This close looking and smaller scale encouraged engravers to focus on fine details in their prints as a way to show off their technical talents, often, as with the example above, at the expense of the overall impact of the image.

The transformation of the original work in the process of its translation into print must have affected the paintings of eighteenth-century artists who wanted their images to be circulated and promoted as prints. As discussed in Chapter One, the Venetian market was very competitive, a situation that was exacerbated by the scarcity of patronage by the state and the nobility. In these circumstances, prints offered artists significant financial and reputational opportunities, making it worth their while to consider how well their original works would translate into prints with as little visible interference from the engraver as possible.

These shifts in scale, contours, and surface effects that I have been emphasising in the process of translating from painting to engraving can be observed in Longhi's works, but in the reverse direction; his paintings from the 1750s mirror many of the qualities of prints made after paintings. This can be seen with the example of Longhi's series *The Seven Sacraments*, painted between 1755–1757, at Fondazione Querini Stampalia. In *The Last Rite* painting from this series, Longhi depicted a sombre interior where an old man lies on his death bed surrounded by his crying relatives (Fig. 52). A kneeling woman on the left-hand side in the foreground prays and wipes the tears of her face with a handkerchief. On the opposite side, we can see two other women; one kneels by the dying man's bed and cries, the other

represented with her back towards the viewers, prays in front of a framed picture hanging on the wall. The priest whose strikingly white vestment attracts our attention holds a book from which he recites the last rite's liturgy. Two religious pictures can be seen hanging on the walls of this simple interior: the partly visible print on the left-hand side represents a kneeling figure in a monk-like vestment, and the one on the right-hand side illustrates the crucifixion. The restrained palette of *The Last Rite* painting brings to mind chiaroscuro prints (printing technique, most popular in the sixteenth century, that gave an effect of heightened three-dimensionality coupled with subtle gradations of hue, more characteristic of a wash drawing than a print). Also, the print medium is evoked in this canvas through the inclusion of aforementioned details such as an open book and two prints hanging on the wall. The whiteness and crispiness of the priest's vestment echo the pages of the book he is holding. The material character of the objects such as the prints and the printed pages of the books, which were emblematic products manufactured by the printing industry, when translated into the engraving create the effect of an image within an image or rather a print within a print. Significantly, the prints in *The Last Rite* are positioned in such a way that they coincide with the actual painting's left and right edges. By cropping the painted prints and aligning their edges with the real picture's frame, the artist creates points of connection between our world and the interior world of the painting. Hanging on the wall of a noble palace, the meta-pictorial quality of Longhi's picture would be surely emphasised even more.

Print technology is also elicited in Longhi's *Ordination* from the same series (Fig. 53). In the centre of this painting, a bishop consecrates a young

man kneeling in front of him to become a priest. In the background, we can see an altarpiece painted in *brunaille* technique (a method of painting which uses primarily shades of brown) which recalls a monochromatic print. The ceremony is witnessed by other members of the clergy who assist the bishop. A young altar boy kneeling behind the bishop and looking at us recalls the candle holder in Longhi's *Baptism* discussed in Chapter One. The prick-like pattern of the paintbrush on his cassock resembles the stippling effect of the etching. The diagonal arrangement of figures in *The Ordination* leads our eyes from the lower left-hand side corner to the painted altarpiece in the upper right-hand side. An open book in front of the altarpiece as well as the one held by the altar boy draw our attention to the print like quality of the altarpiece. The succession of levels — the boy looking at the viewer holding a small book, another smaller book on the altarpiece, the brunaille altarpiece within the larger painting — encourages the beholder to view the work and its elements from up-close. This way of looking would mirror the way the contemporary viewer would have approached prints displayed on the wall as works of art in their own right, in a bound volume, or viewed within a perspective box, something that will be discussed in the next chapter. Both of Longhi's pictures from *The Seven Sacraments* series with their dark backgrounds and white surfaces mirror the light effects achieved in print medium through cross-hatching by Rembrandt. This resemblance is not accidental since the Dutch artist's prints were enthusiastically collected in eighteenth-century Venice and they were seen by Longhi in the Zaccaria Sagredo's collection that he evaluated.[239]

[239]See B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750 bis/4 (1762). Of all the single volumes of prints in Zaccaria

The format of Longhi's sacraments pictures, their proportions and vertical orientation, recommends them as readily translatable into printed media. The compressed hermetic nature of Longhi's paintings, their lack of depth or uncertain perspective, as well as the scale and rendering of the figures, (which has often been attributed to a lack of technical skills, an erroneous assumption, as discussed in the previous chapter), eased the translation process. Longhi's works function in a similar way to contemporary prints, by inviting close inspection of their multiple and individual details, often at the expense of the harmonious aesthetic impact of the ensemble. This demonstrates that the artist meditated on print technology while producing these pictures. Also, by blurring the distinction between printmaking and painting, the artist questioned the very act of looking.

Significantly, the prints made after *The Seven Sacraments* series were engraved by Marco Pitteri on imperial folio sheets (54.5 x 44 cm), which almost matched the exact dimensions of the paintings, enabling a close to exact translation of the original canvases' compositions (Figs. 54 and 55). This strongly implies that Longhi's paintings were created with the intention to be engraved, and that the engraved work was to be considered as a work of art in its own right, rather than a weak reflection of an original. The large size

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Sagredo's collection, the one containing the prints of "Salvator Rosa, Rembrandt, Vilet, Gio' Benedetto Castiglione, and Raimondo Lafagie [*sic*]" was worth the most according to Longhi, who suggested an impressive sum of four thousand Lire veneziane.
On Rembrandt's popularity in eighteenth-century Venice and the Venetian collections with the artist's prints see: Franklin W. Robinson, "Rembrandt's influence in eighteenth-century Venice," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek (NKJ) / Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 18 (1967): 167–196; Frances Vivian, *Il Console Smith mercante e collezionista* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1971); Alice Binion, *La Galleria scomparsa del maresciallo von der Schulenburg. Un mecenante nella Venezia del Settecento* (Milan: Electa, 1990); Alessandro Bettagno, "Antonio Maria Zanetti collezionista di Rembrandt," in *Scritti in onore di Giuliano Briganti*, eds. Marco Bona Castellotti et al. (Milan: Longanesi, 1990), 241-256; Jaco Rutgers, "Notes on Rembrandt in Venice. Paintings, Drawings and Prints in the Sagredo Collection," in *Aux Quatre Vents: A Festschrift for Bert W. Meijer*, eds. Anton W A Boschloo et al. (Florence: Centro Di, 2000), 315-322.

of Pitteri's prints after Longhi and the high-quality of execution, as well as their serial character must have appealed to the painter's noble patrons, who enjoyed collecting prints as well as paintings. The pricier larger sheets in contrast to small cheaper prints had a more obvious use as decorations to be displayed like paintings on walls within a house.[240] As the inventories of Longhi's noble patrons indicate, artists' prints hung in private rooms "framed and glazed."[241] *The Seven Sacraments* pictures with their everyday narrative did not resemble typical devotional images, which would usually display images of Christ, Mary and the Saints. Therefore, rather than being viewed as separate pictures their importance was in their serial character. They were meant to be read as a part of a narrative stimulating faith, a sort of spiritual exercise. In this context their resemblance to paper was meant to encourage people to think about them as text.

The Seven Sacraments prints were advertised in published pamphlets mentioned in Goldoni's dedicatory letter to Pitteri prefacing his play *Il flappatore* where the writer hailed the production:

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[240] The price of a print was determined by its size. The most commercial format was small-to-medium sized, called "mode" and "francesine." These prints measured 30 cm by 40 cm and depicted thousands of different subjects.

[241] See for instance the *Inventory of furniture in Marina Sagredo Pisani's casino in Trevisana.* B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c. 2750 bis /12 (1753): "Per le camera delle Donne: …carte del signor Pietro Longhi soazate con lastre," (For the Ladies' Room …papers [prints] of signor Pietro Longhi framed in glass"). A series of *The Seven Sacraments* (possibly prints) has been identified as "7 quadri con specchio, e soaza dorata rappresentanti li sette Sacramenti" ("7 pictures in mirrors [*sic*; protective glass] and golden frames representing seven Sacraments") in Palazzo Querini a Santa Maria Formosa, in the inventory of Andrea Querini's goods, see A.S.V. Giudici di Petizion, b.490/47, c. 6v (1796).
Marini, in his "Longhi and his Engravers," 410, points out that in Teodoro Correr's picture collection assembled towards the end of the eighteenth century known to us from the drawings showing the layout of the collection, alongside Longhi's canvases appeared a dozen "paintings on mirror" that is a group of colour prints applied to glass, by Flipart, Bartolozzi, Faldoni, Cattini, Gutwein, showing an equal appreciation for all, see B.M.C. Mss. c.1472, cc.24, 25, 25v, 27. The drawings of Correr's pictures can be seen in Giandomenico Romanelli, "Pietro Longhi. Dalla storia al 'vero'," in *Longhi*, eds. Mariuz et al., 19.

> Equally fortunate will be our mutual friend, the most celebrated Pietro Longhi, … since you agreed to do etchings based on his famous work, The Sacraments, seven paintings wondrous inventions of his, and so life-like in expression that they certainly merit publication for his honour and our glory. Everyone has been delighted by the leaflet, in which you suggest the possibility of such a fine work, with the addition to even out the number, of the Holy Family, by the same worthy artist. You can expect a prodigious number of subscriptions, since, for a miserable advance of 3 paoli, and 6 on receipt of each sheet, we will be able to provide a most beautiful singular set.[242]

This passage illustrates the high regard in which Longhi and his prints were held, as well as demonstrating the artist's business-minded approach. The prints were advertised publicly before they were published, and subscriptions were offered to fund the project. Their cheap price, that Goldoni mentioned, was meant to attract as large a number of orders as possible.

Familiarity with *The Seven Sacraments*, and the unequivocal treatment of the theme — unusual in Longhi's often satirical, topical, or erotically charged works — suggests the series of prints would appeal to a wider audience than the patricians who commissioned his paintings. Accordingly, *The Seven Sacraments* were also printed in a smaller and less costly format. Remondini, who specialised in the distribution of devotional images, copied Pitteri's successful prints a few years later with the help of Amedeo Gabrielli.[243] The comparison of Pitteri's and Gabrielli's prints illustrating Longhi's *Ordination*

[242]Carlo Goldoni, "Il frappatore," trans. in Marini, "Longhi and his Engravers," 409.
[243] Drigo in *Longhi* eds. Mariuz et al., 154.

reveals striking difference with regards to their quality (Figs. 55 and 56). Gabrielli's figures are crudely engraved: their faces lack subtlety of expression and individuality present in Pitteri's work. The artist does not pay much attention to details evident in the depiction of the priest's hand which looks awkward and lifeless in contrast with Pitteri's execution. Also, Gabrielli is not able to communicate the sense of perspective. For instance, the candlesticks and the crucifix present in the background niche do not seem to occupy the second plane since they are delineated as sharply and clearly as elements in the foreground. The scene lacks the painterly quality of Pitteri's work achieved through the subtle use of light and shadow effects which adds a sense of depth and texture to the image. Through the use of chiaroscuro, Pitteri also managed to convey the quality and pattern of different textures absent from Gabrielli's work. The smaller size of Gabrielli's prints in comparison with Pitteri's and their poorer execution suggest that they were cheaper and aimed at general public that Remondini catered for. Crucially, this shows that Longhi tried to expand his clientele. The competitive environment of the eighteenth-century Venetian art market forced artists to adopt alternative business-minded approaches and to promote themselves and their art to a broader public.

2.3 At the print workshop: The Longhi, Wagner, Remondini correspondence

Longhi's awareness of the changing demands of the market is particularly noticeable in his personal letters sent to the publisher Giambattista Remondini

from 1748 to 1753, and in the Giuseppe Wagner and Giambattista Remondini correspondence exchanged between 1751–1764.[244] This material constitutes a rich source of information regarding Longhi's involvement in the production of prints after his works as well as the functioning of the printing industry in eighteenth-century Venice. It demonstrates the artist's full awareness of the promotional gains that the translation of his works into print could have. It also offers us an insight into the complicated and intimate system of relations behind the work of printshops at the time.

In order to understand the different aims and strategies of publishing houses and how they affected the translation of Longhi's works into prints, it is important to outline the history of Remondini's and Wagner's shops. In the mid-eighteenth century, Wagner and Remondini were the most influential publishers in the Republic. The German printmaker Wagner opened his workshop in Venice in 1739 in partnership with the painter Jacopo Amigoni, whom he had met in Augsburg. Amigoni had introduced him to the newest printing techniques when they had travelled through Europe together, and whilst they shared a studio in London.[245] Wagner's aim was to produce high quality prints which would be attractive to buyers in Venice, where the market for prints was experiencing a rejuvenation. His print shop, situated in the heart of the industry on the Merceria, became successful soon after opening, producing technically sophisticated prints blending engraving and etching which as Leslie Hennessey informs "stimulated the development of a European market for Venetian prints and … created new opportunities for

[244] I am grateful to Cristina Cortese for her insightful research of the correspondence in "Pietro Longhi, Giuseppe Wagner a Giambattista Remondini" in *Lettere artistiche del Settecento*, eds. Marina Marini and Alessandro Bettagno (Venice: Neri Pozza, 2002), 379-413. It has been extremely helpful in my interpretation of these letters.
[245] Hennessey, "Notes," 216.

the Venetian printmaking industry."[246] The shop employed known and talented engravers such as Charles Joseph Flipart, Giovanni Volpato, Antonio Baratti and Francesco Bartolozzi.[247]

Giambattista Remondini's production differed greatly from that of Wagner's. In 1742, Remondini inherited a print workshop in Bassano del Grappa from his father Giuseppe Remondini. In contrast to Wagner, Remondini produced simple and inexpensive popular and religious images. A large part of Remondini's success can be attributed to itinerant sellers that worked for the publisher and popularised his prints around the world.[248] Giambattista enrolled in the Venice printers' guild and opened a bookshop in the city in 1750, expanding the business to cater to the demand.[249] The production of prints was amplified; besides religious images, reproductions of Italian and other masters were printed as well as books, decorated paper, wallpaper, maps, fans, and playing cards. Remondini's successful management led the company to become a leading printshop in Europe.

Longhi's correspondence demonstrates that the first prints produced after his works were executed in Wagner's shop at some point in 1748.[250] Four of the artist's prints were engraved by Flipart whose work was closely supervised by Wagner (as the Latin word *dir.* on the prints indicates). These were most probably "4 conversations of Petri lunghi" mentioned by George

[246] Ibid., 214.
[247] Pallucchini, *Gli Incisori Veneti*, *26*-27.
[248] Mario Infelise, "I Remondini," in *Remondini: un editore,* ed. Marini, 19-20.
[249] Ibid, 21.
[250]Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, December 7, 1748, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3543, in Cortese, "Pietro Longhi, Giuseppe Wagner a Giambattista Remondini," In *Lettere artistiche del Settecento*, ed. Marini and Bettagno (Venice: Neri Pozza, 2002), 397-398.

Vertue in his notebook in 1750.[251] Longhi described the project in his letter as "a great success." [252] The artist's initial contact with Wagner must have been facilitated by his close friend and Wagner's business partner Amigoni.[253] Longhi, conscious of Wagner's skills and popularity, would have seen this venture as important for popularising his novel subject matter of Venetian interiors. By examining Flipart's print at the Correr Museum after Longhi's painting *The Dancing Lesson* (1742) in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, we can notice the exceptional graphic skill of the engraver (Fig. 57). The print is a very close copy of Longhi's picture. It presents a lavishly decorated room, in which a young noblewoman in an elegant dress practises some dancing routine to the music played by a violinist. The dance tutor instructs the lady with his pointing finger how she needs to position her feet. The whole scene is observed by another richly dressed woman seated in profile on the right-hand side. Wagner's skilful execution of the print is indicated by his meticulous use of light and shadow, subtlety of expressions, elegance of poses and gestures, and the ability to convey various textures for instance the fur trimmings on the ladies' dresses, the heaviness of a velvet curtain, the shimmering of satin clothing, the lightness of a silk handkerchief held by a dancing woman, and the floral motifs on the furniture. To achieve such superb effects, the artist combined etching with engraving. This novel method was introduced in Venice by Wagner.[254] *Aquaforte e bulino* or *style moderne*

[251] See "Vertue's Note Book B. 4 [British Museum. Add. MS. 23,074]," in *The Volume of the Walpole Society* 22, (1933): 154.
[252] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, December 7, 1748, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3543, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 397-398.
[253] See note 207.
[254] See Antonio Maria Zanetti, *Della pittura veneziana e delle opera pubbliche dei veneziani maestri* (Venice, 1771), 547.

as it was referred to in France was an innovative technique that offered the engraver greater scope to convey some of the more subtle nuances of paintings' textures and tones, resulting in a more "painterly" quality of print.[255] It enabled the artist to imitate with great precision the modelling and shading which is created by tonal effects in a painting.[256] The etching-engravings of talented engravers such as Flipart were able to effectively translate the atmospheric quality of a painting into a mono-tonal print medium.[257] These finely executed prints with their painterly effect would be most likely destined to adorn noble *palazzi*. As Goldoni wrote prints were "the most beautiful ornaments of study, of a room, of a retreat."[258]

The successful collaboration between the two artists attracted the attention of Remondini, who subsequently decided to publish Longhi's prints.[259] Remondini was able to take advantage of a pause in Wagner's process caused by difficulty in obtaining access to Longhi's paintings held by nobility in order to create the necessary preparatory drawings.[260] At the same time, Remondini who was known for using every method to increase his financial gains, engaged other engravers in copying Wagner's prints of Longhi.[261] This is what most likely led to Wagner's appeal to the Riformatori dello Studio di Padova for a patent that would protect his copy rights and punish the companies that copied him illegally, although no direct legal

[255] Hennessey, "Notes," 211-228.
[256] Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 393.
[257] Hennessey, "Notes," 65.
[258] Goldoni, "Il frappatore," trans. in Marini, "Longhi and his Engravers," 410.
[259] Marini, "Longhi and his Engravers," 403-404 and note 14.
[260] See Longhi's letter to Remondini, Venice, December 7, 1748, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3543, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 397-398. Longhi informs Remondini of Wagner's difficulty to obtain his paintings from nobility.
[261] The engravers who copied Wagner's prints after Longhi include Johann Caspar Gutwein and Giovanni Cattini; for more on this see Cortese, "Longhi, Wanger a Remondini," 379-313.

action was taken against Remondini.[262] Surprisingly, as evident in one of Wagner's letters to Remondini, despite the plagiarism, Wagner accepted an offer to work with the publisher from January 1751 on a project producing prints after Longhi's paintings.[263] Wagner's agreement to work with Remondini and the subsequent correspondence with the publisher demonstrates that the two competing printmakers tried to maintain good relations in order to prosper financially and further promote their respective businesses. It is possible that Remondini realised that this was the only way that he would be able to sell Longhi's prints without breaking the law. Also, the partnership with Wagner meant that Remondini would improve the quality of his prints and could respond to the demands of more discerning patrons. For Wagner, collaborating with the largest print company in Europe, offered him opportunities to grow his popularity.

During Remondini's engagement in the production of Longhi's prints, the artist offered his assistance to the draughtsmen and engravers involved in the project. Longhi's knowledge about the print medium, possibly a legacy of his father's involvement in the casting trade, is clearly expressed through his letters. The artist communicated his judgement confidently on various engravers and their work, for instance, complimenting Giovanni Antonio Faldoni by saying "that he is an experienced engraver and a man of value"[264] and offering particular praise for the artist's "thick line."[265] He also praised

[262] A.S.V. Avogaria di Comun, Miscellanea Civile, c. 78, no.12; trans. Marini, "Longhi and his Engravers," 406.
[263] See Wagner's letter to Remondini, Venice, February 6, 1751, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XXIV 5.6989, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini,"400.
[264] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, November 23, 1748, Rovigo, Biblioteca dei Concordi, Ms Concordiana 372, 34, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 396-397.
[265] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, December 7, 1748, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3543, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 397-398.

the skill of Marcello Robazza who according to the painter "has a good eye", "really understands how to engrave copper" and whose work was full of "harmony and lightness of line."[266]

Aware of the interpretive nature of the reproductive print and the fact that it often distorted the intention of the painter, Longhi was preoccupied with the correctness of the translation of his paintings as is revealed in the correspondence. The artist complained often to Remondini about the poor execution of the drawings or engravings after his works. In 1748, Longhi wrote that the drawing he had seen "lacks grandeur, especially in the heads, as they are in the pictures."[267] A few year later, in 1751, Longhi again lamented the inadequate quality of the print proof, writing: "I am not happy that the plate should be published without corrections to the faces, hair and masks, and also the head of the Coffee-House keeper, and other details."[268] The adequate execution of the details present in his works in prints was crucial to Longhi because, as he wrote they "make the work perfect," and "these niceties" were seen by the artist as "important for your [Remondini's] interest and my [Longhi's] reputation, and should not be neglected by unconscientious engravers.[269] Clearly, the artist was aware of his artistic status that could be at stake as well as the promotional aspect of the print medium.

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[266] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, April 23, 1751, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3546, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 404-405.
[267] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, December 7, 1748, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3543, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 397-398.
[268] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, April 23, 1751, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3546, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 404-405.
[269] Ibid.

Longhi was very meticulous in pointing out to the engravers all of the details that needed correction. This was certainly the case with the example of Gutwein's *The Temptation* print, discussed at the beginning of this chapter, where the minutest details are identified and listed as needing improvement before the plate could go to the printers.[270] In another of his letters, Longhi informed Remondini that almost every day he would visit a draughtsman preparing the drawings to give him very detailed instructions: "I have hardly let a morning pass without going out to put the fear of God into the young man and give him my advice."[271] On another occasion, Longhi wrote to the publisher explaining that he had applied the required corrections to the engraving proofs with black and white chalk, the same technique that can be seen in his sketches drawn from nature.[272] This is further evidence of just how important it was for the artist that the prints should resemble his works and their artistic qualities as closely as possible.

Longhi was prone to remind the recipient of his correspondence how poorly executed prints could harm his reputation. In defence of his good name, the artist exerted control over the process of engraving to such an extent that he would not allow the prints to be published without his corrections: "… if one or other of these gentlemen engravers will not make a positive undertaking with me to let me see the first proofs and alter them according to their ability and my intention, I shall never feel like letting them

[270] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, May 13, 1749, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3544, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 398-399.
[271] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, December 7, 1748, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3543, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 397-398.
[272]Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, November 23, 1748, Rovigo, Biblioteca dei Concordi, Ms Concordiana 372, 34, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 396-397.

make drawings."[273] Determined to enhance his prestige as an artist through the print medium, Longhi not only corrected the print proofs but he also tried to almost obsessively direct the whole process including the arrangement of access to his paintings which would be engraved and the choosing of draughtsmen. Also Wagner in his letter to Remondini stressed that Longhi was keen to oversee the whole process in order to protect his good name and obtain the best results. The letter is worth quoting at length as it also provides evidence of the closeness of the collaboration between Wagner and Longhi, and how highly the printmaker valued Longhi's advice:

> I consulted Signor Pietro Lunghi [sic], who agrees with me that the plate can be still adjusted by the engraver from Livorno if he comes to Venice where he will be assisted by me and Signor Lunghi [sic]… I think you [Remondini] can be sure that signor Longhi is willing to do that to serve you and also for his own reputation because he does not want to see his paintings reproduced badly; in fact with regards to four drawings that I am in charge of, I asked signor Pietro to choose and find paintings and proper subject matters as well as to have them drawn under his supervision: I believe that you [Remondini] can get a better result with the help of the author himself, who without doubt will pay all his attention to the task since his own reputation is involved and he does not want anything to be published without his approval; for this

[273] Pietro Longhi to Giambattista Remondini, Venice, April 23, 1751, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3546, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 404-405.

> reason, he will seek to meet your demands and the public's praise that will be to your advantage.[274]

The quote indicates that Longhi was conscious of the marketing advantages that the print project could have for him and thus he was determined to control every aspect of the engraving production so as to achieve the best possible results. The artist made sure that his high expectations and his awareness of his artistic worth was known to his colleagues. It seems understandable that Wagner, whose small shop produced high quality prints in contrast to Remondini's, shared Longhi's worries regarding the execution of the artist's prints. Longhi's recognition of Remondini's low standards and the publisher's interest in economic success over the artistic value of its products, was possibly one of the reasons why the artist felt the pressing need to monitor every stage of the printing process of his works.

Excitingly, two prints after Longhi's paintings produced in the Remondini's firm appeared last year on the art market. They exemplify an inexpensive type of product the publisher would sell (Figs. 58 and 59).[275] The prints are of very low quality and they are crude pirate copies of Flipart's prints produced in Wagner's workshop. The small low-quality engravings were most likely published for a book since two of them appear together on one sheet of paper. But how is it possible then that Longhi so concerned with

[274] Giuseppe Wagner to Remondini, Venice, May 1, 1751, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XXIV-5-6991, Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 405-406.
[275] The prints appeared at the sale *Drawings, Old Masters Prints, Books* organised by Bado e Mart Auctions in Padua on 18 December 2019, Lot 414 (still available at the time of accessing this website); see "Remondini. Da Pietro Longhi. Scene di vita veneziana," Bado e Art Auctions, accessed August 29, 2020, https://www.badoemart.it/uk/auction-0012/remondini-mondini-da-pietro-longhi-scene-d-1703.asp.

the adequate execution of his prints allowed for such mediocre works to be released?

Although unsatisfied with some of the prints and preoccupied with his reputation, Longhi was at the same time aware of the popularity of Remondini's prints and the promotional and financial gains the project could bring him. Even though the artist often mentioned in his letters how a badly executed print could harm his reputation, he also acknowledged that even if the engravings were not skilfully done, they would be successful because they would bear his name on them. As he wrote to Remondini "…it would be as well to let the public know that the original works are by Longhi although they are badly drawn and engraved, if they [engravings] are printed with my name the business will have far more success."[276]

The letters cited above reveal that in the competitive Venetian art market, artists and publishers largely depended upon good commercial relations and therefore had to often compromise. Also, the correspondence not only offers a rare insight into Longhi's artistic practice, his professional relations, and his promotional strategies but it is also a useful source regarding the dissemination of prints.

2.4 Performing prints — Longhi's interest in itinerant vendors

Letters written between Wagner and Remondini provide information on the involvement of peddlers in the print industry that fascinated Longhi and

[276] Pietro Longhi to Remondini, Venice, December 5, 1752, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XIII-25-3548, in Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 408-409.

constitute a large part of his output.[277] The street vendors were part of interconnected networks for distributing print. They were crucial in informing the publisher on the latest novelties and fashions among the clientele, at home and abroad, which allowed Remondini to promptly cater to new demands.[278] Apart from the prints, the hucksters' merchandise would include spectacles, telescopes, lenses and other optical devices, devotional objects, leather goods, medicine, and other such objects.[279] The visual and aural presence of print vendors would have been palpable and pervasive. They chose places in the city where many people came or passed through every day, such as Piazza San Marco and the Rialto to advertise and sell their wares. Competing with the chaos of urban life, itinerant vendors attracted their customers with their cries, poems and songs based on the prints or even directly taken from their texts as documented in Giuseppe Maria Mitelli's satirical print *Buy whoever wants*, which shows a street seller offering prints for sale of the Turkish defeats. The ubiquitous presence of print sellers loudly marketing their products must have annoyed passer-by — the situation which is illustrated with the discontent of two men who have had enough of the news (Fig. 60). However, the performing of prints by mountebanks also meant that the material was not only distributed physically around the city but also it travelled orally from exclusive social circles out to wider audiences bridging the gap between printers and customers .[280] Mitteli's image provides a good visual example of people who would sell prints in Venice. The vendors

[277] Giuseppe Wagner to Remondini,Venice, June 23, 1764, Bassano, Biblioteca Civica, Epistolario Remondini, XXIV-5-6995, Cortese, "Longhi, Wagner a Remondini," 411.
[278] Infelise and Marini, *Remondini.* 20.
[279] Susan Noakes, "The Development of the Book Market in Late Quattrocento Italy: Printers' Failures and the Role of the Middleman," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 11 (1981): 46–7.
[280] Salzberg, "Per le piazze e sopra il ponte," 126.

would carry their merchandise in baskets such as the one seen in the picture. Several of Longhi's paintings depict charlatans performing and selling their merchandise often in the presence of printed posters. These pictures demonstrate the artist's interest in how the printed materials were displayed in the city, performed and consumed. Posters and pamphlets "often designed with appealing, eye catching illustrations and bold titles," as Rosa Salzberg observes, and distributed by itinerant sellers were an integral part of Venetian public life.[281] This can be discerned in Longhi's pictures of mountebanks such as *The Tooth Puller* in the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan (Fig. 61), and *The Fortune Teller* in Ca' Rezzonico (Fig.62), where both performers are accompanied by printed posters.[282]

In the Brera picture, the charlatan stands on the wooden stage and presents to the audience a tooth he has successfully extracted. The patient sits in front of him holding a handkerchief to his swollen mouth. The performance seems to arouse great curiosity of three young boys on the left-hand side of the stage who are observed by the charlatan's monkey. The children hold coins in their hands and are ready to pay to see more tricks. Behind the youngsters, we can see a poster leaning on the side of the platform which most likely advertised the showman's repertoire. In *The Fortune Teller*, Longhi painted in the centre of the composition an elderly woman who reads a noblewoman's future from her palm. Behind her, we can see the stage on which she would perform and the stick through which she would whisper into the audience's ears the future predictions. Also in this picture, Longhi included a placard hanging on a column. In both works, the print nature of these posters is further enhanced

[281]Salzberg, "Per le piazze e sopra il ponte," 111, 114.
[282] Although speculative, Longhi could have drawn on the Mittelli's print *Buy whoever wants* (Fig. 60) when composing his *Fortune Teller* (Fig. 62).

by the presence of scribbles on the walls and columns. These inscriptions were electoral messages supporting candidatures of doges or priests for vacant places which could also circulate in Venice in manuscript or print form.[283] The inscriptions' letters were most likely engraved with a sharp tool such as a nail or they were scribbled with a charcoal. By the seventeenth century, the practice of writing public messages on the city's wall and columns was so common that it was criticised in a proverb that stated, "white walls are like paper for mad people."[284] The comparison of walls with paper is significant here since the graffiti engraved on the columns in both paintings bring to mind technology of print. The presence of printed posters within Longhi's canvases also creates the effect of a painting within a painting. The artist not only documented the activities of charlatans as many scholars have previously noted, but he seems to have been genuinely interested in the transitional nature of images and their power to act upon their spectators.

Importantly, we can see a resemblance between the street showmen and the artist. Specifically, this can be noted in his *Tooth Puller*, where the charlatan who stands next to a picture with his hand raised and faces the viewer, reminds us of a painter working on his canvas. The wooden structure of the platform brings to mind a painter's easel or a canvas stretcher. Like a painter, the showman orchestrates the spectators' viewing experience by tricking their eyes and playing with illusion and reality. The agility and tenacity of the itinerant sellers to travel long distances and their willingness to improvise and take up various strands to their careers as "sellers of other

[283] Gastone Vio, "Pietro Falca detto Longhi: la sua famiglia e i suoi messaggi elettorali," *Arte. Documento*, 7 (1993): 163-170.
[284] Tommaso Buoni, *Nuovo thesoro degli proverbi italiani* (Venice: Ciotti Senese, 1604-6), 225-6.

goods, performers, beggars, printers' apprentices, or school teachers" was akin to Longhi's readiness to transgress boundaries of different media, styles, subject matters, and formats and to absorb different trends and technologies.[285]

Interestingly, later in the eighteenth century it became common for peddlers to carry a small chest on their backs known as *cassela a spalla*, in which prints would be well protected.[286] Such a box would often contain another entertainment called *mondo nuovo* which Remondini made use of by displaying within it his *vedute ottiche*.[287] The next chapter will discuss Longhi's paintings depicting these optical boxes that hid prints within them. As I will argue, through these pictures, the artist further explores the possibilities of vision and the illusion of art and the affinity between himself and the showmen operating these optical devices.

[285]Salzberg, "Print Peddling and Urban Culture in Renaissance Italy," in *Not Dead Things*, 37.
[286]. Negri, *I Tesini*. 21.
[287] See Carlo Alberti Zotti Minici, "Per una riconstruzione visive del catalogo delle vedute ottiche Remondini" in idem *Il Mondo Nuovo: Le Meraviglie della vision dal '700 alla nascita del cinema* (Milan: Mazzotta, 1988).

Chapter 3. Optics and Vision: Looking and Being Looked at in Pietro Longhi's Paintings

In two of his street-life paintings, known as *The New World* c.1750s, Pietro Longhi depicted a wooden structure accompanied by a showman. Pushed to the background of both pictures, this seemingly unimportant entertainment was known as the *mondo nuovo* (from the Italian for new world) — a peepshow box that was popular in eighteenth-century Venice. In the first example, in the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, a group of people from various social strata mingle in the middle of a street (Fig. 63). A dandy dressed in a fashionable blue three-piece suit, a cloak and a tricorn hat, advances towards the two middle-class women depicted in *zendadi* (head-clothes). Behind them, we can see two figures in *bauta* attire with their faces covered by masks. In the background, a woman wearing a headscarf, whose features we are unable to see, stands in profile by a column as if speaking with someone behind it. On the opposite side, the showman gazes at us and points at the device with a stick. In the foreground, we notice a caped individual standing with his back towards the viewer. Likewise, in the Palazzo Montanari canvas, a man's back is turned towards us (Fig. 64). The group of people gathered in the centre of the composition also resemble the arrangement of figures in the Querini Stampalia picture: two women are being approached by a man. However, in contrast with the Querini Stampalia work, here the trickster is shown changing the views hidden inside the machine to a child held by his mother struggling to reach its eyehole.

Although mondi nuovi have been studied extensively, Longhi's pictures of them and his interest in these apparatuses have received little scholarly attention.[288] These two canvases with their intricate details pose many questions and deserve an attentive examination. The crucial question of this chapter is why Longhi was fascinated with optical devices and the showmen operating them?

The previous chapter concentrated on Longhi's engagement with print culture and touched upon the artist's observation of vagabond performers. Focusing on the artist's paintings of mondi nuovi, this chapter will explore further his preoccupation with mountebanks. It will demonstrate that Longhi interacted with other technologies and forms of knowledge, such as optics and geography, which were for him a way to study various modes of looking existing in the city and to meditate on his role as an artist. My discussion will begin with an explanation of the origins and functions of the mondo nuovo, as well as its vogue as a leitmotif in Venetian literature and art, which will lead to a visual analysis of Longhi's mondi nuovi pictures. Then, I examine how

[288] For the literature on mondi nuovi see for instance Carlo Alberto Zotti Minici, *Il mondo nuovo: le meraviglie della vision dal '700 alla nascita del cinema* (Milan: Mazzotta, 1988); Carlo Alberto Zotti Mincini and Mariano Avanzo, *Mirabili visioni: vedute ottiche della stamperia Remondini* (Trento: Provincia autonoma di Trento, Servizio beni culturali, 1996); Richard Balzar, *Peepshows: A Visual History* (Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1998); Donata Pesenti Campagnoni ed., *I Vedute del "mondo nuovo": vues d'optique settecentesche nella collezione del Museo nazionale del cinema di Torino* (Turin: Umberto Allemandi, 2000); Barbara Stafford and Frances Terpak, *Devices of Wonder: From the World in a Box to Images on a Screen Paperback* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2001); Giuliana Bruno, "Geography: The Architecture of Interior," in idem. *Atlas of Emotions: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* (New York: Verso, 2002), 133-204; Erkki Huhtamo, "The Pleasures of the Peephole: An archaeological Exploration of Peep Media," in *Imaginary Media: excavating the Dream of the Ultimate Communication Medium* ed. Eric Kluitenberg (Rotterdam: Nai Publishers, 2006), 74-156; Darius Spieth, "Giandomenico Tiepolo's 'Il Mondo Nuovo': Peep Shows and the 'Politics of Nostalgia," *The Art Bulletin* 92, no.3 (2010): 188-210; Erkki Huhtamo, "Towards a History of Peep Practice," in *A Companion to Early Cinema*, ed. André Gaudreault, Nicolas Dulac, Santiago Hidalgo (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 32-51; Carlo Montanaro, *Mondo Novo. Le Vedute d'Ottica and Olafur Eliasson* (Venice: Espace Louis Vuitton, 2014); John Plunkett, "Peepshow for All: Performing Words and the Travelling Showman," *Zeitschrift fur anglistik und amerikanistik* 63 (2015): 7-30.

the practice of peeping was woven into the fabric of Venetian culture and thematised in other works of the artist. Certain ways of looking, such as close scrutiny of the female body manifested in Longhi's canvases, will be studied in the context of the rise of curiosity and connoisseurship spurred by global and scientific discoveries, influx of information and interest in the unknown during the Enlightenment period. Following an investigation of Longhi's mondi nuovi paintings — an apparatus identified with global expansiveness – I will discuss paintings that feature maps and globes, which were also ways of recording the world. I will show that geography and cartography were at the heart of the city's cultural life during these decades; Longhi's noble patrons — still exclusive members of the Republic's government — were involved with these forms of knowledge, which consequently informed the artist's oeuvre. Items such as mondi nuovi, maps, globes, and zograscopes (a device which consists of a magnifying glass, and a mirror behind it, fixed on a vertical wooden table stand; fig. 90), played important educational and entertainment functions in the lives of Longhi's patrons. They also signified these families' aristocratic refinement as well as served as crucial tools to reflect on their position within the larger world. Longhi's pictures, inspired by geography and cartography and related objects, encouraged conversation amongst the nobility on their place within the emerging public sphere. The final part of this chapter will consider how the peepshow boxes and the showmen manipulating them spurred Longhi's exploration of his role as an artist orchestrating the visual experience of his viewers.

In the chapter, I use terms such as charlatan and mountebank to indicate an operator of the mondo nuovo. In the Venetian dialect the words:

ciarlatano and *montimbanco* were used interchangeably for itinerant showmen who also acted as sellers.[289] Significantly, both words imply performance and deception which is key to Longhi's paintings as this chapter will reveal.

3.1 The origins and functions of the mondo nuovo and its representation in eighteenth-century visual and literary sources

To understand the subject matter and significance of Longhi's mondi nuovi, it is essential to explore the origins and functions of this popular entertainment.[290] A new world was a peepshow box made of a wooden container often decorated outside, with a flap for light to enter inside, and an eye hole or several eye holes fitted with lenses through which viewers could look (Fig. 65). Inside the box one could see prints of various places, usually cityscapes and urban events. The etchings and engravings shown within it relied on growing interest in topographical views that were popularised by Venetian artists such as Canaletto. The main centres of their production

[289] See Boerio, *Dizionario del dialetto veneziano*, 424 and "Ciarlatano," Treccani La Cultura Italiana: Vocabolario, accessed August 18, 2020, https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/ricerca/ciarlatano/.
In both dictionaries, the words *ciarlatano* and *montambanco* are synonymous. In the old Italian the term *ciarlatano* is a blend of *ciarlatore* (chatterer) and *cerretano* (lit. native of Cerreto di Spoleto – village in Umbria known for its quacks). It was used to describe a person who sold remedies or other goods in public, attracting people and enchanting them with an abundance of chatter. It indicates a trickster, a fake person, especially one who deceives for personal profit. The term *montambanco* comes from the Italian phrase *monta in banco* – getting up on a bench to address the audience of potential customers.

[290] By "popular" I mean widespread among the population and easily accessible to various classes.

included London, Paris, Augsburg, and Bassano del Grappa.[291] The prints would often be coloured, and perforated in appropriate details (windows, street lights, stars, etc.) and backed with coloured tissue paper, so when they were lit from behind, stunning light effects were created. [292] Sometimes elements such as cut-out figures would be added which could be animated by the showmen when pulling strings attached to them.[293] It is difficult to establish with certainty when exactly the machine was invented but the Italian name mondo nuovo was used in relation to the device as early as the mid-seventeenth century in the drawing *The Marvels of Mondo Nuovo* attributed to Stefano Della Bella, in which a crowd is gathered to peek into the device covered with a cloth (Fig. 66).[294] Although the apparatus has often been named a magic lantern, the two instruments differed in important ways.[295] The magic lantern could be operated only in the darkness, whereas the mondo nuovo could be used at any time of the day.[296] The images in the magic lantern would be projected on a wall to a group of spectators whereas the pictures in the peepshow box would be seen inside it, usually by a single viewer. The mondo nuovo therefore gave its viewer a more individual experience than the magic lantern, both in the physical experience of struggling to peep, and also through the depicted scene.

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[291] Carlo Alberto Zotti Minici, "Mondi in scatola," in *Mirabili visioni,* 41.
[292] Montanaro, *Mondo Novo*, 38-40. Montanaro discusses thirty engravings from the Remondini printing press, depicting views of Italian and European cities acquired by the Correr Museum, restored and displayed with the help of Espace Louis Vuitton in Venice. Several details suggest that these prints were used in mondi nuovi, for instance: the paper is perforated and coloured to increase light effects produced inside the device, the prints are mounted on wooden frames which would be inserted into the device, and they bear signs of damage (numerous tears caused by sliding the prints via pieces of string).
[293] Huhtamo, "The Pleasures of the Peephole," 93.
[294] Lia Camerlengo, "Il Mondo Nuovo, disincantato strumento d'incanto," in *Mirabili visioni,* 57-59.
[295] Gian Piero Brunetta, "L'Eldorado dei poveri: I viaggi dell'icononauta," in *Mirabili visioni,* 17.
[296] Montanaro, *Mondo novo,* 37.

The development of this contraption can be linked to the growth of interest in perspective among artists and scientists in the fifteenth century.[297] Both Filippo Brunelleschi and Leon Battista Alberti experimented with perspective, and they have been credited with inventing one of the first devices to demonstrate its effects. In the famous apparatus, described by Antonio Manetti, viewers would look through a hole in the back of a painted panel and marvel at the perspectival view of the Florentine Baptistry, seen in a mirror.[298] The camera obscura described by Giovanni Battista Della Porta in his *Natural Magick* (Natural Magic; 1558), must also have influenced the design of these new world apparatuses.[299] The two instruments shared some elements, such as a box and a lens, but also had distinctive qualities: in the camera obscura, what was seen outside of the box was projected onto the interior surface, including things in motion, whereas the mondo nuovo showed unknown and often imaginary pictures of the world that were static, but could be changed by the trickster. Also, the way one looked into these devices differed greatly. When looking into a camera obscura, one would sit and lean over it to trace the projected view or stand before the image as illustrated famously by Athanasius Kircher in his *Ars magna lucis et umbrae*

[297] Recent scholarship on perspective includes Hanneke Grootenboer, *The Rhetoric of Perspective: Realism and Illusionism in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Still-Life Painting* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005); Justina Spencer, "Baroque Perspectives: Looking into Samuel Van Hoogstraten's Perspective Box," (M.A. diss., McGill University, 2008); Christopher P. Heuer, *The City Rehearsed: Object, Architecture, and Print in the Worlds of Jan Vredeman de Vries* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Justina Spencer, "Peeping in, Peering out: Monocularity and Early Modern Vision," (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 2015); Justina Spencer, "Illusion as Ingenuity: Dutch Perspective Boxes in the Royal Danish Kunstkammer's 'Perspective Chamber,'" *Journal of the History of Collections* 30, no.2 (2018): 187-201.

[298] Antonio Manetti, *The Life of Brunelleschi*, ed. Howard Saalman, trans. Catherine Enggass (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1970), 43-47; Leon Battista Alberti, *De pictura*, ed. and trans. Cecil Grayson (London: Phaidon, 1973), 26-28.

[299] Giovanni Battista Della Porta, *Natural Magick*, trans. anon., (London: T. Young and S. Speed, 1658), Book XVII, Chapter VI. Also, for an early and important study on the camera obscura see Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

(Great Art of Light and Shadow, 1646; Fig. 67).[300] The peepshow box required a more strained posture, sometimes bending, and squinting one's eye to look through the hole. The following century, another peeping mechanism was created by the Augsburg clock maker Marggraf which also served as a clock.[301] This catoptric apparatus (which relied on the use of mirrors) would reflect light creating a new image or restoring a deformed one. In the seventeenth century, Dutch painters such as Samuel van Hoogstraten and Carel Fabritius invented perspective boxes, wooden containers with illusionistic scenes devised to be viewed through a hole on the side, a vantage point from which interior spaces appeared to be rendered in three dimensions.[302] These two devices like the mondo nuovo relied on the manipulation of images which produced illusionistic effects that surprised the spectators.

In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the mondo nuovo, understood as a peepshow box in which topographical *vedute* could be seen, reached the peak of its popularity, appearing as a common motif in literary and visual sources around Europe. Their operators were often represented as one of the typical professions of the streets, for instance in Marcellus Laroon's *The Cries of the City of London* (1688; Fig. 68), and in Gaetano Zompini's *Le arti che vanno per via nella città di Venezia* (lit. The arts which walk the streets of the city of Venice, also known as Venice of the Arts, 1753; Fig. 69). Although not specific to Venice, Laroon's print is important because it emphasises that the mondo nuovo was a portable entertainment — a sort of travelling spectacle. The itinerant showman wandered from place to place

[300] Athanasius Kircher, *Ars magna lucis et umbrae* (Rome: Hermann 1646), 807.
[301] Balzer, *Peepshow*, 18-20.
[302] Huhtamo, "Pleasures of Peephole," 89.

with the machine strapped onto his back stopping at crowded urban spaces such as public squares and streets where he could exhibit it in exchange for a small sum.[303] Thus the device, which provided viewers with a mental voyage through various architectural sites, also travelled through places itself. The shape of the box which often resembled a building, such as a house, a church or a medieval castle (as seen in Longhi's pictures) enhanced further the effect of sight-seeing.[304] The various languages of the inscription under Laroon's illustration (English: Oh Rare show; French: Rare chose a voir; and Italian: Chi vuol veder meraviglie) suggest that the print was meant to travel through different locations. These sentences also stress the uniqueness of views shown in the machine and the sense of amazement and fascination that it created in the spectators. Curiously, the Italian verse below the engraving in contrast to the other two is formed as a question rather than a statement: "Who wants to see wonders?" This rhetorical question would most likely have been shouted by the charlatan and points to his tactic of persuading or subtly influencing the audience to see his show.

In Zompini's print, the handler of the peepshow box is depicted in the crowded arcades of Venice with his back towards the viewer, pulling the strings attached to his device which changed the images hidden inside it. Like in Longhi's mondo nuovo painting in the Palazzo Leoni Montanari collection, here a mother supports her child who stands on a stool peeping into the device. Zompini's trickster raises the inquisitiveness amongst his audience with the promise of revealing to them unknown lands for a small sum of money. Similarly, the image of a boy seeing what we cannot see, raises our

[303] Plunkett, "Peepshow for All," 10-12.
[304] Huhtamo, "Pleasures of Peephole," 93.

temptation to observe the hidden wonders. The pleasure we derive from watching other people looking is also key to Longhi's works as will be demonstrated later.

The verses written below Zompini's print deserve our attention as they characterise the profession of the performer managing the device and the experience of looking inside it. According to the caption: "In this box I am showing the new world, with distances and perspectives (prospects) inside, I want a penny a head and I get it."[305] Spoken in the first person, these phrases would be shouted by the mountebank who in the busy streets and squares of Venice had to compete with other entertainers, and therefore would need to attract the spectators with his cries to his wares. He would secure his audience by tempting them with promises of seeing the new world inside the box with its *lontananze* (faraway places) and *prospetive* (perspectives; prospects). These words refer to images which could be viewed in the apparatus. Perspective, by the eighteenth century, was clearly associated with the "art of drawing objects so as to give appearance of distance or depth."[306] With their carefully delineated vistas, the prints shown inside the machine would often be called perspective views or *vedute ottiche*.[307] However, it is also worth pointing out that originally, the word *prospectiva* would be understood as the science of optics and the direct translation of the word from Latin means "looking closely at or looking through."[308] Perspective would therefore have

[305] The inscription along bottom of the print reads: "In sta cassela mostro el Mondo niovo / Con dentro lontananze, e prospetive; / Vogio un soldo per testa; e ghe la trovo."
[306] "Perspective," Online Etymology Dictionary, accessed August 18, 2020, https://www.etymonline.com/word/perspective.
[307] C.J. Kaldenbach, "Perspective Views," *Print Quarterly* 2, no.2 (June 1985): 91.
[308] From Medieval Latin *perspectiva ars* "science of optics," from fem. of *perspectivus* "of sight, optical" from Latin *perspectus* "clearly perceived," past participle of *perspicere* "inspect, look through, look closely at," see "Perspective," Online Etymology Dictionary, accessed August 18, 2020, https://www.etymonline.com/word/perspective.

been a suitable word to be used in correlation with optical devices where the topographical views creating an illusion of depth could be observed closely through a peephole. Also, the word *prospectiva* could be employed in a figurative sense as a "prospect" denoting a mental picture of a future or anticipated event.[309] Therefore, with the aid of the mondo nuovo, one could travel not only through space but also time.[310] The text written below Zompini's picture also notifies that the entertainment was affordable and thus extremely popular amongst Venetians (the showman admits that he has no problem receiving the money he asks for). The cheap nature of the peepshow suggests that the spectacle was egalitarian — almost everyone could afford it but at the same time it could have dangerous implications. It could subvert the order since it led to the mixing of various classes and could have an addictive influence on its audiences.

The device was also executed by another contemporary Venetian painter, Giandomenico Tiepolo, who used the motif of mondo nuovo on many occasions. [311] Significantly, in one of his frescoes in his Villa in Zianigo in 1791, now at Ca' Rezzonico (Fig. 70), Tiepolo, similarly to Longhi and Zompini, depicted a peepshow box in a context of a parent-child relationship. The fresco shows people turned with their backs towards the viewer, crowding in front of the small building with eyeholes in order to see what is displayed within it. On the left-hand side, the showman, wearing a tricorn hat

[309] Ibid.
[310] For the association of the mondo nuovo with time and future see Jonathan White, " 'When The Kissing Had to Stop.' Eighteenth-Century Venice – Apotheosis or Decline?" in idem. *Italy: The Enduring Culture* (London: Bloomsbury Academy, 2006), 171-201; and Darius A Spieth, "Giandomenico Tiepolo's 'Il Mondo Nuovo,' " 188–210.
[311] The mondo nuovo was painted by Giandomenico Tiepolo on several occasions. Apart from the Ca' Rezzonico fresco, Tiepolo executed *Il Mondo Nuovo* (fresco, 1757) in Villa Valmarana ai Nani near Vicenza and *Maskers at the Mondo Nuovo* (oil on canvas, 1765) now in Museo del Prado, Madrid.

and brown clothes, stands on the stool and holds a stick with which he either changes the views or lifts the box's flaps to create night and day light effects. The viewers come from various social classes and include both young and old visitors which proves that the contraption fascinated all members of Venetian society. As in Longhi's mondi nuovi paintings, Tiepolo's scene takes place in an unidentifiable location. Yet, Tiepolo's outdoor picture with its life-size scale and panoramic orientation contrasts with Longhi's close-up small-scale canvas. All of the spectators' faces in Tiepolo's fresco are hidden apart from two people on the right, painted in profile, who are believed to represent the artist himself and his father.[312] Both men seem to focus their gaze on the figure in the centre dressed in red, standing by the device, accompanied by three children, one of whom he lifts so he can reach its eyehole. Importantly, the younger of the men standing in profile, possibly Giandomenico himself observes the show through a monocle. The artist's act of peeking through the eyeglass echoes the looking through the box's lens. The gesture also evokes inquiry driven by curiosity — a phenomenon which manifested itself particularly strongly in the eighteenth-century cultural practices and was often explored by artists including Longhi as shall be discussed later. The representation of a child assisted by his parent so he could reach the mondo nuovo's eyehole and the presence of Giandomenico and his father's likenesses in the picture suggest that for Tiepolo and his contemporaries, the peepshow box was associated with childhood, youthfulness, and the family relationship. According to Darius Spieth, Giandomenico's inclusion of portraits of himself and his father with whom he often collaborated in his

[312] Giambattista and Giandomenico Tiepolo also included their self-portraits in the celling of Residence in Würzburg, Germany (1752-3).

work, is his expression of nostalgia associated with filial affection.[313] However, the image of a child looking into the box might also point to the naivety of its audiences who like children fall for the trickery of the showman and the illusionistic effects of the device.[314]

Also, in eighteenth-century Venetian literature, such as Carlo Goldoni's play *I rusteghi* (1760), known as *the Boors*, the mondo nuovo is associated with paternal involvement.[315] The comedy is a satire on contemporary Venetian mercantile society. The main protagonists of the play, Canciano, Simone, Maurizio and Lunardo, represent the *rusteghi*, "bitter boorish men, enemies of civilization, culture and conversation," as the playwright himself explains in the preface.[316] This theatrical piece evolves around Lunardo's decision to marry his daughter Lucietta to a man she has never seen. The reference to the apparatus takes place in the second act of Goldoni's work in which Lunardo and Simone describe their attitude towards various forms of cultural entertainment. Lunardo reveals that he does not know what an opera or a play is, and Simone admits that he fell asleep the only time he went to see an opera performance. In the same discussion, the peepshow box is recounted in relation to his childhood memories. When offered a choice by his father of receiving money or seeing the views in the machine, Lunardo chose the money.[317] Lunardo's precocious indifference towards the mondo

[313] Spieth, "Giandomenico Tiepolo's 'Il Mondo Nuovo,' " 195-97. Giandomenico worked together with his father on the frescoes cycle in the villa Valmarana. Spieth also discusses the fresco in a larger context of post unitarian nostalgia in Italy/ nostalgia for Venetian Republic.
[314] On the association of the mondo nuovo with deceit see Reva Wolf, "Seeing satire in the peepshow," in *Seeing Satire in the eighteenth century*, eds. Elizabeth C. Mansfield and Kelly Malone (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2013), 183-5.
[315] Carlo Goldoni, "I rusteghi," in *Raccolta completa delle commedie di Carlo Goldoni Avvocato Veneto*, vol. III (Venice: Pasquali, 1761), 1-69.
[316] Carlo Goldoni, "I rusteghi," xiij; trans. in *Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies,*ed. Gaetano Marrone (London, New York: Routledge, 2007), 872.
[317] Goldoni, "I rusteghi," 35.

nuovo and other entertainment demonstrates his misoneism and narrowmindedness. The device therefore comes to represent progressive thinking for Goldoni. Significantly, in Simone and Lunardo's conversation, the apparatus is connected to the performing arts such as opera and a theatrical play. Recall that Zompini's print classified the mondo nuovo as one of "the arts" present in the streets of Venice. The peepshow box was seen at the time not only as a mere viewing instrument but as a spectacle which was fully orchestrated by the skilful showman whose performative and creative role was central to its success. Goldoni's association of the mondo nuovo with theatrical performances and artistry can also be noticed in the way the playwright refers to its operator in *Il mondonuovo* (1761), his poem written for the occasion of "taking the veil" in a convent by the patrician woman Contarina Balbi.[318] The author used an Italian word *inventori* to designate the men managing the machine.[319] The term, used since the fifteenth century, originated in the Latin *invenire*, meaning to find, to indicate, a discoverer and an inventor, denoted someone who created new things with great imagination especially with an artistic goal in mind. The expression was often employed to name people associated with theatrical inventions (designers, architects and scenographers). [320] By calling the device's operator an *inventore*, Goldoni pointed to his ingenuity and power of conception, which resembled that of an artist.

[318] Carlo Goldoni, "Il mondonuovo: ottave per vestizione di una monaca Balbi," in *Scherzi poetici di Carlo Goldoni* vol.9 (Venice: Alvisopoli, 1817), 13-29.
[319] Goldoni, "Il mondonuovo," 14.
[320] For instance, the eighteenth-century architect of the Teatro Comunale at Bologna Antonio Galli Bibiena was called "inventore e direttore della fabbrica del nuovo pubblico teatro," see "Inventore," Grove Art Online, accessed August 18, 2020, https://www.oxfordartonline.com/groveart/search?siteToSearch=groveart&q=inventore&searchBtn=Search&isQuickSearch=true.

Goldoni' *Il mondonuovo* deserves a closer look since it was inspired by the omnipresence of the apparatus in Venice, and was written around the same time Longhi, a close friend of the playwright, created his paintings (Figs. 63 and 64). The poem tells a story of a gondolier, Pasqualin, who builds the entertainment for Contarina who, like many young noblewomen of the time, had purportedly chosen to become a nun. Noteworthy is evidence that it was not unusual to witness peepshow boxes or puppet shows in convents, as can be seen in Francesco Guardi's painting of *The Parlour of the Nuns at San Zaccaria* displayed at Ca' Rezzonico, to which I return later (Fig. 71). The poem is written in the form of a conversation between its author and Pasqualin who presents the wonders of the mondo nuovo. Each event from Contarina's life leading up to her decision to become a nun is described by Pasqualin as a different view projected in the device. At the beginning of his composition, Goldoni describes to his readers the instrument in such words:

> An industrious machine,
> Which reveals so many wonders to the eye,
> And by virtue of optical crystals,
> Even makes flies appear to be the size of horses.
> We often see such works,
> Multiplied by the inventors in the Piazza,
> And especially during carnival time people come running
> Around them, and go crazy to see them.
> The sound of drums and raucousness can be heard,

And with only a penny one finds amusement and merriment,

And one sees battles and ambassadors,

And boating parades, queens, and emperors.[321]

In these few verses, Goldoni draws a vivid picture of the performance filled with colours, voices and other noises. The Italian word *meraviglie* (marvels) is used to designate views seen in the box which implies their fantastic and unusual character. The term was often used in relation to the mondo nuovo for instance it features in Zompini, Laroon and Della Bella's images of the device. In the cited fragment, Goldoni discusses the magnification of the views and the optical illusion created by the lenses which subverted the order of the world, for instance ignoble flies become grand as horses. Like in Zompini's print, the quoted passage stresses the cheap nature of the show and its accessibility. The playwright also underlines that the peepshow was not only a visual experience but also deeply aural. The spectacle would be accompanied by storytelling, singing and often music played by the charlatan that would dramatise the scenes seen inside the device.[322] The mixture of historical, military and fairy tale subject matters would move one in time and space. By recreating the charlatan's patter and the magical mood surrounding the peepshow, Goldoni also imbues a sense of dislocation in his readers who start to feel part of the show's audience.

The mondo nuovo was ubiquitous in eighteenth-century Venice, which, with its carnival and numerous fairs, guaranteed travelling vendors, fortune tellers and quacks opportunities to display their wares and skills in stalls.

[321] Goldoni, "Il mondonuovo,"14, trans. in Spieth, "Giandomenico Tiepolo's 'Il Mondo Nuovo'," 193.
[322] Plunkett, "Peepshow for All," 13-16.

Platforms and booths could be erected at Piazza San Marco and the adjacent Piazzetta, between the Palazzo Ducale and the Biblioteca Marciana, as seen in Gabriele Bella's painting *Charlatans in the Piazzetta* at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia (Fig. 72).[323] The square is animated with people curious to see various types of entertainment such as puppets shows, theatrical troops, booths with exotic animals, and optical *casotti* (lit. small houses; boxes). Written sources such as the accounts of the Venetian chronicler Pietro Gradenigo testify to the presence of the mondo nuovo in the Piazzetta. Here is what Gradenigo wrote about a peepshow box operator:

> A skilled Bolognese Professor of Light and Shadow Marvels, shows in his casotto located at the Piazzetta in San Marco, opposite the Porta del Formento, the representations of cities, villas, gardens, waterfalls, fountains, sea storms, buildings and other curious and vague views.[324]

The passage is not only an important document witnessing the presence of the device in the *Serenissima* and the type of views shown inside it, but it also offers insight into how the showmen were perceived at the time. It highlights the prestige that they acquired through mastering their apparatuses and points to the magical and astonishing atmosphere surrounding their profession. The name "Professor" underscores the huckster's skill and artistry. His control of

[323] With regards to Venetian carnival see pages 13-14 of this thesis and note 9.
[324] Pietro Gradenigo (Venezia, 1773), in *Gli Annali di Pietro Gradenigo*, eds. Ilaria Marchesi and Franco Crevatin (Trieste: Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2005), 40-41.

light and shadow was crucial to the spectacle. Like a scenographer or a painter, the showman manipulates and dramatises his tableau.

The mondo nuovo featured prominently in eighteenth-century Venice. It could be encountered in the public squares, and it was also used as a painterly and literary motif. [325] What is more, one of the main centres of production of images used in the device was near Venice, in Bassano del Grappa, and was owned by Giambattista Remondini with whom Longhi collaborated as the previous chapter explained. The artist's take on this machine, which was omnipresent in the city's spaces — from the theatre to Piazza San Marco — seems therefore to be a natural consequence.

3.2 Pietro Longhi's *Mondi Nuovi* and optics in Venice

As early as the fifteenth century, numerous artists experimented with optical devices when creating their works, notably in the Netherlands. Importantly, in Venice although painters such as Canaletto and Guardi have been discussed in light of their involvement with the camera obscura, Longhi's interest in the optical apparatuses has not been considered by scholars.[326] Significantly,

[325] See for instance Balzer, *Peepshows*.

[326] For the scholarship discussing the use of optical devices by vedutisti such as Canaletto and Guardi see for instance: H. S. Francis, "Four Drawings by Francesco Guardi," *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 45, no.1 (1958): 8-13; Andre Corboz, "Sur la pretendue objectivity de Canaletto," *Arte Veneta* 18 (1974): 205-18; Robert Smith, "Canaletto and the camera obscura" in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, IV (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1979); Alessandro Betagno, *Disegni, Dipinti, Incisioni* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1982); André Corboz, *Canaletto: una Venezia immaginaria* (Milan: Alfieri, 1985); Terisio Pignatti, *Canaletto* (Bologna: Capitol, 1987); Filippo Pedrocco, *Canaletto e i vedutisti veneziani del Settecento* (Florence: Giunti, 1995); Giovanna Nepi Sciré, *Canaletto's Sketchbook* (Venice: Canal & Stamperia, 1997); G. Brani,"Francesco Guardi e la camera ottica," in *Atti della Accademia Roveretana degli Agiati* VII, no.VIII (Rovereto: L'Accademia, 1998), 7-19; Alessandro Bettagno and Bożena Anna Kowalczyk, *Canaletto. Il trionfo della veduta* (Milan: Silvana Editioriale,

what is often overlooked is that Longhi's teacher, Giuseppe Maria Crespi, handled a homemade camera obscura. This is how Crespi's son described his father's use of it:

> …he had a hole made in the door of his home, which was opposite a house with a white wall facing south, before which some women were laying silk cocoons on some matting in the sun; and when some country folk passed with meats and cattle, he applied a lens to that hole, and facing it, a white cloth, spending whole days there observing all the objects on the cloth, reproduced on it by that lens, lit, spotted and reflected by the sun, as one sees in a camera obscura.[327]

The skilful use of a lens to refract the light rays to create the image described in this extract implies that Crespi possessed some knowledge of optics. Crucially, the painter did not utilise the camera obscura to directly copy what he saw on the canvas (a popular misconception often surrounding artists using the device) but to study the composition and the effects produced by natural light. Optical contraptions such as camera obscura were useful to artists in many ways, not only for tracing the image, but to contemplate on

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2005); Filippo Pedrocco, *Il Settecento a Venezia: I Vedutisti* (Milano: Rizzoli, 2001); Alessandro Betagno, *Canaletto prima maniera* (Venice: Electa, 2001); Terisio Pignatti, *Antonio Canal detto Canaletto* (Giunti: Florence, 2001); Bozena Anna Kowalczyk, *Canaletto e Belotto. Due vedutisti veneziani a confronto* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2008); André Corboz, "Sulla pretesa obiettività di Canaletto," in *Canaletto: Venezia e I suoi splendori* eds. Giuseppe Pavanello and Alberto Craievich (Venice: Marsillio, 2008), 31-37; Charles Beddington *Venice, Canaletto and his Rivals* (London: National Gallery, 2010); Rod Bantjes, "Hybrid Projection, Machinic Exhibition and the Eighteenth-Century Critique of Vision," *Art History* 37, no. 5 (2014): 912-939; Anna Baccin, "The Artificial Eye: The Camera Obscura in Artistic Practice of the Seventeenth and Eighteen Century,"(MA diss., Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, 2020).

[327] Crespi, *Felsina pittrice,* 218, trans. in *Galerie Canesso - A selection of Italian and Flemish paintings from the 16th to 18th centuries* eds. Véronique Damian and Alberto Crispo (Paris: Galerie Canesso, 2017), 27.

how the eye worked and to study scale and various compositional and tonal effects made possible by changing the vantage point.[328] Clearly, Longhi was familiar with these apparatuses, which fascinated artists in Venice, and through his teacher's experimentation with them.

The mondo nuovo was painted by Longhi on two occasions around 1750, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Significantly, how he constructed the viewing experience for the beholders of his paintings mirrors the tactics employed by the owners of the peepshow boxes. Striking in both of Longhi's pictures is how the device is situated in the background rather than being depicted centrally, as seen in the majority of contemporary representations of the contraptions. In the Querini Stampalia canvas, it is located in the upper left-hand side corner and is partly cropped by the frame (Fig. 63). Mounted with towers and adorned with flags, it looks like a castle which gives it a fairy-tale aspect that surely would attract passers-by. The apparatus is also pushed to the back of the composition in the Montanari picture (Fig. 64). The optical machines are not the only details in Longhi's paintings that are concealed from us. Several figures' faces are hidden either behind masks or turned away from us. We cannot see what the nobleman dressed in blue in the Querini Stampalia work points to or with whom is the woman by the column speaking. We struggle to read the inscriptions on the columns, and we wonder what is viewed in the box by the child in the Montanari image. Also in this painting, the inability to see is emphasised by a

[328] The recent analysis of Canaletto's drawings with infrared photography carried out during the research for *Canaletto & the Art of Venice* exhibition, at The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace (2017), has demonstrated that the artist did not use the camera obscura to create his preparatory drawings but most likely used the device to imagine various compositions. See "Secrets of Canaletto's Drawings Revealed Ahead of New Exhibition," Royal Collection Trust, News Release, 18 April 2017, accessed August 18, 2020, https://www.rct.uk/about/news-and-features/secrets-of-canalettos-drawings-revealed-ahead-of-new-exhibition#/.

sleeping dog in the foreground. This struggle to see is at the heart of Longhi's new words pictures. Our efforts and inquisitiveness to discern various elements in the artist's scenes echo the child's struggle and excitement to see what is hidden inside the device. The charlatan in the Montanari painting represented in the background with his back to the spectator pulling the strings attached to the side of the device recalls the artist working on his canvas. The composition of the master behind the scenes allowed Longhi to engage with issues such as concealment and revelation as well as manipulation of representation. I will return to the idea of a mountebank serving as a proxy for the painter later in this chapter.

The popularity of the mondo nuovo and Longhi's attentiveness to this device was likely stimulated by wider interest in vision and optics in eighteenth-century Venice encouraged by Enlightenment thinkers, who advocated that knowledge comes from direct experience and observation of the world. The city had a long tradition of engagement with optics. During the Renaissance, as a leading centre of glassmaking, it played a crucial role in the development of various optical instruments.[329] However, in the eighteenth century, optical apparatuses became widely available. The city's areas such as San Marco, the Grand Canal, and Giudecca were filled with *occhialerie* that produced and sold spectacles, telescopes, microscopes, opera glasses, and optical entertainment devices.[330] Biagio Burlini and Lorenzo Selva, in particular, were the leaders in the field. Their shops in Venice were broadly

[329] W. Patrick McCray, *Glassmaking in Renaissance Venice: The Fragile Craft (*Aldershot and Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 1999), 4.
[330] Alberto Lualdi, "Venetian Makers of optical instruments of the 18th-19th Centuries: Part 1 Biagio Burlini," *Bulletin of the Scientific Instrument Society* 76 (2003): 35.

known and admired, and their optical products were sold all over Europe.[331] A picture in Burlini's catalogue promoting his optical apparatuses *Raccolta di macchine, ed istrumenti d'ottica che si fabbricano in Venezia* (Collection of machines, and optical instruments that are manufactured in Venice, 1758), allows us to see the interior of the *officina* (workshop) of the time.[332] The illustration executed by Giuseppe Filosi purports to show a view from the canal at the Fondamenta del Rosmarino (today del'Osmarin) near Arsenale (Fig. 73).[333] Three different areas of Burlini's shop can be distinguished. On the left-hand side, in the distance, below a religious picture, we can see a room with four apprentices working by the windows. In the centre, another four employees grind and polish glass.[334] Behind them, we can see stacked boxes of spectacles, and above and below there are objects such as mirrors, lenses, telescopes and microscopes. In the foreground, a group of finely dressed gentlemen is shown a microscope by a shop assistant testifying to the patricians' interest in the optical devices. The instruments sold by Burlini can also be seen on his shop's wrapping paper (c.1750), where the central illustration of a battleship being set on fire by a lens, is framed by microscopes, monoculars and magic lanterns (Fig. 74). The box-like structure situated in the middle of the bottom frame, which resembles a house, most likely depicts a mondo nuovo, as evidence of its fashion — and of the store's modernity — in the eighteenth century.

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[331] Alberto Lualdi, "Biagio Burlini, un ottico del '700 veneziano," in *Nuncius* 14 (1999): 213–220; Alberto Lualdi, "La famiglia Selva: ottici del '700 veneziano," in *Nuncius* 16 (2001): 531–46. Domenico Selva's shop at Calle Larga S. Marco in parish San Giuliano was taken over by his son Lorenzo Selva whose skill was admired by the Venetian Senate to such an extent that in 1771 he was nominated *ottico pubblico* of the Republic.
[332] Biagio Burlini, *Raccolta di macchine, ed istrumenti d'ottica che si fabbricano in Venezia da Biagio Burlini*, (Venezia: Modesto Fenzo, 1758).
[333] Alberto Lualdi, "Biagio Burlini," 214.
[334] Lualdi, "Venetian Makers," 36.

Optical technologies were brought to public attention by books, treatises, pamphlets and brochures advertising instruments, which were published in large numbers in Venice at the time. Most notably, Venetian polymath and art collector Francesco Algarotti issued in 1737 a simple guide to Newton's optics known as *Il Newtonianismo per le dame* (Newtonianism for Ladies), which was popular across Europe.[335] He was followed by Lorenzo Selva, who, inspired by Algarotti, wrote extensively on optics and between 1761–1787 and published four books popularising his optical inventions in the city.[336] Selva's final volume, *Sei dialoghi ottici teorico-pratici* (Six theoretical-practical optical dialogues, 1787), is particularly important in relation to the mondo nuovo as it provides information regarding the operation of this apparatus and its users. *Sei dialoghi* are written in the form of a conversation between three characters: a professor, a nobleman and a priest who discuss their encounters with the device. Selva chooses to name the protagonist (his alter ego) who displays the machine in the piazza *il professore*. We might recall that Gradenigo used exactly the same word when referring to the mondo nuovo performer. Importantly, Selva calls devices such as the magic lantern and the mondo nuovo "vari giocchi" (various games), which points to the their entertaining quality but also to their fooling

[335] Francesco Algarotti, *Il Newtonianismo per le dame, ovvero, dialoghi sopra la luce e i colori* (Venice: Publisher not identified, 1737).
[336] Lorenzo Selva, *Esposizione delle comuni e nuove spezie di Cannochiali, Telescopj, Microscopj, ed altri Istrumenti Diottrici, Catottrici, e Catodiottrici perfezionati ed inventati da Domenico Selva ottico in Calle Larga a S. Marco con un discorso teorico-pratico sulla formazione e sui difetti della Visione; sulla utilita, e sul buon uso ed abuso degli Occhiali. Dedicata all'Illustriss. Sig. Co: Francesco Algarotti* (Venice: Giambatista Pasquali, 1761). This book was written under the name of his father Domenico and was dedicated to Francesco Algarotti. Other books of Lorenzo Selva include: *Lettera di Lorenzo q. Domenico Selva Ottico Pubblico ad un suo amico sul ritrovato da lui fatto del Flintglass pei Telescopj Accromatici del Signor Dollond di Londra umiliata … all'abate Alberto Colombo … e all'Abate Giuseppe Toaldo* (Venice: Giambatista Pasquali, 1771); *Lettera all'Abate Toaldo …* (Venice, Simone Occhi, 1781); *Sei Dialoghi Ottici teorico-pratici dedicati all'eccellentissimo Senato da Lorenzo Selva Ottico Pubblico stipendiato* (Venice, Simone Occhi, 1787).

nature since the Italian word *giocco* also implies a joke or a trick.[337] The reaction provoked from viewers by the "camere otticche chiuse in cassetta" (optical cameras closed in a box) emerges in Selva's book.[338] The characters talk about the "sorprendente effetto" (the surprising effect) that views seen inside the apparatuses had on them and praise their "chiarezza, e vivacità straordinaria" (extraordinary clarity and vivacity) when seen at any time of the day.[339] They also express the long-lasting impression the show had on them, for instance the priest remembers the "quadri animati" (moving pictures) as still alive in his memory.[340]

Selva's *Sei dialoghi* as well as Algarotti's *Newtonianismo per le dame* were easily accessible in Venice. They were published by the Pasquali press, set up by Giovanni Battista Pasquali and Consul Joseph Smith, which was known for selling scientific volumes.[341] As explained in the previous chapter, the bookshops including Pasquali's *Felicità delle lettere* on Campo San Bartolomeo were centres of intellectual encounters where Enlightenment thinkers could discuss ideas from the fields of literature, mathematics, science, and architecture.[342] The Pasquali's *libreria* must have also attracted Venetian artists since Smith and Algarotti were the most influential art patrons and collectors in the city. Smith was one of very few non-Venetian owners of Longhi's paintings.[343] Algarotti was in very close contact with the

[337] Ibid., 170.
[338] Selva, *Sei Dialoghi*, 172.
[339] Ibid.
[340] Ibid., 170.
[341] Pasquali press published two works of Newton which were translated into Italian for the first time*: Lettera d'un filosofia* (1739) and *Elementi delle matematiche* (1744). The bookshop also imported many banned foreign texts into Venice including works of Newton and Voltaire, see Razzall and Whitaker, *Canaletto*, 80; 334-335.
[342] Ibid., 24.
[343] Smith owned Longhi's *The Married Couple's Breakfast* (signed and dated 1744, Royal Collection Trust) and *Blind-Man's Bluff* (c.174?, Royal Collection Trust). The paintings formed

leading Venetian painters of the day, including Canaletto, Tiepolo, Carriera, Piazzetta, and Ricci, and although no evidence exists to his patronage of Longhi directly, the two men must have encountered each other, as there were many connections between them in artistic and social circles.[344]

Enlightenment texts were also studied by nobility in the privacy of their homes. Algarotti's *Newtonianismo per le dame* was present in the home library of Longhi's patron Caterina Sagredo Barbarigo, as the 1772 inventory reveals.[345] Evidently, the artist's patrons participated in contemporary discourses on optics which informed his works produced for them.[346] Optical devices, strongly associated with what has been called the Age of Reason, appear not only in the artist's mondi nuovi paintings but also in several of his other pictures: his sitters wear spectacles in *The Tutors of the Venier Family* (Fig. 35; discussed in Chapter One) and we can see a person peeping through a monocle in Longhi's *The Geography Lesson* (Fig. 29; discussed in Chapter One) to mention only a few.[347] Significantly, all of these images revolve

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part of George III's purchase of Consul Joseph Smith's collection of paintings, drawings, prints and books and were recorded at St James's Palace in 1819; see: https://www.rct.uk/collection/403029/the-married-couples-breakfast and https://www.rct.uk/collection/403030/blind-mans-buff.

[344] Francesco Algarotti was acquainted with Longhi's patron the Sagredo Family. In 1743, he was responsible for a production of an inventory of the Sagredo's drawings; see Alice Binion, "Algarotti's Sagredo Inventory," *Master Drawings* 21, no. 4 (Winter, 1983): 392-396. Also, Algarotti was a great admirer of a Franciscan philosopher and architect Padre Carlo Lodoli whose *Saggio sopra l'architettura* (1757) he published. Lodoli frequented erudite circles in Venice and socialised with many nobles, scholars, and artists. His portrait was painted by both Alessandro and Pietro Longhi.

[345] B.M.V. Mss. It VII 713 (8404) (1772).

[346] Longhi, a member of the Venetian Academy must have heard of Lorenzo Selva, who in his first book *Esposizione* (1761) boasted with the invention of the lamps installed in the establishment's building.

[347] Other Longhi's paintings where we can see people looking through an eyeglass include: *The Concert* (1741, Gallerie dell'Accademia), see http://www.gallerieaccademia.it/il-concerto-0. *The Visit to the Library* (c.1741, Worcester Art Museum), see https://www.worcesterart.org/collection/European/1942.2.html. *The Temptation* (c.1750, Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford in Connecticut), see http://argus.wadsworthatheneum.org/Wadsworth_Atheneum_ArgusNet/Portal/public.aspx?lang=en-US. *The Apothecary* (c.1752, Gallerie dell'Accademia), see

around the activity of looking which is amplified either by the curiosity to learn or to discover something.

3.3 Looking in Venice: curious peeping in Longhi's pictures

Sight, in particular peeping — by which I mean looking through an eyehole or other aperture, often secret and illicit or/and spurred by curiosity — was greatly encouraged by the city's unusual topography and certain social and cultural practices, including the wearing of masks and the placing of young women in convents, and was often thematised in Longhi's paintings.[348] Historically, Venetian masks were taken from the tradition of *commedia dell'arte* and were worn for amusement during the carnival period. However, in the late seventeenth century, two new types of masks, the *moretta* and *bauta* emerged in the public realm.[349] These new masks, significantly, are repeatedly depicted in Longhi's pictures. The moretta was small, oval shaped and covered with black velvet. It was worn only by women whom it prevented from speaking as they had to clench a button between their teeth placed on the inside of the mask in order to hold it on their faces.[350] The bauta on the other hand, was a whole attire that included a *tabarro* (black cape), a silk hood decorated with lace and a white mask called *volto* (face) or *larva* which were kept together by a tricorn hat.[351] In the eighteenth century,

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http://www.gallerieaccademia.it/il-farmacista. *The Alchemists* (1757, Ca' Rezzonico), see http://www.archiviodellacomunicazione.it/sicap/OpereArte/7817/?WEB=MuseiVE.

[348] Barbara Benedict in her *Curiosity: A Cultural History of Early Modern Inquiry* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 143 writes that the eighteenth-century meanings of the word to peep burgeon to designate a looking-glass, an eye, and one-eyed person.

[349] Marc Neveu, "The Space of the Masque."

[350] Johnson, *Venice Incognito*, 8.

[351] Ibid.

masking became carefully controlled by the state and it was a requirement to wear them to public spaces such as theatres or gambling halls. As James Johnson has observed, masks became the "public face of Venice in eighteenth century."[352] The bauta was a standard dress of the nobility who used it when engaging in public life. Peeping through a mask was therefore a daily occurrence in Venice for Longhi's patrons.

The architecture of the city with its narrow *calle* (alleys or streets) and close-set buildings also incited peeping. The windows and *altane* (rooftop patios) allowed Venetians to peek into neighbours' apartments and look onto the city itself. As a result, those who could afford it would buy shutters or blinds in order to shield themselves from prying eyes. Windows and other apertures were a contentious matter in Venice.[353] They were linked with illicit and erotic gazes especially because prostitutes used them to display themselves in order to attract customers. They were also associated with amorous encounters since young women exhibited themselves from windows and balconies to find future husbands. [354] Architectural openings were therefore seen as a potential danger to women's chastity and honour and the

[352] Ibid, xii.
[353] On the association of the architectural apertures with the dangers of the outside world, female sexuality, and privacy see Patricia Waddy, *Seventeenth-Century Roman Palaces: Use and Art of the Plan* (New York: The Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, MA.: The MIT Press, 1990); Jane Tylus, "Women and the Windows: *Commedia dell'arte* and Theatrical Practice in Early Modern Italy," *Theatre Journal* 49 (1997): 323-42; Helen Hills, "Architecture as Metaphor for the Body: The Case of Female Convents in Early Modern Italy," in *Gender and Architecture*, eds. Louise Durning and Richard Wrigley (Chichester: Wiley, 2000), 67-112; Elizabeth S. Cohen and Thomas V. Cohen, "Open and Shut: The Social Meanings of the Cinquecento Roman House," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 9, no. 1 (2001): 61–84; Jennifer Megan Orendorf, "Architectural chastity belts: The window motif as instrument of discipline in fifteenth-century Italian," (MA diss., University of South Florida, 2009); Dana E. Katz, " 'Clamber not you up to the casements': On ghetto views and viewing," *Jewish History* 24 (2010): 127–153; Diane Wolfthal, "The woman in the window: licit and illicit sexual desire in Renaissance Italy," in *Sex Acts in Early Modern Italy: Practice, Performance, Perversion, Punishment*, ed. Allison Levy (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 57-75; Alexander Cowan, "Seeing is Believing: Urban Gossip and the Balcony in Early Modern Venice," *Gender & History* 23, no.3 (November 2011): 721-738.
[354] See Wolfthal, "The woman in the window."

exchange of gazes from them was carefully surveyed by the state. [355] Authorities such as *the Inquisitori di Stato* (State Inquisitors) and *Avogadori de Comun* (public prosecutors) monitored the use of buildings' openings not only to protect the virtue of young women and men but also to protect Venetian citizens from the religious outsiders' view such as Jews and Turks living in the city.[356]

The contemporary Venetian artists explored the association of the windows and balconies with women's moral conduct and the illicit gaze. For instance Goldoni's play *La casa nova* (The New House, 1760) illustrates how women were kept out of the public view so they would not be tempted by the outside world.[357] Goldoni's protagonist Meneghina is given by her brother Anzoletto a room in his new house, which faces the enclosed courtyard.[358] As we find out from her servant Lucietta, the noblewoman's lover lived opposite her previous house and they communicated through a window.[359] Meneghina's neighbour Rosina compares the young woman's new situation to that of a nun shut in a convent whereas Meneghina herself describes her room as a *camerotto,* which in Venetian dialect signified a prison's cell.[360]

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[355] Ibid.; see also Waddy, *Seventeenth-Century Roman Palaces* where she demonstrates that women of the highest status had their own separate apartments in Roman Baroque palaces but these were usually located in the most segregated areas of the palace, looking towards the rear or inwards to an enclosed court or garden.

[356] See for instance Cowan, "Seeing is Believing." Cowan writes that the evidence given to the Avogadori de Comun about the women who had applied to marry into the Venetian patriciate often focused on what could be seen on balconies or through windows. For instance, the absence of a woman seen from balconies was given as an evidence of her positive moral conduct and therefore her suitability to marry a patrician. Also, see Katz, "On ghetto views and viewing," 127–153. Jews living in the ghetto area would be watched by guards and were required to obstruct their windows, balconies, and doors to prevent their ocular contact with Christians.

[357] Carlo Goldoni, *La Casa nova: commedia veneziana di tre atti in prosa del signor avvocato Goldoni Veneziano* (Venezia: Stamperia di S. Tommaso d'Aquino, 1767), English trans. in *Five Comedies,* eds. Luigi Ballerini and Massimo Ciavolella (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016).

[358] Goldoni, *La Casa nova,* Act 1, Scene 6.

[359] Ibid., Act 1, Scene 1.

[360] Ibid., Act 2, Scene 1; Act 1, Scene 6.

Goldoni's comparison of his protagonist's situation to that of a nun closed in a convent is significant here since the tradition of placing young women in nunneries also encouraged peeping practices.[361] By the middle of seventeenth century, somewhere between sixty and seventy percent of patrician women were living in one of the forty-six religious institutions.[362] Many daughters of noble Venetian families peeped out at the world from behind bars, and visitors to the convents peeped into the private cells of nuns. Depictions of Venetian parlours (visiting rooms at nunneries; the term on architectural drawings is *parlatorio*) were prevalent in seventeenth and eighteenth century. They were painted by several artists including Giuseppe de Gobbis, Joseph Heintz, and Francesco Guardi.[363] The latter represented a visiting room at the monastery of San Zaccaria in Venice in 1750 (Fig. 71). In the background of the painting, at Ca' Rezzonico, we can see three cells with curtains and grilles behind which the nuns peep into the main room. Guardi's parlour is striking for its relaxed atmosphere: we can see the nuns' visitors enjoying their conversation and beverages, and children watching a puppet theatre. As Silvia Evangelisti has suggested, the atmosphere in the convent parlours of the time echoed that of other social spaces. They were spaces between private and public and could be considered centres of entertainment.[364] Lucy Odlin and Elizabeth Metcalf elaborate on that view and compare a parlour to a theatre "where the grilles mark the divide between the interchangeable audience and

[361] See Hills, "Architecture as Metaphor for the Body," 67-112.
[362] Elissa B. Weaver, *Convent Theatre in Early Modern Italy: Spiritual Fun and Learning for Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 13.
[363] For more details on the depiction of Venetian convents see Lucy Odlin and Elizabeth Metcalfe, *Visitors to a Venetian Convent during Carnival: Conservation and Art Historical Analysis: A Collaborative Research Investigation* (The Courtauld Institute of Art, July 2015), 1-37, accessed August 17, 2020, https://courtauld.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Visitors-to-a-Venetian-Convent-during-Carnival.compressed.pdf.
[364] Silvia Evangelisti, *Nuns: A History of Convent Life 1450-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 138.

stage: the nuns are spectators of the unruly visitors, and the visitors, peering at the nuns through the grilles, treat them as a spectacle."[365] The puppet box seen in Guardi's painting, observed with great pleasure by two children, alludes to the theatricality of the scene. Such a doubleness of representation where the observer become simultaneously the subject and the object of an inquiry can be also witnessed in Longhi's paintings. As with a mirror, Longhi's noble viewers could watch themselves witnessing various public entertainment taking place in the Republic. Both Guardi's convent painting and Longhi's mondi nuovi pictures with their voyeuristic character point to the pleasure one receives from the peeping experience.

Peeping was also a crucial element of political control in Venice which was based on surveillance. A network of state informers spied on Venetians and reported on their actions.[366] Particularly, in the eighteenth century, peeing was strongly associated with secret behaviour. Tracing the etymology of the word through Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) definition of the term, Barbara Benedict identifies its derivation from the Dutch "to lift up" or the Latin for "spy."[367] Living in the city where people knew that they were subject to a constant peeping gaze, they conditioned themselves to self-regulate their behaviour.[368] Venetians spied on each other and reported on the activities of their neighbours in the forms of pamphlets, poems, and drawings

[365] Odlin and Metcalf, *Visitors to Venetian Convent*, 8.
[366] Jonathan Walker, Filippo de Vivo, and James Shaw, "A Dialogue on Spying in 17th Century Venice," *Rethinking History* 10, no. 3 (2006): 323-344.
[367] Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary of the English Language*: *A Digital Edition of the 1755 Classic by Samuel Johnson*, ed. Brandi Besalke, accessed August 18, 2020, https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/page-view/&i=248. I have discovered the contemporary meaning of the word "to peep" thanks to the observation of Barbara Benedict made in her book on the curiosity, see Benedict, *Curiosity*, 142-143.
[368] On the concept of self-regulation see for instance Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, (London: Allen Lane, 1977).

popularly known as *pasquinate* posted at the statue of the Gobbo (Hunchback) at Campo San Giacomo near Rialto.[369]

Longhi's pictures often focus on peeping driven by curiosity. In particular, the artist explores in his works the tension between legitimate discovery and illegitimate observation. In the Enlightenment period which advocated the empirical pursuit of information, curiosity became the trademark of progress.[370] It stimulated far away voyages and trade, collecting, new inventions and scientific discoveries. Paradoxically curiosity became at the time both honourable if it was associated with intellectual pursuit — discovery of unknown lands, examination of objects, their artistry and rarity — or as a crime if it meant stealing of a sight, desire to know the forbidden.[371] Several of Longhi's paintings concentrate on the voyeuristic pleasures afforded by the close scrutiny of a female body by men.[372] For instance, the artist's *Indiscreet Gentleman* in the National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo (Fig. 75) centres around the activity of peeping induced by curiosity associated with women sexuality.[373] In the painting, Longhi portrayed a woman at her toilette in what looks like a noble interior. She is assisted by her maid and is being watched by two gentlemen. The majority of the composition is occupied with the beautifully decorated dressing screen

[369] See Rosa Salzberg, " 'Through the piazzas and on the Rialto Bridge': the landscape of the ephemeral city," in idem. *Ephemeral city: Cheap print and urban culture in Renaissance Venice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014) 63; Antonio Marzo, "Pasquino e il Gobbo di Rialto," in *Ex marmore.Pasquini, pasquinisti, pasquinate nell'Europa moderna*, eds. Chrysa Damianaki, Paolo Procaccioli, and Angelo Romano (Rome: Vechiarelli, 2006), 123; Andrea Moschetti, "II Gobbo di Rialto e le sue relazioni con Pasquino," *Nuovo archivio veneto* 5, no. 1 (1893): 5-93.
[370] See Benedict, "Introduction," in *Curiosity*, 1-23.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Other pictures that deal with this theme include *The Geography Lesson* (Figs. 29 and 86) and *The Temptation* (c.1750, Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford in Connecticut), see http://argus.wadsworthatheneum.org/Wadsworth_Atheneum_ArgusNet/Portal/public.aspx?lang=en-US.
[373] For a discussion of this painting, see also Brabant, "Pietro Longhis," 283-287.

from behind which one of the men peeks at the lady's exposed breast while the other hides behind a piece of furniture. The fan lying on the table next to the woman echoes the structure of the folding screen and might allude to peeping and secrecy since the fans were often used by women to convey secret messages.[374] The picture could be interpreted in many ways. The men might be looking surreptitiously at the woman, however in this case, the proximity of one of them to the grooming female, and the unconcerned stance of the serving maid who clearly sees one of the voyeurs suggest that it is a staged encounter. Also, the screen present in the painting is positioned in such a way that it neither obstructs our view nor that of the male visitors and point to the female complicity in this event. The scene most likely shows one of the Venetian *cortigiane* who in contrast to lower-class prostitutes had a prominent position in the city.[375] The courtesans lived in relative luxury, dressed in a rich manner and often employed servants. Frequently, they would be invited to participate in the noble salons where they would sing, dance and recite poems. [376] Significantly, they were known for their tricks and carefully choreographed movements used to entice and entertain men.[377] In particular, they would play with partially covering and revealing parts of their

[374] For the language of fans see for instance Angela Rosenthal, "Unfolding Gender: Women and the 'Secret' Sign Language of Fans in Hogarth's Work," in *The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference* eds. Bernadette Fort and Angela Rosenthal (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2001), 131; Valerie Steele, *The Fan: Fashion and Femininity Unfolded* (New York: Random House Incorporated, 2002), 12-13; Rosanna Lucy Doris Colchester Harrison, "A study of George Wilson's eighteenth-century narrative fans as prints and mobile conduct instructors," (PhD. Diss. University of Birmingham, 2019), 228-234.
[375] See for instance Daniella Rossi, "Controlling Courtesans: Lorenzo Venier's Trentuno della Zaffetta and Venetian sexual politics," in *Sex Acts*, 225-240; Margaret F. Rosenthal, *The Honest Courtesan: Veronica Franco, Citizen and Writer in Sixteenth Century Venice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
[376] Chriscinda Henry, " 'Whorish civility' and other tricks of seduction in Venetian courtesan representation," *Sex Acts*, 109-123; Diana Robin, "Courtesans Celebrity and Print Culture in Renaissance Venice: Tullia d'Aragona, Gaspara Stampa, and Veronica Franco," in *Italian women and the city: essays*, eds. Janet Levarie Smarr and Daria Valentini (London, Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003), 35-59.
[377] Wolfthal, "The woman in the window," 60-64.

body mesmerising their clients.[378] Venetian courtesans were therefore sexual actors inviting male viewers into a world of erotic fantasy. Longhi's canvas clearly engages with the idea of a performed erotic encounter: the woman in the painting uses an array of gestures to demonstrate her charm to the male viewers. The scene reminds us of a theatrical stage with its lack of windows, a folded screen backdrop, and the artificial lighting illuminating the female protagonist and the indiscreet gentleman. Also, the comportment of the figures appears to be conscientiously orchestrated. The woman's pose is unusually elegant for someone in the act of making her toilette, the standing gentleman, as previously noticed, is placed in strangely close proximity to the female, and the hand gesture of the man in the far end of the room looks exaggerated. By depicting his female sitter in a private setting surrounded by luxurious objects and wearing rich textiles, Longhi equated her with a noblewoman. As viewers we are not sure whether we are looking at the female aristocrat or a courtesan.

Images such as *The Indiscreet Gentleman* were probably informed by the eroticised sociability of Longhi's patrons. Erotic playfulness and sexual innuendos were a permitted part of light-hearted and sophisticated play within the noble class. Pornographic literature and print culture present in Venice would engage their viewers in a visual game similar to the one staged by Longhi. As an example, Donato Bertelli's flap book *Le vere imagini et descritioni…* (True images and descriptions…, 1572) uses female sexuality as licentious opportunity for voyeuristic pleasures of the reader (Fig. 76). The peekaboo scenes allowed their viewers to indulge in the act of revealing

[378] Ibid.

hidden details by lifting the piece of paper covering them. One of his illustrations shows a prostitute with a dress which can be raised to reveal her chopines (Venetian high-platformed shoes) as well as male breeches, which refers to controversial cross-dressing practices that were in fashion among Venetian courtesans (Fig. 76). Like Bertelli's engravings, Longhi's picture not only amuses viewers by involving them in a game of hide and seek similar to the one in which prostitutes and their clients would get involved during real-life encounters, it also offers the experience of a guilty pleasure. However in contrast to the print that clearly represents a courtesan, Longhi's image plays with its sitter's identity. The ambiguous erotic character of the painting would attract, entertain and arouse his noble viewers as well as provoke discussion.

In the previous chapters I have demonstrated that Longhi often drew on artistic examples from the past and appropriated mythological or religious tales into his pictures of contemporary life. Recall for instance *The Tickle* painting in which three young women in the foreground are surrogates for the Three Graces in the painting hanging on the wall (Fig. 37). In a similar way, Longhi's *Indiscreet Gentleman* could be seen as a modern interpretation of the biblical tale of Susanna and the Elders which tells a story of a beautiful Susanna bathing in her garden and being spied on by two elderly men lusting for her. The parable is one of the most represented stories from Old Testament Apocrypha by artists throughout the centuries. Notably Tintoretto depicted the scene at least five times. Although for several centuries, Susanna represented moral virtue and chastity, in sixteenth-century northern Italy, she was often depicted as a nude seductress, an idea Tintoretto suggests in his

representation of the story (Fig. 77; c. 1557, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna).[379] The artist painted the female's body in a sensual manner that is heighted by surrounding details. Susanna is seated by the pool in her garden, ready to take her bath. She is watched by two men from behind a flower trellis. Her naked body is illuminated by light to attract attention and her accessories such as a mirror and jewellery bring to mind the depictions of Venus. Tintoretto manipulated the story in order to capture Susanna as the source of two men's temptation. Longhi's *Indiscreet Gentleman*, with two men peering out from behind the screen adorned with painted flowers resembles the work of the sixteenth-century painter. Like in his predecessor's canvas, Longhi's woman is depicted as provoking the men's desire. The presence of a mirror in both pictures suggests that both artists' female sitters survey and admire their body which indicate their vanity as well as validate the men's and the viewers' recognition of their beauty. However, even though in both paintings the viewers find themselves in the position of the two men spying on the woman, in Longhi's picture we are presented with a nude in a domestic setting, rather than a mythical dreamscape. The contemporary resonance of the canvas would surely have increased its titillating effect on spectators especially because they could enjoy voyeuristic pleasures with no threat of punishment.

The position of the woman in *The Indiscreet Gentleman* has been recycled from Longhi's early pastoral picture *Shepherd Girl with a Flower* at the Civic Museum in Bassano del Grappa (Fig. 78). In this work, a young woman, looking down and holding a flower, sits in the middle of the

[379] Babette Bohn, "Rape and the gendered gaze: 'Susanna and the elders' in early modern Bologna," *Biblical interpretation* 9, no.3 (2001): 262-266.

composition against an empty black background. Absorbed in her action of attaching the flower to her dress, she accidently reveals her right shoulder and breast.[380] Longhi's woman recalls the sitter from Crespi's *Woman Looking for Fleas*, (Fig. 79; c. 1715-20, Barber Institute of Fine Arts in Birmingham). In Crespi's canvas, a woman sits on a bed in a simple interior during the night-time. Surrounded by her few humble possessions, she searches for fleas while being secretly watched from the window by two boys. As she tries to find the bugs hidden under her dress, she exposes her breast.[381] The tickle or itch was a popular metaphor for sexual arousal which has been previously mentioned with the example of Longhi's *The Tickle* in Chapter One (Fig. 37). It became a pretext for artists to depict the female naked body which clearly imbued their works devoted to this theme with a voyeuristic element popular amongst male viewers.[382] The keyhole perspective as well as the voyeuristic and humorous character of Crespi's work clearly appealed to Longhi who several years later re-used this motif in his Tokyo painting. However, Longhi's canvas, in contrast to *The Woman Looking for Fleas*, strikes us with its lack of perspective: the absence of definition to the wall or the floor in Longhi's scene, the lack of doors or windows, the artificial light and the screen that limits the space gives it a hermetic stage-like feel. Crespi painted the subject of a woman catching flees on several occasion, however, only in

[380] Longhi's *Shepherd Girl with a Flower* could have been inspired by Piazzetta who depicted similar subject matter in his *Peasant Girl Catching a Flea*, c.1715, now at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston; see https://collections.mfa.org/objects/32966.
[381] It is worth pointing out here that Crespi also taught young Piazzetta therefore both Longhi's and Piazzetta's interests in similar subject matters such as the woman grooming herself/catching fleas seem inspired by their teacher.
[382] Francesco Porzio, "Malizie e virtù delle donne nella scena di genere italiana," in *La donna nella pittura italiana del Seicento e Settecento. Il Genio e la Grazia*, ed. Alberto Cottino (Turin: U. Allemandi, 2003), 60-61. The contemporary poets used the tickle in similar sexual context, for instance Domenico Tempio (1750-1821) in his *Lu pulici* (Flea), see Domenico Tempio, *Poesie siciliane*, ed. Domenico Ciccio (Catania: Giuseppe Di Maria, 1972), 140-162.

the Birmingham version of this theme did he include two boys peering out of the window on the woman. [383] One of them holds his finger near his mouth which echoes the gesture of Longhi's gentleman depicted in the background of *The Indiscreet Gentleman*. Intriguingly, a similar sign often appears in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century pictorial representations of *Susanna and the Elders* tale which would confirm the supposition that the biblical story could be one of the sources for Longhi's *The Indiscreet Gentleman.* [384] Although the gesture is often identified with the imposition of silence, in Longhi and Crespi's pictures, after a close examination, we can notice that the index finger is not on the voyeurs' mouths but rather on their cheeks. The same signal is also used by an old woman in Longhi's painting *The Seduction*, now in the private collection in Milan (Fig. 80). The Correr Museum possesses a preparatory drawing for the figure of the *vecchia* where the gesture can be seen more clearly (Fig. 81). *The Seduction* picture most likely shows a group of washerwomen at work. The focus of the scene is the old man, who is making advances at one of the young laundresses. The elderly man holds in his hand a moneybag which he offers to the woman in exchange for sexual favours. In the background, one of the females is hanging the laundry unaware of the situation and the other one sleeps seated by the table. Only two women from the group notice the amorous encounter; the older one looks directly at the young girl and points with the tip of her index

[383] Crespi depicted a woman searching for fleas on several occasions: the earliest one from 1707-9 is in Uffizi, Florence; the work in the Museo Civico, Pisa is from c.1710; the work in the Louvre, Paris, is datable to 1720-25; the version in the Museo di Capodimente, Naples is from circa 1730.

[384] See for instance Artemisia Gentileschi, *Susanna and the Elders* (1622, Burghley House, England) https://collections.burghley.co.uk/collection/susannah-and-the-elders-by-artemisia-gentileschi-1593-1652/; Guido Reni, *Susannah and the Elders* (c.1620-25, the National Gallery, London) https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/guido-reni-susannah-and-the-elders.

finger at her nose. Her stance is unclear. Is she objecting to the man's attempts or is she taking part in the game of seduction?

The gesture's meaning was illustrated and explained a century before by John Bulwer in his *Chirologia, or The Natural Language of the Hand* (1644) which illustrates twenty-four hand gestures that are arranged in four vertical rows (Fig. 82). The picture A, at the top left corner of Bulwer's folio, shows a man who presses his finger to the bottom lip. The gesture is described as *inventione laboro* (I work in discovery).[385] The difference between this sign and the imposition of silence can be seen in the image H *silentium indico* (I ask for silence) on the same sheet, where the hushing woman keeps her finger in the middle of the mouth. During the Enlightenment period, the next-to-mouth finger "language" would often imply the state of curiosity, particularly an erotic one. For instance, it can be witnessed in English satirical images of the time. In the third plate of William Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress* (1731–32) the magistrate entering Moll's den of iniquity, makes this gesture, which would have evoked for contemporaries both discovery and prurient excitement about what he finds there (especially since the big upright club behind him symbolises male arousal; Fig. 83). I have emphasised the significance of this gesture in the eighteenth-century visual culture in relation to a discovery and a sexual curiosity because at the time peeping was often associated with connoisseurs' activity of examining curiosities. The period's

[385]John Bulwer, *Chirologia, or, The naturall language of the hand composed of the speaking motions, and discoursing gestures thereof : whereunto is added Chironomia, or, The art of manuall rhetoricke, consisting of the naturall expressions, digested by art in the hand, as the chiefest instrument of eloquence, by historicall manifesto's exemplified out of the authentique registers of common life and civill conversation : with types, or chyrograms, a long-wish'd for illustration of this argument* (London: Tho. Harper, 1644). See also Cory Holding, "Rhetorical gestures in British elocutionism," (PhD diss. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012). Bulwer's text was often deployed by actors on the stage, see John Wesley, "Original Gesture: Hand Eloquence on the Early Modern Stage," *Shakespeare Bulletin* 35, no.1 (Spring 2017): 65-96.

caricaturists mocked the arrogant collectors and virtuosi who misplaced value and authority and were interested in everything and nothing.[386] The print *Scholars Consulting Books and a Globe* executed c.1747 by Venetian architect and leading scenographer Giovanni Francesco Costa shows two old men examining books surrounded by instruments such as a globe, rulers and a divider (Fig. 84). Costa's anamorphosis comments on the fashion amongst his contemporaries to study geography and cartography. Cunningly, the artist gives his picture a hemispherical composition which echoes a globe. The studious men with their distorted features rather than drawing our admiration, raise laughter.[387] The curious men's attitude was often satirised by being linked with erotic peeping which can be seen in Carington Bowles' *A Group of Well-Known Connoisseurs at a Sale of Pictures*, c.1773 (Fig. 85). The caricature shows a crowd of men at the picture sale. Several of them are squinting their eyes or peek through a looking glass in order to study miniatures. Two men in the centre however leer sideways at a young woman who sits with a gentleman between them and one holding a catalogue. Notice that one of them holds a finger to his cheek which indicates a particularly lecherous form of curiosity.

Longhi also explores the prurient and lascivious gaze veiled behind intellectual interests, for instance in his two *Geography Lesson* paintings. In the picture in the Civic Museum in Padua, discussed in Chapter One, the artist depicts two young noblewomen being taught geography by their tutor

[386] Barbara Benedict, "The 'Curious Attitude' in Eighteenth-Century Britain: Observing and Owning," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 14, no. 1 (1990): 60.
[387] The print shows Costa's interest in optics and perspective. He wrote a book *Elementi di prospettiva per uso degli architetti e pittori* (Venezia: Giambatista Pasquali, 1747). Costa also worked at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Venice (1767-69) so Longhi would probably know him.

(Fig. 29). The painting has clear lewd overtones. The tutor ogles through his eyeglass the seated woman's breast. The peeping activity in the picture is further alluded to by the ajar door and the undrawn curtain. Similar subject matter, with even more overt erotic connotations is evident in the variation on the theme at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, in which a fashionably dressed woman seated in the centre of the composition studies the globe with dividers (Fig. 86). She is accompanied by two gentlemen, one of whom appears to examine the globe through his monocle, but in fact he is peering at her bosom. Another man, who sits on a chair in the foreground and holds a book that displays an engraving of a globe, also leers at the woman. The silhouette of the seated female is illuminated by light which glamorises and dramatises her visual allure. The colours of the pages of the atlas, which lies open on the floor, echo the light pink and blue hues of the woman's attire and skin. Her skirt touches the book suggesting that the woman herself is like the unknown lands on the atlas's pages, a territory for exploration. Longhi's picture clearly plays here on the image of a globe, which is not an instruction piece, but instead equated with female breasts.[388] Associations of the globe with body parts, however, also extend to the sitting man's round belly. Likewise, in *The Geography Lesson* in the Civic Museum in Padua, the women's breasts, the shape of their dresses with dilated curvy hips achieved by panniers, the curvature of the table and chair, and the bulky needlework cushion held by the chaperone, recall the shape of the sphere being ostensibly studied. A similar scene where a tutor stares at his young pupil's bosom can also be seen in Francesco Bartolozzi's etching, *The Singing Lesson,* executed

[388] Charles W. J. Withers, "Spaces and Forms of Geographical Sociability," in *Placing the Enlightenment: Thinking Geographically About the Age of Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 232.

c.1751 (Fig. 87) after Longhi's painting of the same title (in a private collection). Its subject matter has been summarised in the verses below the image: "Either for an exercise, under pressure or for a fancy, the refined singer studies her part, she is assisted by the tutor, but rather than being interested in art, he takes pleasure in her beauty."[389] The print's humorous inscription and subject matter would surely entertain its viewers.

Like *The Geography Lesson*, *The Singing Lesson* and *The Indiscreet Gentleman*, Longhi's mondo nuovo paintings revolve around the act of peeping. This mode of looking was entwined with Venetian cultural life and also encouraged by Enlightenment empiricism. Although close observation through an eyeglass was often ridiculed in art because it was associated with false connoisseur activity, at the same time the visualisation and exploration of the world was an important matter to Longhi's patrons.[390] Struggling to find their place in the city and the world at a time of economic and political crises, the artist's paintings featuring mondi nuovi, maps and globes allowed nobles to ponder on their roles within this new challenging reality and an emerging public sphere.

3.4 Encountering *New Worlds*: geography, cartography and "mapping" one's place through Longhi's paintings

Venice had been a centre of geographical inquiry and cartographic production since the Middle Ages, but in the eighteenth century the preoccupation with

[389] The verses on the print read: "Per impegno,per forza o con dispetto/ Cantatrice gentil studia la parte/ L'assiste il Protettor, ma men dell'arte/ che della sua belta prende diletto."
[390] See for instance Withers, *Placing the Enlightenment*.

these forms of knowledge was more widespread. Venetians from a wider social spectrum exercised and expanded their geographic knowledge by attending public lectures, purchasing geographical instruments, and participating in discussions of global issues in academies and salons as well as coffee houses and piazzas.[391] Printing workshops, where globe gores and maps were produced and bound into atlases, and bookshops where they were sold, were located in the Mercerie and in Frezzaria since the sixteenth century.[392] Maps and geographical texts continued to be available along these commercial arteries in the Settecento.[393] Several influential geographic and cartographic texts were published in eighteenth-century Venice. Particularly noteworthy are the publishing houses of Albrizzi, Zatta, and Remondini, the most prolific producers of volumes on contemporary geographical, ethnographic and scientific topics.[394] Between 1740–61, Giovanni Battista Albrizzi published the monumental world history and atlas of Scottish geographical writer Thomas Salmon, *Modern History, or the Present State of all Nations … illustrated with Cuts and Maps,* which consisted of twenty-six volumes.[395] In 1779, Antonio Zatta issued *Atlante novissimo* (The New Atlas,

[391] Withers, "Doing Enlightenment: Local Sites and Social Spaces," and "Geography and the Book," in *Placing the Enlightenment*, 62-83, 167-8; Katherine Parker, "Pocketing the World: Globes as commodities in the eighteenth century," *IMCoS Journal* no. 141 (Summer 2015): 47-53.
[392] Bronwen Wilson, "Navigating the Business of Print in Venice with Jacopo de'Barbari's itinerary," forthcoming in *Jacopo de Barbari*, ed. Kristen Huffman, 2021.
[393] Jill Carrington, "Venetian Cartography and the Globes of the Tommaso Rangone monument in San Giuliano, Venice*," Notes on Early Modern Art* 3 no. 1 (March 2016): 14; Denis Cosgrove, "Mapping New Worlds: Culture and Cartography in Sixteenth-Century Venice," *Imago Mundi* 44 (1992): 72.
[394] Giorgio Mangani, "Antonio Zatta editore veneziano di libri geografici," in *Gerardo Mercatore. Sulle tracce di geografi e viaggiatori nelle Marche* eds. Giorgio Mangani and Feliciano Paoli (Urbania: Biblioteca e Museo Civico di Urbania; Ancona: Il lavoro editoriale, 1996), 73-87.
[395] Ibid., 81. One of the volumes was devoted to Venice.

1775–85), a four-volume atlas of the world.[396] The Remondini publishing house, who, as I established in the previous chapter, collaborated extensively with Longhi on the production of his prints, began to specialise in the production of cheap atlases and small colourful maps.[397] The dimensions of many of Remondini's maps suggest that they were meant to be pocket size, and possibly carried in a bound form in an album. Also relevant to the topic of mondi nuovi is the subject matter of many of the publisher's prints, which were often devoted to the world, its various regions and its nations, exemplified by the titles of series: *The Four Corners of the World, The Seven Planets*, and *The Seven Wonders.* These affordable prints, also used for the moving images inside mondi nuovi, helped people to draw a mental picture of a particular geographical zone and to visualise their own place within the larger world.[398]

The central importance of mapping in eighteenth-century Venice combined with the city's thriving printing industry signified that the Republic flourished again as a centre of cartographic production in Europe. Longhi's involvement with the printing industry must have offered him many possibilities to witness production of cartographic objects, especially given that mapmakers, woodcutters and engravers, publishers and dealers often collaborated and worked in more than one role. For instance, copper engravers Innocente Alessandri and Pietro Scaltaglia, who were taught by Longhi at Pisani's Academy of Drawing and Engraving were also involved in the production of globes, two of which, one terrestrial and one celestial, were

[396] Ibid., 83-84. Some of the maps within this atlas were engraved by Marco Alvise Pitteri who also produced engravings of Longhi's paintings.
[397] Mario Guderzo, "Gli atlanti geografici," in *Remondini* eds. Marini and Infelise, 250-251.
[398] Milano, "Selling prints," 91.

constructed in 1784 for the Venetian Accademia di Belli Arti and issued by the bookdealer Matteo Viani at San Bartolomeo.[399] Intriguingly, Longhi depicted a globe in his reception piece *The Philosopher Pythagoras* c. 1762, for this Academy, where he taught the art of painting nudes (Fig. 88). The picture, gifted to the establishment, presents a semi-naked old man, seated in profile, reading a large book by the candlelight. Other elements surrounding the figure include another large book seen in the background, an animal skull placed by the man's feet and a large globe partly covered by the open book. These objects allude to Pythagoras' philosophical studies. In particular, the globe refers to his discoveries in mathematics and astronomy — he was the first scholar who advocated for the sphericity of the earth. In the eighteenth-century Venice, geography and cartography constituted a significant part of education.[400] Celestial and terrestrial globes viewed together symbolised the divine order, the balance between macro and microcosmos. Their study allowed for the visualisation and exploration of the relationship between the heavens and the earth.[401] Maps and globes were important instruments used when teaching not only geography but also navigation, the art of war and politics and therefore young nobles increasingly encountered geography from private tutors and in academies as depicted in Longhi's paintings such as *The Geography Lesson* and *The Tutors of the Venier family* (Figs. 29, 35, 86).[402]

[399]Gallo, *Una Famiglia patrizia*, 53; Edward Luther Stevenson, *Terrestrial and Celestial Globes*, Vol II (Frankfurt on the Main: Outlook Verlag, 2020), 192-193.
[400] Charles W. J. Withers, "Spaces and Forms of Geographical Sociability," in *Placing the Enlightenment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 213-234.
[401] See "European Globes of the 17th-18th Centuries," British Library, accessed August 18, 2020, https://www.bl.uk/maps/articles/european-globes-of-the-17th-and-18th-centuries.
[402]Lesley B. Cormack, "Maps as Educational Tools in the Renaissance," *The History of Cartography Volume 3: Cartography in the European Renaissance*, ed. David Woodward (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007), 622-636; Cosgrove, "Mapping New Worlds," 67-68; Withers, "Spaces and Forms of Geographical Sociability," in *Placing the Enlightenment*, 225 and 230-233. In Venice, many academies were being established in the seventeenth and

In order to facilitate the education of Venetian patricians on the topic, the French historian and Benedictine monk Casimir Freschot, active in Venice, collaborated with the master engraver Anton Francesco Lucini to produce a landmark method of instructing geography through play. In his *Geografia ridotta a giuoco per instruttione della giovine nobiltà venetiana* (Geography Games for Teaching the Young Venetian Nobility, c.1680), Freschot introduced a series of miniature regional maps in the form of a jigsaw puzzle which, when pieced together, would reveal a map of the world with Venice at its centre (Fig. 89).[403] Such a game helped the noble students to visualise the location of places in relation to Venice and one another and thus how the world fitted together. Geographical games enjoyed a particular popularity in the eighteenth century and the mondo nuovo was one of them.[404] Its images of cityscapes were easier to grasp than maps as one did not need any

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eighteenth century for the young nobility to study subjects such as mathematics, arithmetic, geometry, geography, astronomy, optics, and agriculture, for instance Accademia dei Nobili and Accademia dei Filaleti in Giudecca, see Alberto Mantovani, "Accademie scientifiche e letterarie," in *Le università dell'Europa. Dal Rinascimento alle riforme religiose* eds. Gian Paolo Brizzi and Jacques Verger (Milan: Silvana editoriale, 1991), 155-169. Other painting by Longhi that show people studying cartographic objects include: *The Friars of Venice* (1761, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice), *The Tutor to the Grimani* (c. 1770, private collection) and *The Lady Reads Aloud* (c. late 1750s or early 1760s, private collection), for the paintings see Pignatti, *Longhi*, 78.

[403]See Casimir Freschot, *Geografia ridotta a giuoco per instruttione della giovine nobiltà venetiana - questo il titolo del gioco da tavolo* (Venice, c. 1680). For two years Freschot taught the sons of Nicolo Michiel to whom he dedicated a map game, see Francesca Bologna, "Collezionismo e carte geografiche nella Venezia del diciassettesimo secolo," (MA diss. University of Ca' Foscari, Venice, 2013), 116-117. There is only one known example in existence of the full broadsheet of the game at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice. Freschot also wrote a book giving historical accounts of the noble families of Venice, illustrated with 52 plates of armorial bearings in the form of playing-cards, see Casimir Freschot, *La nobilta veneta o' sia Tutte le famiglie patrizie con le figure de suoi scudi, & arme.Casimir Freschot, Li pregi della nobiltà veneta, abbozzati in un giuoco d'arme di tutte lefamiglie* (Venice: Gio. Gabriel Hertz, 1707).

[404] Withers, "Spaces and Forms," 231. On games in Early Modern Italy see: Patricia Rocco, "Virtuous Vices: Giuseppe Maria Mitelli's Gambling Prints and the Social Mapping of Leisure and Gender in Post-Tridentine Bologna," in *Playthings in Early Modernity, Party Games, Word Games, Mind Games*, ed. Allison Levy, (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, spring 2017), 167-190; Patricia Rocco,"The World Upside Down: Giuseppe Maria Mitelli's Games and the Performance of Identity in the Early Modern World," in *Games and Game Playing in Early Modern Art and Literature*, ed Robin O'Bryan, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), 157-180.

education or training to read them. However, this does not mean that the nobility did not use or enjoy the mondo nuovo for entertainment. The small portable versions of the device or their simpler equivalent such as the zograscope were often used in noble palaces at leisure time (Fig. 90).[405]

In the Settecento, cartographic objects were used by the aristocracy for their pedagogical and entertaining functions and also as signifiers of their position in polite society. Objects such as globes were expensive, and hence by simply adorning the domestic space, they indicated the owner's wealth and power.[406] In fact, they were often valued more for their contribution to one's social image than for their practical utility.[407] Their possession would stress one's refinement and learning as well as engagement with global commerce and progress.[408] A large part of eighteenth-century nobles' instruction relied on producing "politeness" (behavioural and moral standards particularly associated with the eighteenth century) which commonly involved the study of geography and astronomy in the home and use of items such as globes.[409] As Alice Walters explains instruments such as orrery and armillary spheres, telescopes and terrestrial and celestial globes "inspired conversation that promoted pleasure, elegance and reason among women and men alike."[410] Social interaction between men and women in domestic settings was at the heart of polite science, which is the theme of Longhi's *Geography Lesson* (Figs. 29 and 86). Introducing women to science was crucial to nurturing this

[405] Huhtamo, "Toward a History of Peep Practice," 37-39.
[406] Withers, "Geography and the Book," 167-8.
[407] Alice N. Walters "Conversation pieces: science and politeness in eighteenth-century England," *History of Science*, 35 (1997): 137; Paul Langford, "The Uses of Eighteenth-Century Politeness." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 12, (2002): 311–331.
[408] Ibid.
[409] Ibid., 121-153.
[410] Ibid., 122.

polite culture since women were seen as a "civilising force" on men.[411] By the eighteenth century, women's civilising function was clearly established in courtesy literature and the sociability of the salons. In fact, the Venetian journalist Giuseppe Compagnoni wrote between 1787–97 that women "were given entrance to public spaces as they could awake, enhance and perfect men's sensibility."[412] Longhi's paintings clearly addressed the reasons patrons acquired globes, and also viewers who understood the range of meanings signified by the objects.

Significantly, Longhi's pictures with geographical instruments in them also encapsulated the desires of his patrons to grapple with their place in the world during a particularly vexing time for the nobility. As discussed in Chapter One, the deteriorating economic situation of the Republic forced the Great Council to accept new members into the patriciate, which was a source of anxiety amongst the well-established noble families, who tried to reinforce their aristocratic lineage. By engaging with globes, patricians could conceive of the world in miniature and thereby imagine their control and mastery of it.[413] Similarly, the images viewed within the peepshow box allowed viewers to visualise faraway places and thus to tame the unknown. Analysing some of the mondo nuovo views, produced in different European cities and displaying different views, we can be struck by their similarities. For instance, the print engraved in Augsburg closely resembles the one produced in Bassano del Grappa even though they show different venues (Figs. 91 and 92). Huhtamo notes that "similar prints were often viewed both in upper class saloons and

[411] Findlen et al., eds. *Italy's Eighteenth Century,* 93.
[412] Giuseppe Compagnoni, *Lettere piacevoli se piaceranno dell'abate Compagnoni e di Francesco Albergati Capacelli,* (Venezia: Storti, 1792), 105-106.
[413] Lesley Cormack, "Glob(al) Visions: Globes and their Publics in Early Modern Europe," in *Making Publics*, 139-156.

displayed by touring showmen, who may have sometimes bought their prints from the second-hand market."[414] The majority of city views that were shown in these devices can be characterised by their vibrant colours and strong linear perspective.[415] They usually present horizontal topographical scenes of monumental buildings (palaces, churches or town halls) or characteristic parts of towns (gates, squares, streets or harbours for example). Historical or biblical scenes were rarer than the scenes demonstrating social life.[416] This generic vision of the world offered a comprehensive and unified view of it, making available to spectators analogies between their city and other sites. Gian Piero Brunetta highlights in his study of the mondi nuovi the global possibilities these apparatuses afforded the contemporary viewers:

> Following the fixed itinerary of the showman, one's gaze lands on the most famous squares and public spaces of the world: Venice, Rome, Florence, Naples, London, Paris, Augsburg, Istanbul, New York, Peking, Moscow, Boston... In the represented places, he admires palaces and monuments, but he also recognises the figures, means of transport, working methods, gestures that bring him closer to places and people seen at home.[417]

The mondo nuovo's views allowed Venetians to encounter faraway places that otherwise they would not be able to visit, and they mediated the changing social character of public spaces. The views helped participants to orient

[414] Huhtamo, "Pleasures of Peephole," 98.
[415] Kaldenbach, "Perspective Views," 89.
[416] Ibid.
[417] Brunetta, "Per una carta del navigar visionario," in *Il Mondo Nuovo*, 26.

themselves in relation to other locations and to see themselves as part of a larger network of people creating and participating in public activities. In a recent study of optical devices in England, Erin C. Blake discusses the zograscope, and how its images shaped collective understandings of distant locales. This device displayed the same perspective views of city spaces that appeared in the mondo nuovo but because of its small size and the simplicity of its operation could be used at home. Blake explains that "the zograscope views allowed observers to imagine a new relationship with the nondomestic world around them."[418] Spectators were a small group of well-off often noble individuals, who, by looking at and discussing the prints of different European cities, came to think of themselves as individuals participating together in a larger sphere of polite society — a process that Blake calls "mapping" of polite public space.[419] By looking at topographical images through a zograscope in the domestic sphere, viewers could transport themselves into the streets, avoiding the distress of the outdoor environment and strenuous travel to faraway places. Zograscopes provided a model for seeing public space as universal, as neutral and polite. Longhi's paintings evoke the views seen through the mondo nuovo or the zograscope through their social aspect — they provided a focus for noble patrons to imagine in private the changing social character of the city's spaces so familiar to them. Although the artist's outdoor scenes depict only Venetian environments, they possess a generic aspect to them as they lack reference to any particular place; his settings are largely unidentifiable. The people in Longhi's works as in

[418] Erin C. Blake, "Zograscopes, Virtual Reality, and the Mapping of Polite Society in Eighteenth-Century England," in *New Media: 1740-1915*, Lisa Gitelman and Geoffrey B. Pingree (Cambridge, MA. and London: The MIT Press, 2003), 1-29.
[419] Ibid., 98.

vedute, tend to be positioned in groups of two or three, chatting with each other and strolling around public spaces. Like in the prints, generally there is no obvious story or moral in Longhi's pictures — the views of public sites are depicted in an impersonal, and therefore polite mode. The paintings offered a manageable version of the new world and their small-scale must have further increased this sense of control. Both optical views and Longhi's canvases played a role as commodities among private individuals that brought them together and stimulated discussion and companionship without leaving the comfort of their home and avoiding potentially precarious social mixing. Executed mostly for local noble families, the artist's works helped his patrons to picture themselves as individuals taking part in the creation of the public sphere.

3.5 Venice as a show — Pietro Longhi and peepshow box operators

Longhi's pictures of mondi nuovi also attest to his close inspection of how these public shows appealed to their audiences. This aspect raises questions about Jonathan Crary's argument that the observer only became an object of investigation in the nineteenth century.[420] In particular, Longhi's new worlds paintings explore the relationship between the performer and the viewers and the dual nature of audiences. There were always two audiences, and at least two types of experiences, for the mountebank's performance. As John Plunkett explains there was an audience peeping into the peep box, and the

[420] Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA. And London: MIT Press, 1990).

onlookers who were observing the "inlookers" while still listening to the showman and adding their own comments.[421] Both the entertainer and his spectators were always dependent upon one another. The viewers were brought together by the charlatan's cries, songs and promises of hidden marvels inside the device, behind the curtain of his puppet theatre, or represented on his signs. At the same time, the trickster's show would not exist without the viewers' involvement, or their willingness to listen to his patter or to peek into his apparatus. The participants were not distant from the event, they actively engaged in it, thus, they were both the subject and the object of the performance. This dual nature of audiences is further extended to the beholder's experience of viewing the mondi nuovi pictures. The artist uses various pictorial strategies to blur the boundary between our world and the world represented in the paintings to involve us in their action and to alert us to the fact that we are both consumers and providers of the painterly spectacle.

The showman in the Querini Stampalia mondo nuovo picture addresses us and makes us feel a part of the scene (Fig. 63). In the same painting, a woman in a green headscarf attracts our attention by looking at us. Holding her mask in her hand, she appears as if she has just taken it off to reveal her identity to us. Also, the figure dressed in a black cape and a tricorn hat, standing in the foreground of both mondi nuovi canvases with his back turned towards us, reflects our position allowing us to vicariously experience the figure's perspective of the scene (Figs. 63 and 64). In this way, Longhi "breaks the fourth wall," and encroaches on the safe space which we, the

[421] Plunkett, "Peepshow for All," 9.

viewers of the paintings inhabit. The artist not only allows us to "enter" his artwork but he also creates an illusion that the painting's reality moves into our space. For instance, the stick of the charlatan in the Querini Stampalia picture protrudes beyond its frame into the beholder's world. Similarly, the figure of the caped man in the foreground, by being aligned with the painting's border, creates an illusion of invading the spectator's space, whereas the elegantly dressed dandy pointing with his finger outside the canvas suggests that the space extends further. By implementing all these pictorial devices, Longhi challenged his patrons to reflect on their role as his spectators. Significantly, such a play with the self-consciousness of viewers and with the question of illusion and reality, and who is watching whom, was in fact popular in the Venetian theatre. According to Ellen Rosand, the libretto of *La finta pazza* (The Feigned Madwoman), the opening production in 1641 of the Teatro Novissimo in the Campo Santi Giovanni e Paolo, included "a play within a play, in which the characters watching the inner play understood themselves as representatives of the audience in turn watching them."[422] Scholars often point to the theatricality of Venetian life.[423]

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[422] Eugene J. Johnson, "Jacopo Sansovino, Giacomo Torelli, and the Theatricality of the Piazzetta in Venice," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 59, No. 4 (Dec., 2000): 448.

[423] See for instance, Lina Padoan Urban, "Teatri e 'teatri del mondo' nella Venezia del cinquecento," *Arte Veneta* 20 (1966), 137–46; Lina Padoan Urban, "La festa della Sensa nelle arti e iconografia," *Studi veneziani* 10 (1968), 291–353; Lina Padoan Urban, "Apparati scenografici nelle feste veneziane cinquecentesche," *Arte Veneta* 23 (1969), 145–55; Lina Padoan Urban, "Gli spettacoli urbani e l'utopia," in *Architettura e utopia nella Venezia del cinquecento*, eds. Lionello Puppi and Anna della Valle (Milan: Electa, 1980), 144–66; Lina Padoan Urban, "Le feste sull'acqua a Venezia nel secolo XVI e il potere politico," in *Il teatro italiano del Rinascimento*, ed. Maristella De Panizza Lorch (Milan: Edizioni di comunità, 1980), 483–505; Adrian Giurgea, "Theatre of the Flesh: the Carnival of Venice and the Theatre of the World," (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1987); Patricia Fortini Brown, "Measured Friendship and Calculated Pomp: The Ceremonial Welcomes of the Venetian Republic," in *'All the World's a Stage…' Art and Pageantry in Renaissance and Baroque*, eds. Barbara Wisch and Susan Scott Munshower (Pennsylvania State University, 1990), 136–86; James Christen Steward and George Knox, *The Mask of Venice: Masking, Theatre, and Identity in the Art of Tiepolo and His Time* (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 1998);

In the eighteenth century, the theatrical element of Venetian culture was most apparent at Piazza San Marco and Piazzetta, both filled with platforms erected by charlatans showing their puppet theatres, dancing animals, peepshow boxes, predicting the future and selling magic potions.[424] Significantly, Carlo Alberto Zotti Minici uses peepshow boxes' images as a metaphor to draw an analogy between public life in Venice and a performance:

> Venice is a show and it lives from shows: the rhythms and modalities of its collective life consist of a constant staging, in which the images from the magic box are as a painting within a painting, a theatre within a theatre, a surprise within a surprise.[425]

Minici highlights the theatricality of public life in Venice where people taking part in Venetian entertainment are like actors on a stage, protagonists of another spectacle — *theatrum mundi* (theatre of the world).[426] In fact, in

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Keith Christiansen, "Tiepolo, Theater, and the Notion of Theatricality." *The Art Bulletin* 81, no. 4 (1999): 665–692; Eugene J. Johnson, "Jacopo Sansovino, Giacomo Torelli, and the Theatricality of the Piazzetta in Venice," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 59, No. 4 (Dec., 2000): 436–453; Elsje van Kessel, "Staging Bianca Capello: Painting and Theatricality in Sixteenth-Century Venice," *Art History* 33, no.2 (2010): 278-291; Daniel Savoy, "Palladio and the Water-oriented Scenography of Venice," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 71, no. 2 (2012): 204-25; Peter John O'Rourke, "Carnevale di Venezia: Performance and Spectatorship at the Venice Carnival," (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2015). For more general information on the concept of theatricality in art history see Michael Quinn, "Concepts of theatricality in contemporary art history," *Theatre Research International* 20, no.2 (1994): 106–13.

[424] See Johnson, "Theatricality of Piazzetta in Venice," 436 where he suggests that Piazzetta functioned as an auditorium — as a place to accommodate an audience.

[425] Carlo Alberto Minici, "Mondi in scatola," in *Mirabili Visioni*, 45.

[426] Theatrum mundi is a concept wherein people are characters and their actions form a drama, with God as the author. As Daniel Savoy informs: "particularly in mid-sixteenth-century Venice and the Veneto, theatres were thought to manifest the cosmological unity of the terrestrial and celestial realms and to present that harmony to the viewer. Theatrical ephemeral structures called teatri del mondo, or theatres of the world, evoked this idea with depictions of planetary circulations and the signs of the zodiac on their domed ceilings." See Savoy, "Palladio," 217.

some of the perspectival views that would be seen in the mondo nuovo, similar meta-reference was used: an image of a peepshow box would be displayed within a device heightening the viewers' awareness of their position as subjects and objects of the show (Figs. 93 and 94).

The paintings with apparatuses were significant to Longhi because those devices stage the game of making pictures. The position of the trickster with his back towards the observer parallels that of the artist working in front of his canvas, indicating a sense of kinship between them. The theme of the artist depicted from behind in the act of painting had been explored by Longhi in his *Painter in the Studio*, now in Ca' Rezzonico (Fig. 95). Longhi was fascinated by this subject matter: we know of the existence of four canvases in which the artist represented a painter seen from behind working in his studio.[427] In the Ca' Rezzonico painting, an artist sits with his back towards the viewer in front of the easel on which rests an oval female portrait. He is shown in the moment of artistic creation. In his left hand he grips his palette and maulstick, in the other hand he holds a brush with which he adds the final touches to his picture. He glances at his model seated in the centre of the studio, chaperoned by a nobleman standing next to her side. The position of the painter, in front of his canvas with his one arm raised manipulating his creation echoes the stance of the showman in the Montanari painting of mondo nuovo (Fig. 64). The charlatan handling the apparatus also evokes in intriguing ways the history of Venetian artists working with models and light

[427] Other variations on the theme can be seen in the Getty Museum in the horizontal format (c.1741-44) https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/254442/pietro-longhi-the-painter-in-his-studio-italian-about-1741-1744/; in the horizontal format in London, Stirling of Keir Collection, formerly in the Cavendish Bentinck Collection (38 x 51 cm); in vertical format in Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland (c. 1740) http://onlinecollection.nationalgallery.ie/objects/11767/the-artist-painting-a-ladys-portrait?ctx=a7aea8bc-2125-423d-a6f4-f9cff6c7d2ef&idx=23 .

in boxes. According to Carlo Ridolfi (1648) Jacopo Tintoretto for instance made little contraptions with apertures for lighting, in which he placed his wax and clay figures, visualising and studying his compositions in the round both at night and during the day.[428] Both Longhi's and Tintoretto's imagination was activated by box-like structures. However, the artists' approach to scale was completely different. Tintoretto turned his studies created with the help of small containers into large-scale paintings. Longhi on the other hand, translated his fascination with mondi nuovi into small-scale paintings which themselves possess a box-like quality. Like the mondo nuovo operator pulling the strings of the device from behind the scenes to change the viewed scenes, the painter "pulls the strings" — he plays with our vision. Similarly to the entertainer, Longhi choreographs and controls the way we approach his paintings. In fact, even the high-view point in his canvases of mountebanks suggest that like one of them he is standing on a raised platform staging novel visual experiences for his patrons.

The structure of Longhi's pictures recalls and enacts the experiences of looking into an optical device and watching people looking. His paintings are hermetic and even claustrophobic, like the peepshow box with its images that are concealed within. Worth noting in this regard is Giandomenico Romanelli's perception that "Longhi's scenes could be viewed as little boxes closed on all sides except for the one where the observer stands."[429] Longhi's striking use of perspective, so unusual for the time when broad topographical views dominated the Venetian art market, invites beholders to look at their

[428] Carlo Ridolfi, *Le Meraviglie dell'arte: ovvero Le vite degli illustri pittori veneti e dello stato,* (Bologna: Arnaldo Forni, 1837), 176.
[429] Giandomenico Romanelli, in *Paintings in Venice*, Augusto Gentili et al., (Udine: Magnus, 2002), 462.

world in unexpected ways. The artist's paintings encourage his viewers to identify their viewing experience with that of watching the mondo nuovo's image and to imagine the device's lens as the threshold where painting and perception meet in his art. Like the peepshows represented in them, Longhi's new worlds paintings attract our attention with their obfuscation and delight us with their deception. These pictorial devices prompt inquisitive viewing, and like peepshow boxes mobilise not only our eye but also necessitate our physical engagement — we are forced to approach the paintings to decipher their meaning. By obstructing our view as well as by including small and often hardly visible details, the artist forces us to tilt our heads and squint. The small scale and quirky perspective of Longhi's paintings draw us closer to them and even encourage us to utilise a magnifying glass — which I often use myself when examining the artist's works. Longhi asks us to be attentive viewers — what is unseen in the painting must be completed in the active work of the beholder: we have to decipher the painting and fill in the missing information. The artist's innovative images like mondi nuovi stimulate our visual interest and prolong the act of looking itself. They urge the beholder to look, to move, to question and to look again. According to Huhtamo, the interplay between hiding and revealing is a central mechanism of what he calls "the culture of attraction."[430] By using this term, Huhtamo draws on the discourse on attraction within media culture initiated by Andre Gaudreault and Tom Gunning in the 1980s.[431] Gaudreault and Gunning saw early silent cinema as exhibitionist and affecting to viewers' emotions with visual shocks

[430] Huhtamo, "Toward Peep Practice," 34-36.
[431] Ibid., 35.

and curiosities.[432] Huhtamo believes that the origins of the cinema of attractions lie in the fairs and carnivals where various entertainments such as peepshow boxes were displayed.[433] The signboards, musical sounds, showmen's songs and stories were attractors that pointed to pleasures that were kept out of sight. Longhi's paintings of street entertainment represent this phenomenon. Like a charlatan trying to rouse the curiosity and excitement of passers-by with his promises of hidden marvels inside the mondo nuovo, Longhi incited curiosity and pleasure in his patrons with his visual riddles. However, the artist's images full of visual surprises not only provided diversion but also had a more serious side to them. For Longhi, they asserted his skill to create an illusion on par with reality and provided a means to construct his identity as "a showman" of the painterly spectacle orchestrating his viewers' experiences. For Longhi's noble clientele, the decoding of various details in his geographical works allowed them to demonstrate their polite education while distinguishing themselves as members of the patriciate at home during decades of economic losses and waning global influence.

[432] See Wanda Strauven, *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded. Film Culture in Transition* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014).
[433] Ibid., 34-36.

Chapter 4. Pietro Longhi's paintings of exotic animals

Longhi devoted several of his works to animals, particularly wild ones. In one of them, known as *The Rhinoceros*, now in Ca' Rezzonico, Venice, we can see a small group of Venetians looking at a rhinoceros known as Clara (Fig. 96).[434] The trompe-l'œil paper notice hanging on the wooden fence within the picture informs us that the scene was painted from life by the artist in Venice in 1751 and commissioned by the Venetian patrician Giovanni Grimani dei Servi.[435] The rhinoceros painting and the animal, Clara, as well as Longhi's *Elephant* canvases are the main focus of this chapter.

Foreign species of animals are prominent in Longhi's oeuvre and often depicted alongside Venetian nobles who commissioned these artworks. Yet, these paintings have been overlooked by scholars in spite of, or perhaps because of, their curious subject matters. Why did Longhi's noble patrons seek to be represented next to a rhino, an elephant, and a lion? What did these animals mean during the Enlightenment period — when the concept of "the animal" was challenged, and in Venice — at the time when the status of well-established patrician families was threatened by the emerging wealthy merchants?

In this chapter, rather than seeing these pictures only as a record of Venetian outdoor entertainments, I demonstrate that Longhi's depictions of

[434] Clara was a female Indian rhinoceros who became famous during 17 years of touring Europe in the mid-18th century. She arrived in Europe in Rotterdam in 1741, becoming the fifth living rhinoceros to be seen in Europe in modern times since sixteenth century.
[435] The painting's inscription says: "Vero ritratto/ Di un Rinocerotto/ condotto in Venezia/ L'anno 1751/ fatto per mano di / Pietro longhi/ per commissione/ Del N.O. Giovanni grimani/ Dei Servi Patrizio Veneto."; English trans. in Pignatti, *Longhi,* 90.

the rhinoceros and elephants had a wider significance; they were created in response to his patrons' interests, widespread during the eighteenth century, in natural history.[436] Longhi's *Rhinoceros* is analysed in relation to the substantial print culture which advertised the animal's travels around Europe and in which it is repeatedly depicted. Significantly, the chapter discusses the artist's canvases of exotic species in relation to contemporary debates on the similarities between human and non-human animals and the related revival of physiognomic theories. The eighteenth century was a period when the relationship between men and animals was redefined. Longhi's works bring to the fore questions regarding the issue of resemblance. At a transitional moment in which sciences of resemblance and sciences of taxonomy overlapped, the artist seems to have highlighted and played upon that overlap in a sustained fashion, both in terms of conceptions of "the animal" and his conflation of genre painting and portraiture. An important contribution in this chapter is my interpretation of Longhi's *Rhinoceros* (Ca' Rezzonico version); in light of Giovanni Grimani and Caterina Contarini's marriage, the painting is viewed as a commentary of the noblewomen's position in Venice. At the same time, the chapter considers the humorous nature of Longhi's pictures. Animal performers in the artist's works possess humanised features and they often attract viewers' attention more than the human beings whose faces are frequently expressionless or hidden behind masks. In view of the association of masks with the theatrical plays in early modern Venice, I explore Longhi's paintings of masking in public spaces in the context of theatrical

[436] By "exotic" animals I mean wild species or ones that were non-native to western Europe. In the eighteenth century the word "foreign" was often used to describe non-native species especially plants, see for instance Luc-Vincent Thiéry, *Guide des amateurs et des étrangers voyageurs à Paris* (Paris: Hardouin & Gattey, 1787), 35. I use the word "exotic" in reference to these animals because it also connotes a European fascination and desire for the "other."

performances. Finally, the chapter examines the function of these pictures in the lives of the nobility. I argue that apart from offering diversion and manifesting intellectual interests of the sitters, the canvases with exotic animals encouraged discussions among the painter's noble clients about self-representation.

4.1 Recording Clara's presence in Europe: Pietro Longhi's *Rhinoceros* and other visual representations of the animal

Longhi's *Rhinoceros,* with its ambiguous subject matter and composition as well as the enigmatic assemblage of figures, requires a close analysis (Fig. 96). The wooden structure depicted in the painting obstructs our view beyond the scene and creates an atmosphere that is typical for the artist, a hermetic box-like. This enclosure can be better understood when we look again at Gabriele Bella's painting *Charlatans in the Piazzetta,* at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia, discussed in Chapter Three in relation to outdoor entertainments in Venice (Fig. 72). Bella demonstrates that itinerant showmen would erect wooden booths in Piazza San Marco for some of their displays, probably to keep out non-paying visitors. Among the major attractions hidden in these festival structures were exotic animals. In fact, if we look closer at Bella's work, on the right-hand side we can see two pictures of four-legged animals hanging on one of the wooden houses next to the puppet theatre. Unfortunately, the creatures on the posters cannot be identified but they must advertise certain animals that can be viewed in this *casotto*. Bella's picture helps us to understand that Longhi's *Rhinoceros* offers a view of the interior of a carnival booth. Inside, the wooden fence

separates spectators from the rhinoceros and divides the composition into two parts: the foreground which is occupied by Clara and we external viewers, and the background where the painted audience stands on the stairs. The placement of the beholder with the rhinoceros in its enclosure suggests blurring of the human and animal boundaries — an issue which was widely debated in eighteenth-century Europe. The enclosure that hems in the rhinoceros also emphasises its scale. The mammal known for its large size takes up half of the small canvas (62 x 50 cm). It is possible that Longhi draws here on the fact that small versions of Clara on decorative objects, prints and coins were extremely popular in Europe during the animal's tour. [437] People could therefore own a large rhinoceros in a manageable size of a clock, a porcelain figurine or a painting.

The puzzling group of spectators in Longhi's picture also yield to our closer inspection. From the text in Longhi's work, we know that it was executed for Giovanni Grimani. Some scholars see the young gentleman, elegantly dressed in a blue coat and an orange waistcoat, as the nobleman.[438] However, no sources exist to confirm this supposition and so it is unclear whether this is a particular individual or if the man represents a certain type of person. Even though the identity of the nobleman is uncertain, by depicting the aristocratic man half-length with his face at a three-quarter angle, Longhi invites us to see his representation as a portrait. Similarly, a likeness of a noblewoman who stands next to this man and faces the beholder recalls

[437] Charissa Bremer-David, "Animal Lovers Are Informed," in *Oudry's Painted Menagerie: Portraits of Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Europe,* ed. Mary Morton (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2007), 91-103.
[438] See for instance Olimpia Theodoli in *The Glory of Venice*, eds. Jane Martineau and Andrew Robison (New Haven: Yale University Press), 463; Piero del Negro, "Amato da tutta la Veneta Nobiltà. Pietro Longhi e il patriziato veneziano," in *Pietro Longhi,* Mariuz et al., 237.

contemporary portraiture, such as Giambattista Tiepolo's portrait of *A Young Lady in a Tricorn Hat,* c.1755–1760, at the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. (Fig. 97), in which a woman also wears a *bauta* attire, holds a fan, and addresses the viewer. As is evident, the rhinoceros picture oscillates between what looks like a portrait of the identifiable individual within the image which otherwise seems to depict representative examples. For example, attracting our attention is an expressive figure of a showman who wears a modest brown coat and a tricorn hat. In his raised hand, he holds a whip and the animal's horn that she had shed during the visit in Italy. The impresario seems to address us, pointing with his finger at the rhino. He looks ready to protect the fence – the boundary between the onlookers and the pachyderm. On the far right, a boy in a tricorn hat and a red cape smokes his pipe. He is the only figure who really looks at the rhinoceros. The proximity of the youth to the animal encourages us to draw comparisons between them. The boy who smokes his pipe lazily echoes Clara who chews idly on her hay and suggests consumption. The pipe also indicates tobacco, which like a rhinoceros, represented to contemporaries an "exotic" world. Benjamin Schmidt explains that such forms of exotic geography were viewed at the time not only as foreign or curious but also delightful and pleasurable.[439] Both tobacco and the rhino hint here at enjoyable but also ephemeral entertainments that they constituted.

The animal is painted in a mundane stance, eating hay and standing next to her droppings which seems surprising given a rhinoceros had not been seen in Europe since the sixteenth century. Clara's arrival and exhibition in Europe

[439] Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism: Geography, Globalism, and Europe's Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).

is documented as extremely theatrical in nature. When the creature painted by Longhi visited Vienna in 1746, it entered the city in a wagon pulled by eight horses and with the escort of eight swordsmen.[440] A few years later, in 1751, it reached Bologna in a carriage drawn slowly, as if a solemn procession, by six pair of oxen wearing horns.[441] The caravan was of course covered so as to arouse visitors' curiosity about the animal; in this way those who witnessed it entering into the city could already develop a certain idea about its weight and size. Moreover, the pachyderm's arrival in various European cities always coincided with certain festivities attracting large audiences. Clara's performance was carefully planned and staged starting from advertisement, to her official measuring and weighing when on the stage.[442] Even the workmen taking care for the success of the show were dressed in such a way to evoke distant lands from which the animal would have come. Casanova recorded that when he visited the rhinoceros' exhibition at the Saint Germain fair in Paris in 1749, a man dressed in the African [*sic*] fashion was collecting money.[443] It is understandable therefore that the animal's spectacular tour culminated with her arrival in the city of carnival. By the eighteenth century, Venice had become associated with carnival, drawing visitors from all over Europe, in particular Grand Tourists who covered their faces and mingled freely with people from all ranks.[444] As mentioned in the previous chapter, itinerant street performers, lured by the prospect of high incomes, flocked to

[440] Glynis Ridley, *Clara's Grand Tour* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2004), 71.
[441] Corrado Ricci, *I teatri di Bologna nei secoli XVII e XVIII* (Bologna: Monti Editori, 1888), 692.
[442] Bremer-David, "Animal Lovers."
[443] Jacques Casanova de Seingalt, chap.7, in *The Complete Memoirs of Jacques Casanova de Seingalt* (Miami, Florida: Library of Alexandria, 2003). The rhinoceros came from India not Africa. The same mistake is made by Alessandro Longhi in his print of Clara in which the painter claims that the animal came from Africa.
[444] James H. Johnson, "The Theatre of Identity" in *Casanova: The Seduction of Europe*, eds. Frederick Ilchman et al. (Boston: MFA Publications, 2017), 74-95.

Venice where they erected their stalls at Piazzetta di San Marco turning it into the largest set-stage in Europe.

When comparing Longhi's picture with that of his imitator, also titled *The Rhinoceros,* c. 1775, now in the Palazzo Leoni Montanari (Fig. 98), we can immediately notice the differences in the depiction of the audiences in each painting. In the follower's work, we can see that the spectators admiring the rhino are more animated than in Longhi's canvas. Various emotions are expressed through their body language and facial expressions. Also, the rhinoceros appears to be more alert and aware of the onlookers' presence in the follower's picture. Clara stares at the nobleman on the far left who watches her with great surprise and curiosity, his mouth slightly open in astonishment and his magnifying glass pressed to his eye. A working-class man in a red cap and blue breeches, seated in the background of the composition seems moved by the novelty of the view and points with his finger to the creature to draw another viewer's attention to it. The showman on the other hand appears concerned, perhaps worried about the safety of the young boy who watches the rhino. With his arms stretched and a whip in his hand he looks ready to run to tame the animal. The horizontal composition of the follower's *Rhinoceros* invites our eye to travel across the canvas from the lower left corner, where the man pouring water crouches, via the animal and back to the audience in the upper right-hand corner. In contrast, Longhi's vertical work lacks any reference to the outside world; our sight travels constantly between visitors and the rhinoceros. Neither one of them is clearly the focus of the image; instead, it is the oscillation and the comparison that seems to be the main goal of the composition. Considering that it has been

two centuries since someone saw a living rhinoceros in Europe, we can imagine that it would have provoked a great commotion. In the eighteenth century, the animal was extremely popular and greatly anticipated by everyone including members of royalty.[445] The printed advertisements promoting Clara's travels raised people's curiosity about her and created a certain image in their mind which they needed to confront with the reality.

Given the flourishing print culture in contemporary Venice, as well as Longhi's involvement in and inspiration with the industry discussed in Chapter Two, it is important to consider the artist's *Rhinoceros* alongside printed pamphlets advertising the animal —especially since the artist's picture was also translated into print. A great number of leaflets and posters depicting Clara were issued as part of an elaborate promotion strategy of her owner Dutch captain Douwemout van der Meer.[446] The way in which this printed material aroused potential visitors' interest in Clara can be seen on the example of a woodcut announcing her arrival in Leipzig, sold in Regensburg, Germany in 1747 (Fig. 99):

> All animal lovers in Leipzig are informed that now has arrived a living rhinoceros, which many people believe to be the Behemoth as described in the book of Job, chapter 40, verse 10. It is worth seeing to all those who come to visit it. It is the first animal of this species which has come to this town; it is about 8 years old, and therefore still a calf, as it will

[445] Clara visited many royals including King Frederick II of Prussia in Berlin, Francis I and Empress Maria-Theresa in Vienna, King Louis XV in Versailles, Augustus III, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, and Frederick II, Landgrave of Hesse.
[446] On this topic see L.C. Rookmaaker and Jim Monson, "Woodcuts and engravings illustrating the journey of Clara, the most popular rhinoceros of the eighteenth century," *Zoologische Garten* 70, no.5 (2000): 313-335.

> continue to grow for many years, because these animals can reach an age of 100 years. It is almost 5000 pounds in weight…It was caught in Asia…4000 miles distant from here…it has a horn on the nose, with which it can plough the ground much faster than a farmer with a plough; it can walk fast, and also swims and dives in the water like a duck…The animal is an archenemy of the elephant, and when the two species meet, the rhinoceros tries to hit it with its horn under the belly and kill it in that fashion…The animal secretes some potion, which has cured many people from the falling sickness.[447]

The text is clearly designed to attract audiences to see the rhinoceros. It is addressed towards animal enthusiasts.[448] The author stresses the novelty of this species by informing us that it is the first of its kind to visit the city. He exaggerates its longevity and size. In order to describe certain features of Clara, he refers to agriculture — "it can plough the ground much faster than a farmer with a plough"— and to the natural world — it "swims and dives in the water like a duck." Both ideas would be familiar and understandable to a typical European visitor.[449] The passage also mentions that she arrived from the Asian continent and travelled a long distance of 4000 miles. In this way, the writer responds to the contemporary fascination with exotica and far-away lands. Furthering associations with foreignness, visual imagery

[447] The original text and English translation of the text from a woodcut sold in Regensburg, Germany in 1747 is published in L.C. Rookmaaker et al., "Woodcuts and engravings," 317-318. The word *liebhabern* has been translated to mean "animal lovers" in the modern sense, however here *liebhabern* means "amateurs" in the early modern sense.
[448] The word "enthusiast" most likely implies here people having strong feelings or interest in the rhinoceros. In certain eighteenth-century settings the world "enthusiast" had often a pejorative meaning associated with obsession, madness and fanaticism which in the context of rhino-mania could also be read in this way.
[449] Bremer-David, "Animal Lovers," 91-92.

accompanying Clara's prints would often include stereotypical representations of people who stood for the allegories of the continent from which she came (Fig. 100). For instance, in the print after Johann Friedrich Schmidt's drawing from the mid-eighteenth century, a black man with a bow and arrow aims at the rhinoceros standing in a vast landscape. By emphasising the foreign element in the print, Clara's owner capitalised on the contemporary public's interest in the exotic and the unknown. The Leipzig pamphlet also creates an aura of danger and magic around the mammal. The notice mentions for instance her ability to heal people and her resemblance to the biblical creature Behemoth.[450] It accentuates her strength, informing readers that she can kill an elephant.[451] By describing the rhinoceros as a fierce monster, the advertisement appeals to the public's desire for danger. The representation of the rhino as a ferocious mythical beast would be perpetuated in other visual imagery. For example, in the background of the poster made by H. Oster during Clara's visit in Germany in 1741 a rhinoceros fights an elephant (Fig. 101).[452]Another anonymous artist follower of Longhi painted the animal as an aggressive beast. In the picture, now lost, the pachyderm is charging towards a crowd of terrified spectators (Fig. 102). The showman who holds a whip tries to tame the rhinoceros and stop her from knocking down the fence. The onlookers — who are a far cry from Longhi's

[450] The Behemoth is a large animal mentioned in Job 40:15–24 which some commentators identified as a rhinoceros.
[451] The pamphlet refers here to Pliny's *Natural History* where the author writes that the rhinos are perpetually at war with elephants and he describes the way the rhino kills the elephant. See Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History of Pliny*, English trans. John Bostock; Henry T Riley (Somerville, MA.: Perseus Digital Library, 2006), Book VIII, Chapter 29.
[452] The print also contains a naturalistic large-scale depiction of the animal in its profile and the portrait of Van Meer at the bottom of the page. The broadsheet is accompanied by a text in four languages and an additional line in Dutch running across the whole page with the rhino's measurements taken in May 1747.

immobile visitors — are rendered in various poses showing fear, awe and surprise.

Longhi's portrayal of the animal echoes her depiction in many advertising prints where she is consistently represented in profile in a naturalistic fashion. A lot of attention is paid to Clara's anatomy and skin texture. Only the execution techniques or background scenes in the prints change. For instance, David Redinger, in his pamphlet documenting Clara's visit in Zurich in 1748, similarly to Longhi, pictures the rhinoceros lying down in a wooden pen being watched by a group of spectators (Fig. 103). On the far right of Redinger's illustration is a showman who holds a whip. A figure in the centre of the audience who touches the creature might be its owner or a visitor who paid extra for a close encounter with the animal. On the left-hand side of the broadsheet is a wagon in which Clara is being transported. Not unlike Longhi *Rhinoceros,* the wooden enclosure extends towards us creating the illusion that we occupy the same space as her. Also, in the similar manner to Longhi, Redinger's print portrays the rhino in profile undisturbed by onlookers. The text accompanying the Zurich advertisement of Clara states that we are looking at "truthful representation drawn from life of a recumbent rhinoceros, which has been exhibited in various European countries, and recently was seen in principal cities of Switzerland" (Fig.103).[453] This statement resembles Longhi's note in the Ca' Rezzonico picture of the animal which attests to the veracity of the depiction.

The legacy of Albrecht Dürer's woodcut of the Indian rhinoceros, which was brought to Portugal in 1513, is clearly evident in the prints of the animal

[453] Author's translation of the inscription accompanying David Redinger's advertisement of Clara.

(Fig. 104). Alexa Torchynowycz discusses Longhi's *Rhinoceros* in relation to Dürer's work. She suggests that by making certain references to Dürer, Longhi tried to increase his reputation and place himself within the lineage of imagery created by the German artist.[454] Earlier chapters of this thesis have demonstrated that Longhi drew on many of his predecessors, making it likely that was also inspired by the German artist. However, the Venetian artist's picture of the animal differs significantly from that of Dürer's. Even though Longhi rendered the rhinoceros in the same position, facing right, his creature is painted in a realistic manner eating hay and excreting dung. Longhi also corrected some anatomical inaccuracies in the Renaissance depiction; Dürer, who had never seen the animal, depicted the body with sheets of armour, a gorget around its throat, a second horn on the back, and a scale-like pattern on the skin. Torchynowycz proposes that the Venetian artist's "improved" representation of the rhino was created to "be more 'artistic' than Dürer's"; however, more relevant and convincing evidence for Longhi's *Rhinoceros* resides in the number and diversity of animals he painted, and in sources specific to eighteenth-century intellectual and polite society of his patrons.[455] The popularity of natural history amongst Venetian nobles is one example of inquiry that should be taken into account, especially when looking at artist's pictures of exotic animals.

[454] Alexa Torchynowycz, "Exhibition of a Rhinoceros: Iconography and Collecting in Eighteenth Century Venice," (Honors diss., University of South Florida, 2011), 1-25.
[455] Ibid., 14.

4.2 Longhi's rhinoceros and elephant paintings and contemporary interests in natural history

The rhinoceros was both an attraction for crowds and also an object of interest amongst contemporary men of science. Empirical studies of Clara appear in various texts of the period, which are often accompanied with images representing her in a naturalistic fashion. [456] One of the first such depictions was Jan Wandelaar's *Human Skeleton with a Young Rhinoceros,* engraved by Charles Grignion (Fig. 105) and published in 1747 in Bernhard Siegfried Albinus' anatomy book.[457] The pachyderm in Wandelaar's print grazes calmly on some grass, undisturbed by the viewer's presence. She is contrasted with a human skeleton that stands in front of her and might also serve as a *memento mori,* reminding us that the animal is subject to death and decay as are human beings. The precision with which Wandelaar represented the rhinoceros suggests that the work is drawn from life. Longhi adopted a similar approach to paint his rhinoceros: he does not glorify Clara; on the contrary, by depicting her next to her dung he conveys mundane animal processes in a rather scientific manner. The striking contrast between the skeleton and the living animal in Wandelaar's work is mirrored in Longhi's picture where the rhinoceros seems more alive than the human beings.[458] The pose of the skeleton with extended arms recalls the stance of Longhi's showman holding a horn. Wandelaar's engraving circulated as a loose plate separately from the anatomical atlas as early as 1742, making it widely

[456] Bremer-David, "Animal Lovers."
[457] Bernhard Siegfried Albinus, *Tabulae sceleti et musculorum corporis humani* (Leiden: Johan and Herman Verbeek, 1747).
[458] Ridley, *Clara's Grand Tour*, 27.

available.[459] One may wonder whether it could be seen in Venice where Dutch prints were widely collected and could have caught the attention of Longhi or his patrons?

Many of Longhi's preparatory drawings express the artist's close observation of animals and a precise almost scientific approach towards their representation. For instance, in his sketch for *The Music Lesson,* in which we can see a parrot in a cage, Longhi scrupulously recorded all the colours of the bird's feathers and their exact placement (c. 1760; Fig. 106). His inscription on the paper notes: "the face is dark/ a yellow spot under the neck/ pink around the eye/ the whole body is greenish/ some pinkish feathers below/ yellow above/ pinkish eyes and a black pupil."[460] Longhi's detailed notes resemble the accounts of various animals in natural history books of the period, such as Denis Diderot's and Jean le Rond d'Alembert's *Encyclopedia* (1751–1772) and Comte de Buffon's *Natural History* (1749–1804). Both of these volumes contained entries on the rhino accompanied by images of her.[461] Buffon's record includes an engraving by Jean-Charles Baquoy after a drawing by Jacque de Seve of Jean-Baptiste Oudry's painting of the animal executed in 1749, now at the Staatliches Museum, Schwerin (Fig. 107). Oudry's portrait of the rhinoceros was exceptional as it was not only drawn from life but it was life-size. Oudry, the artist to the French king Louis XIV, was able to sketch Clara during her stay at the monarch's menagerie at

[459] L.C. Rookmaaker, "Captive Rhinoceros in Europe from 1500 to 1800," in *Bijdragen tot de Dierkunde* 43, no. 1 (1973): 47.
[460] Author's translation. For the original version in Italian see *Pietro Longhi,* eds. Mariuz et al., 64.
[461] Bremer-David, "Animal Lovers," 100.

Versailles in 1749.[462] The painting conveys the creature's volume, the texture of her skin, its folds and thickness, but also her character and mood, which brings her to life. The impressive picture which recorded every aspect of the rhino's physical appearance was shown at the Salon of that year. Not only does it demonstrate Oudry's artistic skill but also reflects "a naturalistic empirical imperative" of the Enlightenment era, according to Mary Morton, a desire to gather scientific knowledge that would provide a more accurate understanding of the animal and would eliminate the misconceptions regarding it.[463]

The French royal practice of amassing exotic animals was not a novelty, but rather, at the turn of Settecento, menageries were largely linked to their owners' interests in natural history. An interest in wild species dates back to Antiquity. It has often been seen as a powerful means for rulers to show off their symbolic mastery of the world.[464] *Naturalia* (wild animals, exotic plants, fossils and minerals) were systematically arranged together with *artificialia* (human-made objects) in drawers, cabinets, and *studioli* by various collectors: scholars, amateur naturalists, and members of polite salons.[465] *Wunderkammer* were perceived by their owners as representations of the world — a sort of microcosm.[466] An example from Venice is Doge Andrea

[462] T. H. Clarke, "The 'Dutch' Rhinoceros of 1741-58," in *Rhinoceros from Dürer to Stubbs, 1515-1799* (London: Sotheby's, 1986).
[463] Mary Morton, *Oudry's Painted Menagerie*, 143.
[464] Marina Belozerskaya, "Menageries as Princely Necessities and Mirrors of their Times," in *Oudry's Painted Menagerie*, 59-73.
[465] Eric Baratay and Elisabeth Hardouin-Fugier, "The Passion for Collecting (1500s to 1700s): The Aristocracy's New-Found Curiosity," in *Zoo: History of Zoological Gardens in the West*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), 29-43.
[466] The literature on Wunderkammer is extensive. For the most comprehensive work see: Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, *Wonders and Order of Nature: 1150-1750* (London: Zone Books, 2001); Oliver Impey and Arthur Macgregor, eds., *The Origins of the Museum: Cabinet of Curiosity in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century* (Leeds: House of Stratus, 2001); Robert John Weston Evans and Alexander Marr, *Curiosity and Wonder from the Renaissance to the*

Vedramin's assemblage of paintings, statues, ancient Roman medals, minerals, plants and gems as well as animals, fish and birds.[467] In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such collections were viewed in new scientific terms. They allowed their owners to comprehend the natural world and their place within it as well as to use the environment to their benefit.

In Italy, the practice of *villeggiatura* (country holidaying in villas), which was particularly well-developed in the Veneto region, presented additional opportunities for collecting natural objects in the nearby countryside as well as discussing and writing works on natural history. The cabinet of curiosities could be now extended outside in the collection of exotic plants and animals in botanical gardens and menageries known as *seragli*.[468] Rather than just entertaining and satisfying the curiosity of the Venetian nobility or demonstrating their mastery of nature, the study of natural history during *villeggiatura*, as Krzysztof Pomian explains, "gained almost political character … it was seen as a means of improving living conditions and increasing public contentment."[469] The natural sciences and building of collections in the countryside contributed to a more efficient use of the Republic's natural resources. For this reason, natural history became an

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Enlightenment (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006); Patrick Mauries, *Cabinet of Curiosity* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2011); Florence Fearrington, ed., *Rooms of Wonder: From Wunderkammer to Museum, 1599-1899* (New York: Grolier Club, 2012); Stephanie Jane Bowry, "Re-thinking the Curiosity Cabinet: A Study of Visual Representation in Early and Post Modernity" (PhD diss., University of Leicester, 2015).

[467] Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectors and Curiosities: Paris and Venice 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 69. Some other collectors of *naturalia* in the Venetian Republic during early modern period include Giovanni Grimani, Gabrielle Vendramin, Giacomo Contarini, Federigo Contarini, Carlo Ruzzini, Gualdo Family, and Lodovico Moscardo.

[468] The etymology of this Italian word is unclear. The Italian *Treccani* dictionary gives two derivations: one from Turkish *saray*, or from Persian *sara'i,* meaning palace, or the enclosed courts for the wives and concubines of the harem of a house or palace. The other (in the sense of enclosure for wild animals) from Late Latin: *serraculum*, derived from *serare*, to close, which comes from *sera*, a door-bar; see "Serraglio," Treccani La Cultura Italiana: Vocabolario, accessed August 18, 2020, https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/serraglio1/.

[469] Pomian, *Collectors*, 218.

important component of a noble's education. Giovanni Serafino Volta, one of the most important naturalists and palaeontologists of the time, offered lessons to the nobility in 1790, which equipped them with basic knowledge of mineralogy, botany, zoology and made them aware of new methods and instruments used in chemistry. Natural history also provided more utilitarian information on beer and wine making as well as the medicinal use of vegetables.[470] The promotion of knowledge of the natural sciences and the emphasis on its usefulness in everyday life also led to the nobles' interest in thermal springs, peat bogs and agriculture, i.e.: the cultivation of land and rearing of animals.[471]

Giovanni Grimani, the commissioner of Longhi's *Rhinoceros* represents this new trend. In Martellago, the province of Venice, Giovanni possessed a villa Ca' della Nave, bought by his father from the Pruli family in the seventeenth century. A century later, the family decided to renovate the villa and they also began to cultivate the surrounding terrains, reaffirming their position as landowners.[472] Francesco Scipione Giuliano Fapanni,[473] the grandson of Grimani's farmer and a distinguished scholar who wrote extensively about Martellago, informs us that Giovanni collected "foreign animals" and possessed in his garden a "seraglio" (menagerie).[474] It is therefore not surprising that Giovanni wanted to own a painting of the famous rhinoceros, drawn from life. The naturalistic aspect of Longhi's picture would

[470] Ibid., 221 and note 202.
[471] Ibid., 229.
[472] Luca Luise, "Alcuni cenni storici sui Mugnai e sui mulini di Martellago," *L'Esde Fascicoli di Studi e di Cultura*, no. 0 (2005): 39.
[473] Quirino Bortolato, "Francesco Scipione Giuliano Fapanni (1810-94) nel bicentenario della nascita," *L'Esde Fascicoli di Studi e di Cultura* (October 2010): 188-206.
[474] Francesco Scipione Giuliano "Fapanni, Intorno a tredici quadri di costume veneziano dipinti da Pietro Longhi. Lettera ad Eugenio Bosa," *Il Vaglio. Antologia della letteratura periodica* 5, (22 September 1838): 308.

appeal to his patron who most likely sought to demonstrate his interest and knowledge of natural history. The collecting of naturalia ran in Giovanni's family. His predecessor Giovanni Grimani, the bishop and patriarch of Aquileia, after whom he was most likely named, was an avid collector and patron of art.[475] By owing the Longhi's *Rhinoceros*, Giovanni could stress his illustrious lineage and status as a collector of nature and art at the time when the old nobility struggled to reaffirm their position.

Giovanni Grimani's rhinoceros painting also testifies to eighteenth-century excitement about the curious and the unusual. Grimani not only ordered from Longhi a painting of Clara's exhibition in Venice but also of Cornelius Magrath. Almost seven feet tall, the man attracted attention, using his height in spectacles performed while travelling around Europe.[476] Like in the case of the rhinoceros, not only Magrath's size but also his foreign origin (he came from Ireland) was especially attractive to Venetian spectators. In 1757, Grimani commissioned Longhi to produce the painting of the giant man, *Giant Magrath*, now in Ca' Rezzonico, Venice, who is depicted in a fashion similar to his picture of the animal (Fig. 108). In the wooden booth, we see the Irishman who is watched by the audience. As in the rhinoceros painting, Longhi's plays here with the small-large dichotomy which might relate to the common Enlightenment fascination with extra-large and extra-small.[477] Magrath's grand stature is emphasised by the small canvas and by the (regular sized) man who stands below his outstretched arm. As in *The*

[475] See Michel Hochmann, "La famiglia Grimani," in *Il collezionismo d'arte a Venezia: dalle origini al Cinquecento* eds. Michel Hochman, Rosella Lauber, Stefania Mason (Venice: Fondazione di Venezia, 2008), 207-23.
[476] Eileen Kane, "An Irish Giant," *Irish Arts Review Yearbook*, (1990): 96-98.
[477] Z.S. Strother, "Display of the Body of Hottentot," in *Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business*, ed. Bernth Lindfors (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 23.

Rhinoceros, in the Magrath painting Longhi rendered a paper poster hanging on the wall, which, resembling a scientific record, lists information on the man such as his impressive height, weight and his date of birth.[478] Longhi also depicted Clara and Magrath in the same picture which highlights their similarities. The whereabouts of this painting are unknown but it features in Terisio Pignatti's catalogue raisonné of the artist (Fig. 109). The juxtaposition of the rhinoceros and the giant man mirrors the practice of early modern curiosity collectors who would often display opposites in pairs. Both stood for rarity, natural wonder and even God's omnipresence as they demonstrated the Creator's power over nature but at the same time they were viewed as specimens for investigation. Also, they both crossed the boundary between spectacle and science. Fair showmen took advantage of the popularity of natural history by pitching their announcements to naturalists, who visited their booths. They acquired valuable information from the animal handlers and often borrowed their fascinating animal-behaviour stories.[479]

Besides Grimani, several of Longhi's noble patrons such as Mocenigo, Sagredo Pisani, Dolfin Valier, and Querini commissioned from the artist paintings of exotic animals which stressed their aristocratic status and interest in natural history. For instance, Longhi executed in 1751 another painting of rhinoceros for the nobleman Alvise IV Girolamo Mocenigo, now in the National Gallery, London (Fig. 110). Many details in the National Gallery picture such as its pyramidal composition, the position and appearance of the

[478] The note says: "Vero Ritratto del/ gigante Cornelio/ Magrat Irlandese/ Venuto in Venezia/ l'anno 1757, nato il 1/ gennajo del 1737 alto/ piedi 7 e pesa L. 420/ Dipinto per commissione del/ N. H. Giovanni Grimani/ dei Servi Patrizio Veneto." For the English trans. see Pignatti, *Longhi*, 89.
[479] Louise E. Robbins, *Elephant Slaves and Pampered Parrots: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Paris*, (Baltimore, London: JHU Press, 2002), 7.

animal, the showman who holds a horn, and two women who stand at the top of the stairs with a young girl, are taken *verbatim* from the Ca' Rezzonico portrayal of Clara. In Alvise IV Mocenigo's painting, all of the men apart from the showman wear masks. There is no trompe l'oeil paper notice in this picture and therefore it is not straightforward to establish its ownership. Luckily, during the artwork relining in the early 1970s, a note was discovered on its back revealing that it was produced for Girolamo Mocenigo.[480] Girolamo came from an old and respected patrician family that produced seven doges. He was a well-educated man whose name appears in the *Catalogo de' signori associati* (catalogue of the associates) in the Italian translation of *the Cyclopaedia, or a Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* (1749) by an English writer and encyclopaedist, Ephraim Chambers, published in Venice by Pasquali.[481] The *associati* would financially support the publishing of certain volumes in which they were interested, which suggests that Girolamo was part of a society or an enthusiast of sciences.[482] Girolamo's brother Alvise II Zuanne Mocenigo, who lived with him in Ca' Mocenigo on the Grand Canal, was also part of the Venetian intelligentsia and possessed in the house a private library with all the classics of the Enlightenment including the *Encyclopaedia* (Lucca, 1758).[483] Girolamo was also an owner of a casino, popular amongst the intellectual elite of Venice, and it is perhaps there that he met Longhi's another patron Marina Sagredo

[480] Michael Levey, "Review of Pietro Longhi by Terisio Pignatti," *The Art Bulletin* 52, no. 4 (1970): 463-64.
[481] Ephraim Chambers, *Dizionario universale delle arti e delle scienze* (*the Cyclopaedia, or a Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*) (Venice: Pasquali, 1749); first published 1728.
[482] Fabio Tarzia, *Libri e rivoluzione: figure e mentalità nella Roma di fine ancien regime (1770-1800)* (Rome: Franco Angeli, 2000), 143.
[483]A.S.V. Gudici di petizion, b.482/147, n.4 (1787); see also Del Negro, "Amato," 230 and 241, note 74.

Pisani with whom he had an affair.[484] Although it is uncertain whether Girolamo entered the circle of Longhi's patrons through Marina, the Mocenigo family remained the artist's regular customers as eight of Longhi's canvases bequeathed in 1787 by Girolamo's brother and heir Alvise II Zuanne prove.[485]

Girolamo and Marina Sagredo Pisani must have also shared interests in exotic animals since the noblewoman ordered from Longhi in 1774 a portrait of herself in the presence of an Indian elephant, now in Palazzo Leoni Montanari. (Fig. 28). Marina, who is discussed in Chapter One, similarly to her mother and sister was a known *salonnière* in Venice. She owned a casino on Giudecca with a splendid garden which was attended by learned Venetians.[486] Marina's *Elephant,* in which the visitors are depicted inside a wooden booth admiring an exotic animal, recalls Longhi's rhinoceros paintings. As in the Ca' Rezzonico picture of Clara, the patron of *The Elephant* is indicated on the painted notice.[487] However, the composition of this picture differs from that of *The Rhinoceros.* The chained animal is displayed on the wooden stage. It is spatially separated from the beholders and from the painted group of onlookers who are pushed to the left-hand side of the painting. The only woman represented in the audience might be Marina

[484] Martina Frank, "The Venetian Casino: Form and Function," in *Looking for Leisure. Court Residences and their Satellites 1400-1700*, eds. Sylva Dobalova and Ivan P. Muchka (Prague: Artefactum, 2017), 231-251. The Mocenigo family of San Samuele branch owned a casino on Murano Island. As Frank informs us the casino served as the gate to a large garden. The casino consisted of four rooms, one used for service and three others decorated with illusionistic frescoes. The three rooms are dedicated to music, poetry and love, and the humanistic mythological program and *quadratura* design are derived from Villa Barbaro at Maser. Casanova recalls in his *Memoirs*, that he met in a ridotto Girolamo Mocenigo who was flirting with Marina Pisani while playing cards; see Casanova, chap.19 in *Memoirs*.
[485] A.S.V. Giudici di petizion, b.482/147, n.4 (1787).
[486] For the intellectual life of Marina Sagredo Pisani see Gabel, "Sisters Sagredo." For Marina's casino see Mazza, *I Sagredo*, 33. Marina also possessed a private library in her apartment with the Enlightenment texts. For the list of books in Marina's library see A.S.V. Giudici di petizion, b.463/128, n.98 (1776).
[487] For the note see Pignatti, *Longhi,* 85.

but she cannot be recognised since she wears a mask. A foreign-looking man who wears blue clothes and a fur hat returns our gaze.[488] He is perhaps one of the show employees dressed in an exotic fashion — you may recall Casanova's vivid description of showmen during his visit to Saint Germain fair mentioned earlier.[489] The two men in Marina's elephant picture who wear bauta attire seem to be more interested in other spectators than the animal. On the far left, an artist sketches the scene who likely stands for Longhi (Fig. 28).

The painting must have appealed to other members of the nobility since at least three other canvases depicting Longhi's patrons at the elephant exhibition exist. The names of the owners of these works can be identified thanks to illusionistic inscriptions that the artist included within them. Steven Ostrov has recently examined these paintings and researched the lives of their commissioners.[490] Two of the pictures belonged to members of the nobility from the Venetian territory: Andrea Dolfin Valier (1774, Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, Houston; Fig. 111) and Count Giuseppe di Porcia e Brugnera (1774, private collection, Padua; Fig. 112) whereas the third one was owned by Venetian doctor Sebastiano Rizzo (1774, private collection; Fig. 113). The compositions of all of the elephant paintings are very similar which suggest that Longhi used the same preparatory drawing for all of them. In each picture, on the right-hand side, a chained elephant stands in profile on the raised platform. Around the creature, we can see its hay and excrement. The animal is watched by a group of visitors which number varies in each

[488] In the painting (Fig. 28), a visible drawing of a man in a fur hat can be seen which suggests that Longhi has changed his position.
[489] See page 187 of this thesis and note 443.
[490] Steven Ostrow, "Pietro Longhi's Elephant: Public Spectacle and Marvel of Nature*," in A Golden Age of European Art,* eds. James Clifton and Melina Kervandjian (Houston: Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation, 2016), 81-99. Ostrov's chapter was extremely useful to me in identifying Longhi's patrons and their interests in natural history.

artwork. Also, in all of the paintings, we can see a showman dressed in a blue coat and a fur hat. Ostrov's analysis allowed him to establish that all of the patrons of Longhi who ordered from the artist paintings of the elephant were members of Venice's intellectual high society and they engaged in some way with the new science of natural history, popular at the time.[491] Andrea Dolfin Valier (Fig. 111), served several important political functions in the Republic, and was the Venetian ambassador in Paris and Vienna.[492] He was a progressive politician, a friend of Benjamin Franklin, and a cultured man greatly interested in arts and sciences which is indicated by a library filled with books, maps, and globes found in his house in San Pantalon area of Venice.[493] He also cultivated an impressive French garden with fish pond, labyrinth, botanical garden and cedar park in his country villa known as La Mincana in the province of Padova which further signifies that he was interested in the natural history.[494] Andrea's painting contains the largest number of onlookers: working class women in black oval moretta masks, a seller of apples (reminiscent of Longhi's early peasant scenes), Venetians in bauta, a member of the government in a wig and a black toga, and other elegantly dressed members of the public. We might suspect that the man who stands next to the animal's trunk and tugs his hands in the muff is the commissioner of the work — his noble status highlighted by the royal red of his clothes. The charlatan who stands with his back towards us and points

[491] Ibid.
[492] Andrea Dolfin was an ambassador in Paris (1780-85), a senator in 1786 and an ambassador in Vienna (1786-92). On his return to Venice, he entered the Council of Ten and he was many times elected as *savio* (1793, 1795, 1796). "Dolfin, Daniele Andrea," Treccani La Cultura Italiana: Dizionario Biografico, accessed April, 15 2020, http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/daniele-andrea-dolfin_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/.
[493] Ibid. See also Diego Mantoan and Otello Quaino eds. *Ca' Dolfin e i Cadolfiniani, Storia di un collegio universitario a Venezia* (Venice: Universita Ca' Foscari, 2014).
[494] "Villa Dolfin – Dal Martello detta La Mincana," Biblioteca Due Carrare, accessed April 15, 2020, http://www.bibliotecaduecarrare.net/index.php/villadalmartello/.

with his finger at the elephant recalls the operator of the mondo nuovo orchestrating his spectacle discussed in the previous chapter.

Count Giuseppe di Porcia e Brugnera, another owner of Longhi's *The Elephant* (Fig. 112) was raised by a famous writer Giovanni Artico.[495] His intellectual upbringing must have drawn him to the learnt circles of Venetian men of letters such as Francesco Scipione Maffei and Apostolo Zeno, redactors of the known literary periodical *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*.[496] Longhi included only three people in Giuseppe's painting: a showman, an artist sketching an animal (reminiscent of the painter in Marina Pisani's painting; Fig. 28), and a nobleman who has been identified as Longhi's patron.[497]

Surprisingly, the third painting from the series of the elephant pictures was not executed for a member of the nobility (typical patrons of Longhi), but a Paduan born man Sebastiano Rizzo who gained recognition in Venice as an obstetrician and who published several books regarding his medical discoveries (Fig. 113).[498] He had married Laura Patarol, a granddaughter of nobleman Lorenzo Patarol, a polymath and a collector interested in natural history. Lorenzo possessed a garden near the Madonna de'Orto church on the model of French botanist Tournefort, conducted etymological research, and

[495] See Ostrov, "Elephant," 86 and accompanying notes as well as "Porcia (di) Giovanni Artico," *Dizionario biografico dei Fruliani*, accessed April 15, 2020 http://www.dizionariobiograficodeifriulani.it/porcia-di-giovanni-artico/.
[496] Scipione Maffei published a dissertation on the rhinoceros he had seen in Verona. See Scipione Maffei, *Risposta ad alcuni dubbi proposti in Verona al sig. Marchese Scipione Maffei sopra il rinoceronte che si e' veduto in Venezia in quest'anno 1751* (Venice: Simone Occhi, 1751).
[497] Ostrov, "Elephant," 86.
[498] Ibid. In 1747, Rizzo received his doctorate in the Republic and in 1751 entered the city's College of Surgeons. In 1764 he became a professor of anatomy in Venice's Medical College and in 1776 he was appointed the head of the School of Obstetrics.

gathered a collection of fossils, stones and shells.[499] The garden was inherited by Sebastiano who must have shared the interests of his father in law.[500] In the canvas, the elegantly dressed man and woman depicted in profile might be Rizzo and his wife Laura although no document exists to confirm the couple's identity. Clearly, the elephant paintings, apart from acting as one of the many fashionable souvenirs commemorating the foreign animals' visit to the Republic, they also signalled their owners' noble status, education, and intellectual and cultural aspirations. They allowed their commissioners to be perceived in the public arena as seeking knowledge, looking towards the unknown, informing themselves about the latest discoveries, witnessing, collecting and cataloguing objects and phenomena from various cultures and places.

Despite Longhi's statement that the elephant is painted from life, the artist does not focus on the minute details of the animal's skin or anatomy as much as in *The Rhinoceros*. Steven F. Ostrov suggests that Longhi did not study his elephant from life but from print sources and by claiming that he painted a real animal, he simply responded to his patron's expectations which he validated by depicting himself in the pictures drawing the mammal.[501] However, Longhi's inclusion of the painter in his canvases as well as the trompe l'oeil paper notices could be also viewed as Longhi's assertation of his artistic status. Remember from Chapter One that the artist would often depict himself within noble circles as a part of his self-fashioning strategy. By incorporating an illusionistic piece of paper with his name on it, Longhi

[499] Lorenzo created a herbarium composed between 1717 and 1719, which is today kept at the Museum of Natural History, Venice. It lists more than 1,200 species of flowers and insects.
[500] See Ostrov, "Elephant," 86 and Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna, *Delle inscrizioni Veneziane*, vol 5 (Venice, Giuseppe Molinari, 1842), 11-122.
[501] Ostrov, "Elephant," 93-94.

aligned himself with the past Venetian masters such as Giovanni Bellini who would stress his authorship and creative skill by accompanying his paintings with *cartellini* bearing his name.[502] Even though we do not know for certain whether the man sketching the elephant represents Longhi, the artist clearly invites us to see the figure as a portrait of himself. By including a figure of a painter at work within his images wearing a typically noble attire, not only Longhi tries to assert himself in the public consciousness as a member of the city's elite but also he declares his artistic position; he promotes his skill of drawing from life and creative identity.

4.3 Physiognomy and anthropomorphism in eighteenth-century Venice: human and non-human beings in Longhi's works

Strikingly, in his elephant paintings, Longhi did not depict the animal in a naturalistic fashion but he conveyed its anthropomorphic features: the elephant has an intelligent almond-shaped eye and his facial almost smiley expression seems humanised. Such a depiction attests to the artist's interest in universal questions of likeness and representation in an era when physiognomic thought was an important topic of conversation, and is an evidence that such works were commissioned and consumed by individuals

[502] See for instance Giovanni Bellini's *Pietà* in Brera Gallery in Milan where the artist included an extensive *trompe l'oeil* notice with a Latin inscription in which he identifies himself as the artist and stresses his masterful naturalism. The note says "When these swollen eyes evoke sighs, this work by Giovanni Bellini could shed tears," quoted in Norman Land, "The Voice of Art in Giovanni Bellini's 'Pietà' in Milan, *History of Art 14*, no. 4 (1995): 16. Both in Longhi's and Bellini's paintings, the inscriptions speak of the artists in the third person so they do not seem overly proud.

who were well aware of these concepts. Zoomorphism (a study of physical or moral similarities between humans and animals) was experiencing a revival of interest in the eighteenth century thanks to the popularity of studies of physiognomy promoted by the Swiss pastor Johann Caspar Lavater in his widely-successful book, *Essays on physiognomy* (1775).[503] Lavater found the confirmation of his ideas in texts of earlier writers on physiognomy such as Italian scholar Giovanni Battista Della Porta. In his influential treatise *De humana physiognomia libri iiii* (1602), Della Porta used numerous engravings of animal physiognomies as explanations for human character types, which were reproduced in Lavater's book.[504] In one of his pictures, Della Porta drew a comparison between a rhino (Dürer's prototype) and a poet Angelo Poliziano who possesses rhino-like features such as an elongated nose (Fig. 114). According to Della Porta, Poliziano's critical nature and sharp temper would derive from the fact that he had a protruding nose.[505] The seventeenth-century French painter Charles Le Brun was another scholar who explored the relationship between humans and non-human animals, and whose anthropomorphic pictures also appeared in Lavater's *Essays*.[506] Le Brun presented his ideas regarding physiognomy during a series of lectures delivered at the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture in Paris between

[503] Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy*. By 1810, sixteen German, fifteen French, two American, one Dutch, one Italian, and no less than twenty English versions had been published – a total of fifty-five editions in less than forty years. In 1790, there were two major English translations of Lavater's *Essays on physiognomy*: Henry Hunter's translation which followed the French translation *Essai sur la physionomie* (1781-1803) and Thomas Holcroft's translation, based on J.M. Armbruster's abridgment (1783-87) of the first German Edition. I refer in my thesis to Holcroft's version.
[504] Giovanni Battista Della Porta, *De Humana Physiognomonia iiii* (Naples: Tarquinium Longum, 1602).
[505] Ibid., 73. See also Stephanie Leitch, "Dürer's Rhinoceros Underway: the Epistemology of the Copy in the Early Modern Print," in *The Primacy of the Image in Northern European Art, 1400-1700*, eds. Debra Cashion, Henry Luttikhuizen, and Ashley West (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 241-255.
[506] See Sarah R. Cohe, "Searching the animal psyche with Charles Le Brun" *Annals of Science* 67, no. 3 (2010): 353-382.

1668–1671.[507] The painter was particularly interested in the correlation between facial movements and passions. He explained in his lecture that "expression is a part that intimates the emotions of the Soul and renders visible the effects of passions ... commonly whatever causes Passions in the Soul, creates also some Action in the body."[508] Le Brun described emotions as emanating from the pineal gland in the centre of the brain — an idea derived from René Descartes who called the organ a "seat of the soul."[509] Crucially, in the sequel to his two-part lecture on expression, Le Brun focused on the relationship between human and animal physiognomies. The artist explored whether the animal character could be linked with their mind and whether it could be compared with human personality and faculties. These ideas were visualised in his drawings.[510] Many of them which feature naturalistic animal heads next to their human counterparts include the geometric analyses of the lines of their eyes, eyebrows, nose and mouth and demonstrate that the French artist looked for animals' "seat of soul" or in other words examined their consciousness and cognition. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the illustrations comparing humans and non-human animals circulated extensively in Europe. Della Porta's engravings enjoyed multiple translations from Latin into Italian, German, French and Spanish,

[507] More on this see Jennifer Montagu *The Expression of the Passions: Origin and Influence of Charles Le Brun's "Conference Sur L'Expression Generale Et Particuliere."* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) and Cohe, "Searching the animal psyche."
[508] Le Brun, *A method to learn to design the passions,* 12-13.
[509] René Descartes, *Passions of the Soul* (Paris: H. Legrass 1649).
[510] Charles Le Brun, a court painter to Louis XIV most likely observed various exotic animals in the king's famous menagerie at Versailles. Also, as Cohe writes, Le Brun based his drawings on Pieter Boel's studies of animals from life. Le Brun's original lecture is lost but his sketches have survived. There are over 250 of his drawings at the Louvre museum today; see Cohe, "Searching the animal psyche,"368-374.

resulting in twenty editions.[511] The prints of Della Porta and Le Brun would dominate any discussion of comparative studies of humans and non-human animals in drawing manuals and physiognomy studies until the end of the nineteenth century.[512]

The physiognomy was also of interest to vagabond showmen visiting Venice, especially fortune tellers — an aspect which has been carefully documented by Longhi in two of his many images of the city's mountebanks. In his *Fortune Teller* (c.1765–1770, private collection, Fig. 115), a charlatan who stands on a wooden stage under the arcades of the Palazzo Ducale holds a long tube close to his mouth through which he predicts the future to an onlooker's ear.[513] Next to him lies an open book on which pages we can identify a word *fisonom* and an image of a man's face (Fig. 116). In the painting of the same title now in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Longhi used a similar composition of a man in a hat holding a pipe to his ear through which he listens to the fortune teller (Fig. 117). Again, an open book lies by the mountebank's feet and it shows the physiognomy of a man (Fig. 118). Clearly, the comparative physiognomy was an important element in the itinerant diviners' repertoire. In fact, those charlatans who took advantage of the art of physiognomy were often called *physiognomators* or *fisnomiers.* Although they were extremely popular, they met with hostility from the church as their physiognomical skills were associated with magic bordering

[511] Alexander Todorov, *Face Value: The Irresistible Influence of First Impressions*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2017), 11.
[512] Ross Woodrow, "Drawing Physiognomy: The Complete Zoomorphic Archive," an essay supporting exhibition in the Gallery 25, Edith Cowan University, Perth, 4 April -16 May 2019, accessed April 14, 2020, https://www.rosswoodrow.com/zoomorphism.
[513] In 1991, the painting was sold to a private collector at an auction organised by Christie's in New York.

on heresy.[514] A printmaker Giovanni Volpato represented in his engraving from the series of the trades of the city known as *Le arti per via* (Venice of the Arts, c.1760-70), a scene comparable to Longhi's fortune tellers paintings, where a clairvoyant seated on a provisional stage reads the palm of a young woman (Fig. 119). He is surrounded by the attributes of his profession such as a long pipe similar to the one seen in Longhi's pictures, and an open book on physiognomy with a likeness of a goat juxtaposed with that of a man (Fig. 120), which exemplifies that physiognomy was often viewed in the context to the human – non-human animal relationship. In the eighteenth century, new sensibilities arose towards animals, plants and landscape. [515] The changes in the perception and classification of the natural world questioned the divide between humans and animals and revaluated animal rights and welfare. The novel ways of classification of different species were less anthropocentric and hierarchical and recognised a continuity in nature. Resemblance and similarities between the bodies and minds of humans and animals were increasingly noted, and non-human creatures were beginning sometimes to be understood as having feelings and cognitive functions as much as humans. The Cartesian view of an animal as the beast-machine which asserted that they had neither reason nor soul or feelings was increasingly challenged.[516]

[514] Ibid., 131-133.
[515] On this topic see for instance: Melissa Percival, *The appearance of character: physiognomy and facial expression in eighteenth-century France* (Leeds: W.S. Maney for the Modern Humanities Research Association, 1999); Flavio Caroli, *Il gran teatro del mondo. L'anima e il volto del Settecento* (Milan: Skira, 2003); Melissa Percival and Graeme Tytler, *Physiognomy in profile: Lavater's impact on European culture* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005); Martin Porter, *Windows of the soul: Physiognomy in European culture 1470-1780* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Frank Palmeri, *Humans and Other Animals in Eighteenth-Century British Culture: Representation, Hybridity, Ethics* (Aldershot and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2006); Nathaniel Wolloch, *The Enlightenment's Animals: Changing Conceptions of Animals in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019).
[516]For the eighteenth-century writers who disagreed with the beast-machine theory see Voltaire, "Dictionnaire philosophique," in *The Complete Works of Voltaire,* eds. Christiane Mervaud et al.

The question of the human-animal boundary was discussed widely in the visual arts and literature of the period.[517] While the physiognomic treatises would be accessible and read only by a small number of scholars, the introduction of the theme of anthropomorphism in popular literature and print culture made it available to a larger part of society in a more approachable and entertaining way, at the same time alleviating the general anxiety related to similarities between humans and animals. Whereas in 1668 in *Fables* by Jean de La Fontaine, animals stood in for humans in moralising tales, in 1726 in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* readers could encounter bestial human-animal hybrid creatures: Yahoos, which were contrasted with rational horses: Houyhnhnms.[518] Fairy-tales with anthropomorphic characters such as Swift's *Gulliver* addressing the theme of animal-human relationships were extremely popular in Italy.[519] Particularly in Venice, Swift's French translations circulated very early as confirmed by Venetian poet Antonio Conti in his letter addressed to Madame de Caylus, and by the catalogues of bookshops and the libraries of rich patricians.[520] *Gulliver's Travels* and its Italian

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(Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1994), vol. 1, 411–15 and his "Dialogue between the Cock and the Hen," trans. Haydn and Adrienne Mason, *Comparative Criticism* 20 (1998): 183–87; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discours sur l'origine et les fondemens de l'inégalité parmi les hommes,"in *Oeuvres complètes*, eds. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1959–1969), vol.3, 126.

[517] See Nathaniel Wolloch, "Animals in Enlightenment Historiography," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 75, no. 1 (2012): 53-68; Laura Brown, *Homeless Dogs & Melancholy Apes: Humans and Other Animals in the Modern Literary Imagination* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2010).

[518] See Jean de La Fontaine, *The Complete Fables*, trans. Norman R. Shapiro (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007), first published 1668; Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver Travels* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Incorporated, 1986), first published 1726.

[519] Flavio Gregori, "The Italian Reception of Swift," in *The Reception of Jonathan Swift in Europe*, ed. Hermann J. Real (New York: Thoemmes,2005), 17-56.

[520] See Antonio Conti, "Lettere da Venezia a Madame La Comtesse de Caylus (1727-29). Con un discorso sullo stato della Francia," in *Fondazione Giorgio Cini. Linea veneta* vol.17, ed. Sylvie Mamy (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 2003), 166. In the letter addressed to Madame de Caylus, Paris, dated December 13, 1727, Conti informs the lady that he has just finished reading *Gulliver's Travels* and that he enjoyed "the invention of the little men" (the Lilliputians) and "the reasonable horses," while he disliked what is said of Homer (in the Glubbdubdrib episode; III, viii), English trans. in Gregori, "The Italian Reception," 18-19. Flavio Gregori informs us that

counterpart Zaccaria Seriman's *Viaggi Di Enrico Wanton: Alle Terre Incognite Australi, Ed Ai Regni Delle Scimie, E De' Cinocefali* (Travels of Henry Wanton to the undiscovered Austral regions and the Kingdom of the Apes and of the Cynocephali, 1749), featured for instance in the library catalogue of Longhi's patron Caterina Sagredo Barbarigo.[521] The first Italian translation of *Gulliver's Travels* appeared in Venice as early as 1729.[522] The book proved to be very popular as it was reprinted two years later by the very powerful and influential Venetian printer Sebastiano Coleti.[523] Many Italian writers became inspired by Swift's *Gulliver* for instance the aforementioned Zaccaria Seriman whose Italian Gulliver is divided into two parts.[524] The first part (books I and II) takes place in the land of monkeys in the Antipodes, which is being discovered and experienced by the main character Henry, a young Englishman, and his companion Robert. Part two (books III and IV) discusses the Empire of the dog-headed men where Henry turns up after he has been cast adrift by the authorities from the Kingdom of the Apes. There is no doubt that Seriman's book was a reaction to the tensions surrounding the questions about the intelligence and consciousness of animals and their resemblance to humans omnipresent at the time. As an example, the principle book Enrico and Robert consult and discuss during their time as castaways

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the Venetian bookshops of *Recanti* and *Amadeo Svajer* possessed Swift's early editions and the library of the British consul and book collector, Joseph Smith, which was much frequented by the members of the patriciate and by men of letters, contained several of Swift's works in English (*Bibliotheca Smithiana seu Catalogus Librorum D. Josephi Smithii Angli*, Venezia: Pasquali, 1755).

[521] B.C.V. Mss. P.D. c.2750bis/3 (1759). *Viaggi L'Enrico Wanton* and *Viaggi di Gullivier* feature in the catalogue under the category "favolosi" - fairy tales.

[522] *I Viaggi del Cap. Lemuel Gulliver in diversi Paesi lontani*, trans. Zannino Marsecco (Venice: Giuseppe Corona, 1729). For the detailed analysis of Italian translation see Alice Colombo, "Reworkings in the textual history of Gulliver's Travels: a translational approach," chap. 3 (Phd diss., University of Portsmouth, 2013), 59-146.

[523] Ibid., 81.

[524] Zaccaria Sermina, *Viaggi Di Enrico Wanton: Alle Terre Incognite Australi, Ed Ai Regni Delle Scimie, E De' Cinocefali* (Venice: Giovanni Targier, 1749). In this chapter I quote second expanded edition (Berne: 1764).

are *Essays* by sixteenth-century philosopher Michel Montaigne which emphasised similarities between humans and animals and compared their psychological states. The book was often quoted by contemporary proponents of anthropomorphism and theriophily (the inversion of human and animal traits and the argument that animals are in some way superior to men).[525]

Longhi's pictures of exotic animals highlight the tensions with regards to human and non-human animal relationship discussed in Venice at the time. The painter plays with the conceptions of "the animal" as being "like" versus being "different" to human beings. The female rhino depicted by the artist, which was known for being raised like a human was a particularly viable subject to comment on current debates regarding human-animal relations. Brought up by a man, Clara was calm towards humans. She spent her first two years at Jan Albert Sichtermann's (the director of the Dutch East India Company) estate at the Assam region of India where she was allowed to roam freely and eat from a dinner plate.[526] Over the years, anecdotes about the almost human-like treatment of the animal spread. She had a particular diet that apart from hay and water, also consisted of oranges, beer, wine, and tobacco smoke.[527] Her skin required special moisturizers and she travelled in her custom-made carriage.[528] In 1748, she was even given the female name Miss Clara that everybody knew her by.[529] The animal's individual treatment and her sagacity raised questions about the idea of human uniqueness. If this

[525] Seriman, *Viaggi*, vol. 1, chap. 7, 92. See also Suzanne Kiernan, "The Exotic and the Normative in Viaggi di Enrico Wanton alle terre australi incognite by Zaccaria Seriman," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 26 (2002): 58-77 and Michel de Montaigne, *Essais* (Paris: Abel Langerier, 1588).
[526] Ridley, *Clara's Grand Tour*, 1-2.
[527] Clarke, "The 'Dutch' Rhinoceros," 58. In the archive of Biblioteka Jagiellonska in Krakow, there is a print depicting a man offering a drink to Clara and saying: "Clar do you want a sip?" which draws upon the knowledge that Clara's favourite drinks were beer and wine.
[528] Ridley, *Clara's Grand Tour,* 10; 43-48.
[529] Bremer-David, "Animal Lovers," 94.

creature seemed so civilised, then what, exactly, was distinctive about humanity?

Longhi plays upon similarities between Clara and human beings. The black capes of the spectators in his rhinoceros paintings resemble the creases of the animal's skin. The close proximity in Ca' Rezzonico picture between a boy smoking tobacco and Clara (who was actually known for her love of tobacco smoke) eating hay suggests basic human appetites which are compared with the animal's (Fig. 96). The rhinoceros which eats and defecates undisturbed by the presence of the onlookers seems the most lifelike — most human — of all the characters depicted in the painting. Clara is represented as if she deserves the same degree of attention as human beings. She occupies half of the canvas and the composition of the painting encourages our eye to constantly move between the animal and the spectators which confuses us and forces to question who the main subject of the work is — the rhinoceros or the people? By extending the wooden enclosure towards the beholder, Longhi undermines the human and non-human animal boundary. We are with Clara, in her pen, which seems questionable, even vulnerable to elision: is it there to keep the (docile) animal and/or keep the humans out? The showman tries to maintain the boundary vigilantly presumably in the face of its potential incursion by visitors but also perhaps the potential collapse of a vulnerable epistemological boundary between human and non-human, between "culture" and "nature." Crucially, Longhi's rhinoceros pictures also seem to play upon the tensions between double meaning of the animal's name. Clara derives from Latin *clarus* which implies

clarity, light, and knowledge as well as fame, celebrity, and illustriousness.[530] What knowledge does she help to produce in Longhi's images? What about her is the cause of her fame? The answers seem unclear and lead us to look towards her onlookers as sites where knowledge and fame are actually produced. Also, Longhi's elephant is juxtaposed with human viewers. In all of the elephant pictures, the vicinity of the spectators to the animal encourages us to draw parallels between them. The straps with metal buckles around the mammal's legs resemble the shoes of the nobility with their gold clasps. Also, the protruding angular white larva masks worn by some visitors echo the shape of elephant's ivory tusks whereas the shape and creases of its ears mirror the Venetians' hats and folds on their clothes.

4.4 Clara and Caterina — femininity as a masquerade

Longhi's pictures of exotic animals also highlight how human – non-human animal relationship could have wider resonance and be used to represent and redress the injustice between humans as well as between humans and animals. The Ca' Rezzonico *Rhinoceros* demonstrates how the inclusion of the animal in the painting can force a different reading not only of a picture but also of society. Clara's condition could be compared with the situation of women in Venice. We can notice several affinities between the woman in the centre of the composition wearing bauta attire and the female rhinoceros. Like the animal, the woman is on display and she is judged solemnly by her

[530] "Clarity," Online Etymology Dictionary, accessed April 15, 2020, https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=clarity.

appearance — she is a desired possession. [531] Even her black cape mirrors the folds of rhinoceros' skin. At the same time, Longhi's "naked" animal contrasts greatly with covered from head to toe noblewoman as if Clara has nothing to hide as opposed to human beings who disguise their true characters under capes, masks, and layers of makeup. One of the women in the painting is wearing a black moretta mask, which as described in the previous chapter was worn by women only, and prevented them from speaking. The women are therefore rendered dumb in the painting, as mute as the rhino. Significantly, some scholars draw a comparison between the femininity of eighteenth-century women and a mask. For instance, according to Rebbeca Messbarger, femininity is a socially constructed mask of:

> … sexual difference that mediates women's self-representation and establishes the rules and boundaries that control their engagement with and reception by the world … The mask of femininity marks women as non-subjects, as objects meant to satisfy the needs of the dominant culture and whose subordination will sustain the subject position of men.[532]

Messbarger explains that in the Republic of Venice, femininity took the form of an illusory façade — a masquerade — that dissembled women's real identity. Women were allowed to take part in the leisure activities of the Serenissima as long as they delighted the eyes of male citizens and remained obedient. From one side, in this way, the state gave women a sense of social

[531] A similar point is raised by Ridley, *Clara's Grand Tour*.
[532] Messbarger, *The Century,* 129-132.

inclusion, on the other side, the emphasis on women's appearances rather than actions confirmed their subordinated position in Venetian society. Culturally constructed femininity silenced women and prevented them from being individuals. Women in Longhi's paintings like Clara are in captivity. The female aristocrat in the centre of the composition is "boxed in" by the surrounding men.[533] In a similar way, a man controls the access to Clara. Although the woman is not wearing a physical mask, her face covered with layers of thick white paint resembles one — her complexion matches the colour of the larva (a white mask) worn by a man to her right. We are surprised by the flatness, smoothness, uniformity of her white skin which contrasts with the rosy cheeks of the man in a blue coat. There is no intention on Longhi's part to depict the skin's natural properties: its blemishes, transparency and the facial bone structure. Such a representation of skin is particularly striking during the Enlightenment when with the emergence of theories of physiognomy and pathognomy, the face was seen as a reflection of one's inner qualities. The woman's appearance mirrors the hermeticism of the artist's painting with no windows or doors, only walls that contain the sitter.[534] It is a socially prescribed mask — "a ready-made identity" which invites the woman to *perform* a certain role in society rather than show her true nature. [535] The performative nature of Venetian existence is central to Longhi's paintings. The artist ironises and plays upon performance in his

[533] In Longhi's *Rhinoceros* executed for Girolamo Mocenigo (see Fig. 110), the eyes of both men standing next to the woman in the centre of the composition are fixed on her rather than on the animal.
[534] More on the representation and meaning of skin in eighteenth-century painting see Mechthild Fend, "Bodily and Pictorial Surfaces: Skin in French Art and Medicine, 1790-1860," *Art History* 28, no 3 (June 2005): 311-339; Angela Rosenthal, "Visceral Culture: Blushing and the Legibility of Whiteness in Eighteenth-Century British Portraiture," *Art History* 27, no. 4 (September 2004):563-592; Melissa Hyde, "The 'Makeup' of the Marquise: Boucher's Portrait of Pompadour at Her Toilette," *The Art Bulletin* 82, no. 3 (2000): 453-75.
[535] Messbarger, *The Century*, 130.

pictures of exotic animals. Neither the elephant nor the rhinoceros are shown performing. They are doing nothing other than being themselves: eating and defecating. Their calm and natural stance contrasts greatly with the stiff postures and emotionless faces of Venetians covered by masks. One is inclined to ask who is the actual performer here?

In Longhi's Ca' Rezzonico *Rhinoceros*, it is not Clara who is on display but the woman in the middle of the composition who has been often identified as the commissioner's wife Caterina Contarini whom he had recently married (1750).[536] Even though we cannot be sure that Longhi depicted the likeness of this noblewoman, this painting should be read in the context of Caterina and Giovanni's recent marriage. The union between the two was very important to their noble families because by joining these two ancient houses, it preserved the tradition in the face of competition from new nobles. What is more, the marriage between Caterina and Giovanni could save the longevity of the Grimani name (Giovanni was the last member of the family line).[537] The marriage ceremony was one of several events in Venice that promoted patrician identity and was particularly strong in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the newly ennobled families tried to establish themselves within conservative society. As Patricia H. Labalme and Laura

[536] Piero del Negro, "Amato," eds. Adriano Mariuz et al., 237. According to Del Negro, the likeness of Caterina is not only depicted in *The Rhinoceros* but also in Longhi's *The Family Concert* (1752) and *The Fortune Teller* (1752) both in Ca' Rezzonico, see http://www.archiviodellacomunicazione.it/sicap/lista/tbl:OA/any:concertino%20in%20famiglia/?WEB=MuseiVE and Fig. 62. The Zani Foundation in Brescia owns a painting identified as *The Reception Before the Wedding* (c.1750) of Caterina Contarini and Giovanni Grimani. The art gallery Stair Sainty in London which used to own the work informs on their website that the likeness of the bride is very similar to the noble woman in Longhi's *Visit from a Friar* painting which used to be in the Grimani Collection (now in the Ca' Rezzonico); see http://arte.cini.it/Opere/461750 and http://www.stairsainty.com/artwork/the-reception-before-a-wedding-148/.

[537] Carlo Lucio Pollini, "Dai Grimani ai Gatterburg – Morosini," in *Botti Barbarighe: Cenni Storici* (Chioggia: La Nuova Scintilla, n.d.), 17-18, accessed May 14, 2020, http://www.cavarzereinfiera.it/Bibliografia/BottiBarbarigheCenniStorici/004DaiGrimaniaiGatterburg-Morosini.pdf.

Sanguineti White inform us "the process of joining two families … involved choreography of events and a level of display in rituals more public than private in import: the lavish style of entertainment paralleled civic rituals in arguing the power of the Venetian city-state."[538] The occasions such as marriage but also more mundane activities such as the visits to the theatre, *ridotto* (gambling house), exhibition of exotic animals, just to name few functioned as a platform for the Venetian nobility to display themselves in order to stress their distinctive lineage. Thus, I would like to advance an idea that Longhi's Ca' Rezzonico picture of the rhinoceros exhibition, produced not long after its commissioner's wedding, could have allowed Grimani to manifest his marriage and possession of a young wife. Crucially, Carlo Goldoni in the poem celebrating Caterina and Giovanni's marriage known as *Componimenti poetici per la felicissima nozze di Giovanni Grimani e la Signora Catterina Contarini* (lit. Poetic compositions for the joyful wedding of Giovanni Grimani and Miss Caterina Contarini) writes that both him and Longhi share a task to celebrate the "glories and name" of Giovanni.[539] In the sonnet, the playwright also refers to Longhi's truthful representation of Giovanni: "you depict Giovanni's arching brow shooting the dart of love at his beloved" which suggests that Goldoni knew of or had even seen the artist's painting produced for the couple to commemorate their wedding.[540] Also, in the poem, Goldoni describes seventeen-year-old Caterina as

[538] Marin Sanudo, Patricia H. Labalme, Laura Sanguineti White and Linda Carroll, "How to (and How Not To) Get Married in Sixteenth-Century Venice (Selections from the Diaries of Marin Sanudo)," *Renaissance Quarterly* 52, no. 1 (1999): 43.
[539] Carlo Goldoni, *Componimenti poetici per le felicissime nozze di Sue Eccellenze il Signor Giovanni Grimani e la Signora Catterina Contarini*, (Venezia: Carlo Pecora, 1750), trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 58.
[540] Ibid.

"illustrious virgin with a beautiful and sweet face and noble comportment."[541] The prominent presence of the rhinoceros' horn in the painting, symbolising power and sexual prowess in eighteenth-century culture, might allude to Grimani's sexual potency and his aim to produce an heir. Venetian men prioritized women's bodies over their actions because of their reproductive functions. Maggie Günsberg suggests that:

> Female sexuality within patriarchy functioned as an arena for male bonding and competition for the possession of socioeconomic power, particularly in the context of the formation of patrilineal next generation families in which patrimony is inherited through the male line.[542]

Günsberg argues the Venetian patriarchal state turned the female bodies into commodities in the marriage business.[543] Giovanni must have been particularly fixated on the need for a male heir since he was the only member of the Grimani dei Servi family upon whom rested the duty to prolong its line.[544] Like Clara, Caterina is on display. The focus is on her appearance and reproductive role within a patrilinear system, which reduces her to an object of the male gaze.

[541] Ibid.
[542] Günsberg, *Playing with Gender*, 159.
[543] Ibid., 165.
[544] Giovanni had only one daughter from his marriage with Caterina, Loredana who married in 1772 Francesco Morosini di Santo Stefano. Upon her death on June 23,1828 died the Grimani dei Servi line. See Pollini, "Dai Grimani ai Gatterburg – Morosini."

4.4. Longhi's paintings of "the characters and passions of men" — theatre, amusing games and the serious business of reading noble signs

Longhi's focus on the performance in *The Rhinoceros* and the way in which people in Venice displayed themselves and allowed themselves to be looked at suggest that the theatre could have influenced the painter. The theatre took an important place in Venice. At the end of the Republic, there were seven theatres in the city.[545] Many patricians in fact owned them in Venice. Longhi's patron the Grimani dei Servi who commissioned his *Rhinoceros* canvas was dominant in this area, possessing four playhouses: San Samuele, SS. Giovanni e Paolo, San Giovanni Grisostomo and San Benedetto, where the playwright Goldoni would serve as director (1737–41).[546]Although the impact of the theatre on the artistic practice of Venetian painters such as Veronese, Tintoretto, Canaletto, Sebastiano and Marco Ricci, and Giambattista Tiepolo has been discussed widely, Longhi's engagement with the theatre is rarely considered in a great depth.[547] Many of Longhi's works resemble stage performances. Their hermetic spaces (lack of windows, adjoining walls, sky), artificial light, a flat backdrop wall, use of curtains, a

[545] Francesco Milizia, *Trattato completo, formale e materiale del teatro* (Venice: Pasquali, 1794), 78.
[546] Maria Galli Stampino, "Family, City, or State, and Theater: Carlo Gozzi and the Rhetoric of Conservatism," in *Rhetoric and Drama*, ed. D.S. Mayfield (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2017), 98; Piermario Vescovo, "Carlo Goldoni, playwright and reformer," in *A History of Italian Theatre*, 162-163. Michele Grimani, the owner of Grisostomo Theatre supported Goldoni in his new approach to the theatre by including prose plays of the playwright in his theatre repertoire.
[547] See Christiansen, "Tiepolo, Theater," 665-692; Rosie Razzall, "Opera and the Theatre," in *Canaletto*, 114-125. Two important but outdated contributions on Longhi's engagement with theatre include Michael L. Quinn, "The Comedy of Reference: The Semiotics of Commedia Figures in Eighteenth-Century Venice," *Theatre Journal* 43, no. 1 (1991): 70-92 and Philip L. Sohm, "Pietro Longhi and Carlo Goldoni: Relations between Painting and Theater," *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 45, no. 3 (1982): 256-73.

viewing platform, clearly evoke a sense of theatricality. However, it is not only the composition of Longhi's painting that is reminiscent of stage performances, but also the subject matter and the performative nature of his sitters, who become the spectacle. Venetian street-life was very theatrical in its nature and was a crucial element of the nobility's display of wealth and status. The use of masks in daily life added a sense of theatricality to Venetian existence. Even a simple walk around St. Mark's Square functioned like a spectacle where one became an observer and the observed at the same time.[548] Recall from Chapter Three, the analogy which was drawn between the Piazzetta di San Marco and a show or a stage. The stroll as Giovanna Del Negro writes was not only an event but a "performance" — a manifestation of townsfolks' views. "In this lively atmosphere," Del Negro explains, "complex greetings, glances, gestures, and conversations intertwine to create a richly textured and highly aesthetic canvas of meanings."[549] The nuanced and carefully choreographed elements of social exchange in Venice are at the heart of Longhi's paintings.

Goldoni on at least two occasions eulogised Longhi's works and drew affinity between his theatrical performances and the painter's pictures. In the sonnet celebrating the Grimani's marriage mentioned above, the dramatist addressed the artist writing "Longhi, you call my comic muse, the sister to your brush which seeks the truth..."[550] Significantly, in the dedication for *Il frappatore* to Marco Pitteri, Goldoni praised Longhi's ability to convey

[548] See for instance Pietro Antonio Pacifico, "I trattenimenti piacevoli della citta di Venezia," in *Cronaca veneta sacra e profana o sia un Compendio di tutte le cose più illustri ed antiche della città di Venezia* (Venice: Francesco Tossi, 1793), 354-355.
[549] Giovanna P. Del Negro, *The Passeggiata and Popular Culture in an Italian Town: Folklore and the Performance of Modernity* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 16.
[550] Goldoni, *Componimenti*.

"men's characters and passions."[551] The eighteenth century increased interest in physiognomy meant that people paid particular attention to how emotions, usually referred to as *passions*, were reflected in our outer appearance, particularly in the face.[552] The nuances of human comportment especially the facial expression were key to Goldoni 's theatrical plays. The playwright abandoned masked characters from his comedies both literally and in a metaphorical sense. He still used the character names in his plays, but he "gave" them human faces, able to change their expressions and have subtle reactions to one another.[553] Goldoni aimed to discredit the social masking by often dramatising the lives, values, and conflicts of his protagonists which clearly mirrored Venetian society. For Longhi, the answer to masking was similar; he found ways to push masks aside; to expose the theatricality of Venetian life. Like Goldoni, the artist focused on the subtle gestures, exchange of glances and he unmasked human vices and follies with light irony and humour. Contemporaries notice that both Goldoni's and Longhi's viewers recognised themselves in their works which was often met with growing appreciation and led to their popularity.[554] Both Goldoni's plays and

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[551] Carlo Goldoni, *Le commedie, corrette, rivedute, ed. Ampliate* (Venice: Stamperia Gavelliana, 1757), 351; trans. Pignatti, *Longhi,* 59-60.

[552]Many early modern authors of physiognomic texts discuss "passions": Nicolas Coeffeteau, *Tableau des Passions humaines, de leurs Causes et de leurs Effets* (1620), Jean-Francois Senault, *De I'Usage des Passions* (1641), Marin Cureau de La Chambre, *Les Caracteres des Passions* (1640-1662), Charles Le Brun, *Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les passions* (1698) which was influenced by René Descartes' *Traité des Passions* (1649). For more information on this topic see for instance Eugenio Refini, "Bodily Passions: Physiognomy and Drama in Giovan Battista Della Porta," *Renaissance and Reformation* 40, no.1 (2017): 121-39; Montagu *The Expression of the Passions*; Shearer West, "Polemic and the Passions: Dr James Parsons' Human Physiognomy Explained and Hogarth's Aspiration for British History Painting," *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies* 13, no.1 (1990): 73-89; Stephanie Ross, *"*Painting the Passions: Charles LeBrun's Conference on Expression," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 45, no.1 (1984): 25-47.

[553] Quinn, "The Comedy."

[554] See Carlo Goldoni, "La Bottega del Caffè," in *Tutte le Opere*, ed. Giuseppe Ortolani (Milan: Mondadori Arnoldo, 1936) III, 5.Goldoni in the preface to his comedy *La Bottega del Caffè* claims "This comedy has such universal characters that in every place where it was staged

Longhi's paintings could be enjoyed within the privacy of their houses during literary and musical events. Intriguingly, in Carlo Goldoni's house, now a museum in Venice, an impressive marionette theatre is displayed which used to belong to the Grimani family (Fig. 121).[555] Such objects would be often used as a private entertainment — a domestic substitute in place of the events of public theatres. It embodied a sort of "chamber theatre" in opposition and as an alternative to the theatre in the square in which puppet shows were represented.[556]

Seeing the nobility's fascination with a theatre, it is not surprising that Longhi chose to emulate Goldoni's plays as a way to appeal to his patrons. Also, it is probably not accidental that the eighteenth-year old son of the artist executed an etching based on the father's *The Rhinoceros* painting with a reference to commedia dell'arte (Fig. 122). Many of the compositional elements from the original picture are retained, however the son introduced some alterations. Clara faces to the left rather than to the right. Also, one of the figures that stands very closely to the animal has been added to the print. The man with a protruding belly wearing a tall hat and a long nose resembling a beak clearly represents the foolish and buffoonish character from the commedia dell'arte — Pulcinella.[557] Pulcinella would be often used to mock and deride society hence would be easily understood by the contemporary audience. Many Italian artists of the period such as

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people thought that it had been inspired by known originals (my own trans.). Orlandi in his *Abecedario*, 427 writes that Longhi painted "…with such veracity and colour that at a glance it was easy to recognise the places and people portrayed"; trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 58,

[555] "Carlo Goldoni's House," Fondazione Musei Civici Venezia, accessed April 14, 2020, https://carlogoldoni.visitmuve.it/en/il-museo/percorsi-e-collezioni/the-puppet-theatre/.

[556] Ibid.

[557] Erika Esau, "Tiepolo and Punchinello: Venice, Magic and Commedia dell'arte," *Australian Journal of Art* 9 (1991): 41-58.

Giambattista Tiepolo, his son Giovanni Domenico, and Pier Leone Ghezzi used Pulcinella in their works as a tool for social satire.[558] Italian Punch can also be seen in Pietro Longhi's puppet booths of mountebanks.[559] Alessandro Longhi's Pulcinella stares at the rhino, his true expression cannot be read as it is covered with a mask. He looks ridiculous and pathetic standing next to the indifferent Clara and her excrements. The painting forces us to reflect on who constitutes the entertainment here Clara or Pulcinella who echoes the other masked viewers? Also, the grotesque long nose and hat of Pulcinella mimic the animal's horn and would be associated by the Venetian audiences with a phallus.

The inclusion of the commedia character — a figure so rich in satirical connotations — in the print after Longhi's *Rhinoceros* indicate that Longhi's images of popular entertainment including shows of exotic animals had a humorous or ironic element to them. Longhi's contemporaries often mentioned that the artist's paintings pleased the nobility with their humour. The artist's son Alessandro in his *Compendio…* (Compendium…, 1762) stated that Longhi's works "… gave great pleasure …" and "[he was] applauded and loved by all the Venetian nobility."[560] Luigi Lanzi in his *Storia pittorica dell'Italia …* (History of Painting in Italy…, 1795–1796) wrote that Longhi "…give[s] pleasure with those whimsical paintings of masquerades, conversations, and landscapes which are to be seen in noble houses," and Gasparo Gozzi in the *L'Osservatore Veneto* (Venetian Observer, 1761)

[558] See for instance Giovanni Battista Tiepolo's *Scherzi di fantasia* prints, Domenico Tiepolo's frescoes from the Villa Tiepolo at Zianigo, now in Ca' Rezzonico and Pier Leone Ghezzi's caricatural print with Pulcinella teaching children to read in a barn (British Museum).
[559] See for instance Longhi's painting *The Quack* (Fig.127) in Ca' Rezzonico, Venice or *Il casotto del Borgogna* in Palazzo Leoni Montanari, Vicenza, https://www.gallerieditalia.com/it/opere/pietro-falca-il-casotto-del-borgogna/.
[560] Longhi, *Compendio;* trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.

pointed out that "Longhi introduce[s] into his scenes certain sentiments which evoke a genial good humour."[561] Significantly, Pietro Gradenigo called Longhi's paintings "speaking caricatures."[562] The art of caricature gained widespread attention in Europe in the eighteenth century and it often built upon theories of physiognomy.[563] Many contemporaries of Longhi such as Anton Maria Zanetti, Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, and Pier Leone Ghezzi experimented with this form of art. Ghezzi's investigation of human expression can be seen in his self-portrait, where the artist is shown sketching while consulting a picture with anatomical details of a human's face (1747; Fig. 123). Contemporary people were familiar with the idea of being able to "read" a person's character by the way they looked. The exaggeration and distortion of caricature played upon this visual language, suggesting the faults and virtues of their subjects.

The obsession with Clara that overtook Europe during her visit lent itself to satire as evident in Alessandro Longhi's print. I have already mentioned the theatrical, almost absurd entrance of the adorned beast to various cities. Apart from that, the rhinoceros featured heavily in interiors in the form of furniture, clocks, textiles, porcelain, and paintings and even inspired fashion — dresses and coiffures *à la rhinocéros* were worn by women — the aspects of the rhino-mania that the caricaturists capitalised on and ridiculed.[564] For instance French poet Jean-Baptiste Guiard de Servigné, published under the

[561] Lanzi, Storia *pittorica,* 218-19; trans. Pignatti, *Longhi,* 60. Gaspare Gozzi, *L'Osservatore Veneto* (Venice, 14 Febuary 1761), 28; trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.
[562] Pietro Gradenigo, *Notizie d'arte tratte dai notatori e dagli annali del N.H. Pietro Gradenigo* (September 3, 1760), ed. Lina Livan (Venice: La Reale Deputazione, 1942), 62; trans. Pignatti, *Longhi*, 60.
[563] Edward J. Olszewski, "The New World of Pier Leone Ghezzi," *Art Journal* 43, no.4 (1983): 325-330.
[564] Clarke, "The Rhinoceros in the Applied Arts," in *The Rhinoceros*, 80-137; Bremer-David, "Animal Lover," 101.

pseudonym *Mademoiselle* a satirical poem *Le Rhinocéros* (1750), which explored the relationship between the animal, its horn and the sexual desire. Servigné's poem tells a story of a cuckold who in his nightmare induced by his wife's adultery, imagines himself as an erotic rhinoceros.[565] The poem's frontispiece features the husband who has a rhinoceros head as well as a life-size model of an animal in which the main character's wife would bring home her lovers (Fig. 124).[566] Above them, a jester and puppets hold a banner with an inscription *Le Rhinocéros. Tragédie du Temps* hinting at the theatrical nature of rhino-mania. Servigné's poem with its hybrid creature (rhino-human) should be read within the contemporary debate on human – non-human animal relation. Many artists and writers used the question of human-animal boundary a as a device for satirical ends. For instance, Thomas Rowlandson sketched a comparison between a rhino and a woman shown in profile (Fig. 125) which clearly demonstrates an inspiration with the popular at the time illustrations accompanying physiognomic texts such as Lavater's *Essays*.[567]

In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, physiognomy and its association with caricature were taken up by wealthy elites as a

[565] Jean-Baptiste Guiard de Servigné, *E Rhinoceros: Poeme En Prose Divise En Six Chants: Par Melle. de* *** (Gale Ncco: 2017); first published 1750.
[566] T.H. Clarke, "The 'Dutch' Rhinoceros," 58 sees the model of the rhinoceros described in Servigné's poem in which the wife would bring her lovers as an allusion to the Trojan Horse. Ridley, *Clara's Grand Tour*, 146 suggests another myth of the Cretan queen Pasiphae who asked Daedalus to build her an animate, wooden cow wrapped in bovine-skin. Hidden inside the contraption she coupled with the bull and conceived a Minotaur.
[567] Thomas Rowlandson drew the rhino owned by Gilbert Pidcock exhibited in the Exeter Change, London. The drawing comes from Rowlandson's sketchbook of "Rowlandson's Sketches on Comparative Anatomy/Resemblances between the Countenances of men and beasts" completed between 1822 and 1827. It has been most certainly influenced by the physiognomist Johann Caspar Lavater's popular book at the time.

parlour game and a form of private amusement.[568] Lavater's book underlined the playful quality of physiognomy. It launched a craze for silhouettes (shadow-portraits) and miniaturised versions of his theory were printed on playing cards that could be carried out and consulted everywhere.[569] Another parlour game based on physiognomy was *physionotrace*. It was a small portrait game with sheets of various facial features and costumes from which one could assemble different faces, which would provoke very humorous effects (Fig. 126).[570] The playfulness of physiognomy in the period explains why the interpretation of Longhi's small-scale paintings with their nuances of physiognomic variations were treated as a private pastime among Venetian nobility. Drawn close to the surfaces of small and ambiguous works to decode and discuss their numerous details, patricians could amuse themselves in the exclusive spaces of their palaces.

There was a serious side to this social game of interpretation, however, which concerned an increasing need for scrutiny for signs of noble status. As discussed in Chapter One, the constant need amongst the Venetian aristocrats to manifest their noble ancestry was a result of social tensions present in the Republic. Conduct books and manuals such as Baldassare Castiglione's *Il libro del cortigiano* (The Book of the Courtier; 1528) popular since the sixteenth century, proved that "those who were not noble or were newly ennobled could learn the art of pleasing at the court or the Great Council with

[568] "The Rise of Caricature," National Portrait Gallery, London, 2006, accessed May 14, 2020, http://www.npg.org.uk/whatson/display/2006/pulling-faces/the-rise-of-caricature.php .
[569] Shearer West, *Portraiture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 32-34; Joanna Finkelstein, *The Fashioned Self* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002).
[570] Stafford and Terpak, *Devices of Wonder,* 229.

the aim of social advancement."[571] As the long-standing and rigid distinctions of class were increasingly threatened and open to confusion, looking closely for signs of noble birth was therefore aimed at maintaining the exclusiveness of the noble status. Physiognomy was not only seen as a parlour game that provided diversion and intellectual stimulation for nobility, but also a way to gain knowledge about one's moral character, intelligence and virtue. Lavater, in his treatise (1775), claimed that vice can degenerate a person's physiognomy, leaving its mark upon the face. He wrote "virtue beautifies, vice deforms."[572] Through the interpretation of external signs manifested by body and face, physiognomy could counter the dissimulation (the fact of trying to hide your real feelings, character, or intentions).[573] For a contemporary viewer, therefore, familiarity with basic physiognomic theory could be a valuable tool to penetrate the superficialities of constructed appearances to reach the truth of inner character. Richard Sennett writes that in the eighteenth century "people took each other's appearances in the street immensely seriously; they believed they could fathom the character of those they saw… Finding out about a person from how he or she looked became, therefore, a matter of looking for clues in the details of his costume."[574] However, the observation of one's appearance was not seen as the only way to detect someone's character. Georg Christoph Lichtenberg criticised Lavater's theory of physiognomy and suggested that pathognomy, the study

[571] Baldassar Castiglione, *II libro del cortegiano* (Milan: RCS Libri S.p.A., 2000), book IV, chapter 57, 320 quoted in Susan Dalton, "Searching for Virtue: Physiognomy, Sociability and Taste in Isabelle Teotochi Albrizzi's Ritratti," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40, no 1 (2006): 85-108.
[572] Lavater, *Essay*, trans. Hunter, vol. 3, 310.
[573] See fragment entitled "On Dissimulation, Falsehood, and Sincerity," in Lavater, *Essay*, trans. Hunter, vol. 1, 152-165.
[574] Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

of passions and emotions indicated by the voice, gestures and facial expression was more effective.[575] In Venice, where the majority of population covered their faces with masks, the body language and costume were the main sources of information about a person. Joanna Finkelstein suggests that "an erect posture, a smile, and steadiness of gaze have precise social meanings that speak of particular personal characteristics — as do hat, wig, earrings, a necktie or a fur coat."[576] The body language is an important aspect of Longhi's pictures. For instance, in *The Quack*, painted in 1757, now at Ca' Rezzonico (Fig. 127), the elite position of patricians is emphasised by the artist's depiction of their refined appearance and behaviour. The reserved comportment of the noble couple suggests their virtue, which is contrasted with the almost idolatrous admiration of the quack by working class people. The body language and eye contact of the couple are rich with meaning. The game of seduction between the man and the woman is refined and restrained. The couple exchanges glances. The man gently touches the lady's dress in order to show his interest in her. She bends her head which might suggest her formal resistance to the man's advances but at the same time she shows her interest by taking off her mask and revealing her face. The woman also plays with her fan, positioned presumably to communicate her unspoken sentiment. In this way Longhi captured what would have been understood as honest dissimulation that suggests the noble woman's virtue and superiority. Honest dissimulation was a value cultivated since the end of the sixteenth century in

[575] Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, *Ueber Physiognomik; wider die Physiognomen. Zu Beförderung der Menschenliebe und Menschenkenntnis* (*On Physiognomy: Against the Physiognomists*) (Göttingen: J. Chr. Dietrich, 1778).
[576] Joanna Finkelstein, *The Art of Self Invention: Image and Identity in Popular Visual Culture* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 127.

contrast to simulation, which was deemed to be dishonest.[577] Venetian nobles could reaffirm their distinctive status by demonstrating that they possessed natural sensibility and taste to read those external signs manifested by body and face in Longhi's paintings. Julie-Anne Plax writes about the eighteenth-century secret societies such as *Regiment de la Calotte* (an informal fraternity of noblemen) who shared a love of wit, believing that the fusion of erudition and quick humour remained a singular aristocratic attainment.[578] "These exclusive societies," according to Plax, "were part of a larger cultural reaction of the nobility against perceived threats to their status … a shared sense of humour incorporated one as a member of this polite, tasteful, and naturally superior group ..."[579] The ability of Venetian nobility to discern humour in Longhi's ambiguous and extremely detailed works could be also seen as a sign of belonging to a distinctive group. By observing and discussing Longhi's scenes of public life in the intimacy of their palaces, not only did patricians entertain themselves but also they differentiated themselves from non-nobles and reasserted their standards of good taste and humour.

Longhi's picture *Lion's Booth* at the Pinacoteca Querini Stampalia, discussed briefly in the introduction to this thesis (Fig. 1) which shows the animals' performance also introduces the issue of physiognomy and resemblance in a humorous form. Similarly to other paintings with foreign species, this canvas features an exhibition of an exotic animal watched by a group of visitors gathered in a wooden enclosure. Like in his other works, the artist included in the painting a note highlighting the authenticity of the

[577] See for instance Torquato Accetto, *On Honest Dissimulation* (Naples: Egidio Longo 1641).
[578] Julie-Anne Plax, "Watteau's witticisms: visual humor and sociability" in *Seeing Satire in the Eighteenth Century*, eds. Elizabeth C. Mansfield and Kelly Malone (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2013), 63-79.
[579] Ibid., 70-73.

presented scene: "The lion's booth, seen at Venice Carnival in 1762, painted from nature by Pietro Longhi."[580] The spectators crowding next to the stage in the picture come from various social strata. We can see a priest wearing a skullcap, nobles in bauta and *popolane* in morette and headscarves. In the centre of the composition, charlatan who stands on a wooden stage demonstrates with a whip in his hand, a lion, and dogs dressed in human clothes. The dogs dance to the sound of music played by a violinist who stands on the other side of the stage. Besides the exotic animals, dogs were also a popular type of entertainment in Venice. The etching from Zompini's series *Le arti che vanno per via …* (The Arts of Venice; 1753) portrays a street entertainer, who similarly to the charlatan from Longhi's works plays music to make two canines dance (Fig. 128). However, it is the lion with its humanised face that attracts our attention the most. The animal has clearly human expression. The anthropomorphic creature resembles human-lion hybrids from physiognomic texts of Della Porta and Le Brun and testify to their popularity in the eighteenth century (Figs. 129 and 130). As in other paintings of exotic species, also here Longhi brings forward the issue of scale and resemblance. The small dogs, which in fact look like puppets mirror appearance and postures of people in the audience.[581] The large lion is juxtaposed with a small dog that stands on him. The monkey watching the performance from above echoes or perhaps mimics the spectators' observing the show. The lion's features resemble those of a human being.

[580] My own trans.
[581] Another painting in which Longhi depicted dogs which mirror the likeness and gestures of human figures is *The Essence Seller* (1757, Ca' Rezzonico). In the picture, two dogs resemble a couple depicted in the centre of the composition. The hand gesture of the masked man is matched by one of the dogs' raised paw.

Resemblances, pairings, groupings and conjunctions seem to recur throughout Longhi's works.

All the way through this chapter, I aimed to show that Longhi played in his paintings with various categories. He paralleled a taxonomical or typological approach and an interest in the individual instances in terms of animals but also in terms of pictorial genres. While the naturalists and collectors aimed to classify animals in menageries, cabinets of curiosity, encyclopaedias, at the same time they encountered individual examples such as Clara that posed a challenge to these categories. Longhi played with this overlap also in terms of artistic genres when he conflated genre painting with portraiture. In all of the discussed canvases, the viewer needs to decide for himself whether the likeness he sees is a particular noble face or it represents the aristocratic type. It is the very ambiguity of Longhi's works that makes them so intriguing and important particularly in the Venetian context at the time when the rigid class categories in Venice were being challenged and confused. Thinking about the animals, Venetian nobility could negotiate who they were and where their place in the world was.

Longhi's *The Lion's Booth* is also significant because it represents an animal which had a specific meaning in the Venetian context. It symbolised the Republic and its patron Saint Mark. Facing the audience, the lion with its human expression seems to scrutinise and confront Venetian society. Longhi's contemporary Ghezzi who experimented with physiognomy in his caricature, also represented an anthropomorphic lion in his picture of *Saint Jerome in the desert* (private collection, Rome; Fig. 131). Some scholars have suggested that Ghezzi who was known for his humour painted himself as a

lion in a punning allusion to his name. [582] Intriguingly, Longhi's lion which addresses the beholder resembles a portrait. Analysing the face of Longhi's animal and the likeness of the artist from his three-quarter portrait engraved by his son Alessandro (Fig. 132), the very same year when *The Lion's Booth* was executed, we might notice some similarities between the animal's physiognomy and that of the artist. Although there is no further evidence whether the lion was meant to represent the painter, the creature with its human features who looks at us with its inquisitive eyes invites us to read this representation as a portrait. Longhi manipulates with what we see and what we expect to see in the painting. The humanised lion accentuates the idea of an artist staging a performance or choreographing a tableau, which is not only significant in this chapter but also is at the heart of this whole thesis.

[582] Flavio Caroli, *L'Anima e il Volto. Ritratto e fisiognomica da Leonardo a Bacon* (Milan: Electa, 1998), 302. The author claims that the animal's humanised face resembles Ghezzi's likeness in his self-portraits from 1702 and 1719 (both at the Uffizi in Florence).

Conclusion

This thesis offers a revaluation of Pietro Longhi's art and career. Since the fall of the Venetian Republic, the artist's small-scale pictures with their oblique perspective and many details have been largely perceived by scholars as unskilful representations of a decadent and debauched Venice or mere "documents" on the epoch. Therefore, this research demonstrated the need for Longhi's art to be considered seriously. The above chapters argued that Longhi was not a passive naïve artist lacking painterly skills but one who was inquisitive about the surrounding environment and deeply aware of the need to distinguish himself in the crowded artistic field of eighteenth-century Venice through conscious artistic choices (in terms of subject matter, media and style) as well as various self-promoting strategies.

Through a detailed analysis of Longhi's various subject matters in their historical, social, and cultural context, the thesis addressed persistent gaps in the critical understanding of his art: inattention to the numerous details in the artist's paintings, scarcity of studies on his patronage, lack of interest in his engagement with print culture and other technologies and forms of knowledge present in Venice, negation of his painterly skills and artistic agency, and rejection of the distinctiveness and critical nature of his works. Importantly, this thesis rectified these gaps by engaging anew with Longhi's artistic output as well as with contemporary commentaries and archival material. As witnessed in the previous chapters, I have identified four key themes in the artist's oeuvre that have not previously been approached

systematically such as his paintings within paintings, his prints, his pictures of *mondi nuovi* and of exotic animals. Crucially, these four aspects of Longhi's art bring to the fore new issues surrounding the artist's patronage, his and his patrons' relationship with the past, the potential of painting to reflect upon itself, the artist's experimentation with possibilities and limits of vision, his self-advertising strategies, Longhi's and his patrons' engagement with theatre, print culture and various forms of knowledge such as optics, geography, physiognomy and natural history. Through close readings of representative examples, this thesis revealed the complexity and distinctive nature of Longhi's art but also reconsidered the contemporary understanding and meaning of the artist's works. As the research demonstrated, Longhi's pictures played significant functions in his noble patrons' lives.

By studying the innovative nature of Longhi's paintings, I showed that his artistic production was an amalgam of his experimentation with various pictorial devices and the engagement with cultural trends, intellectual ideas, technologies, forms of knowledge, and market exchanges present in eighteenth-century Venice.

The introduction delved into Longhi's picture *Lion's Booth* (Fig. 1), which exemplifies the four main themes discussed in this thesis (paintings within paintings, prints, mondi nuovi, and exotic animals). After the brief analysis of the painting, this section considered the current position occupied by Longhi and his oeuvre in Venetian art history as an insignificant and unskilful painter whose pictures are largely seen as "records" on the fashion and lifestyle of eighteenth-century Venice. Unfairly, this perception of Longhi has been reproduced and perpetuated abundantly by scholars. At the

same time, his artworks have been little known outside of Italy, largely confined to museums' stores or owned by private collectors attracted to his art by the nostalgic view of Venice as a pleasurable and romantic city. After an analysis of the existing literature on Longhi, largely influenced by the nineteenth-century decadent and libertine view of Settecento, the introduction proposed a reinterpretation of Longhi's art and persona as shaped by specific social and cultural contexts.

Chapter One looked at Longhi's and his patrons' relationship with the Venetian past. It began with the analysis of the artist's early works and considered the change of the format and the subject matter of his output from large-scale mythological and religious paintings to small-scale pictures of everyday life. The abandonment of grand-scale works has often been seen by modern scholars as dictated by the artist's lack of skills. In this chapter I readdressed this claim by examining Longhi's works in the context of the eighteenth-century art market, his noble patronage and current Enlightenment ideas. My research demonstrated that the artist's transformation was dictated by several factors such as the pressures from the competitive art market and the preference of realism over fantasy in arts advocated by Enlightenment thinkers. The analysis of Longhi's early large-scale pictures also revealed the artist's emulation of pictorial examples from the past and his experimentation with everyday life subject matter and meta-pictorial devices. These aspects of Longhi's output were further explored in his small-scale interior scenes which feature paintings within the paintings. The pictures within pictures were examined in the context of the changing political and economic situation of the Venetian patriciate whose distinctive status was threatened by the

acceptance of new members into the ranks of the nobility. As this chapter illustrated, Longhi's meta-paintings produced exclusively for old Venetian families were used by them as tools to reaffirm their noble lineage and distinctive status.

Chapter Two continued to examine the impact of the art market on Longhi's artistic practice. It specifically focused on the artist's engagement with the print industry in eighteenth-century Venice. The chapter considered Longhi's change of format and the subject matter of his works in the mid-1730s, in the context of the revival of print culture in Venice by analysing prints produced in the Republic and those that were brought to and collected in the city. My examination of Longhi's paintings and their printed versions executed at the peak of his career demonstrated that the technology of print became essential in the conception of his small-scale pictures. The close study of the epistemological written exchanges between Longhi, publisher Giambattista Remondini, and printmaker Giuseppe Wagner in the last section of this chapter is significant in showing the artist's close involvement in the process of the translation of his works into prints and how he capitalised on prints to market his pictures. The chapter finished with the brief discussion of the importance of the itinerant sellers in the dissemination of prints in Venice and Longhi's fascination with them.

Chapter Three focused on Longhi's paintings of mondi nuovi (peepshow boxes) and their operators which opened up a discussion on Longhi's preoccupation with optics and geography. The chapter explored the artist's interest in and experimentation with vision. After the discussion of the origins and functions of mondo nuovo as well as the thriving optical industry in

Venice, the chapter considered several of Longhi's paintings that drew on various modes of looking present in Venice at the time, in particular, peeping. People's curiosity about the unknown encouraged by the Age of Reason was juxtaposed with the salacious interests in female sexuality evident in Longhi's and his contemporaries' works. The exploration of mondi nuovi — the devices which showed topographical views of various places in the world led to the examination of the artist's paintings that feature cartographic objects such as globes and maps. The chapter further drew on the affinity between the mondo nuovo apparatus and Longhi's pictures, which like the views seen inside the device, allowed their noble patrons to mediate on their place within the world in the privacy of their own home. Finally, the chapter demonstrated that through the observation of various optical devices manipulated by showmen, Longhi explored his own role as an artist orchestrating his spectators' visual experiences.

Lastly, Chapter Four examined Longhi's paintings depicting his noble patrons in the presence of exotic animals such as a rhinoceros and an elephant which were brought and displayed in Venice as a part of the outdoor entertainment. Here, Longhi's rhinoceros pictures were analysed together with other visual representations of the animal including the advertisement prints. As the chapter proved, Longhi's paintings of exotic animals were created in response to his patrons' interests in natural history, the eighteenth-century debates on the animal-human relationship and comparative physiognomy. The study of the pictures revealed that the artist played with the issue of resemblance not only by comparing animals and people but also by blending genre painting and portraiture. By exploring the performative and

theatrical nature of Venetian social life, the chapter also offered a new reading of these paintings as a commentary on Venetian society and gender inequalities. The role of pictures of exotic animals in the lives of their owners was a final consideration; the chapter suggested that apart from providing diversion and manifesting intellectual aspirations of Longhi's patrons, the paintings encouraged conversation about self-representation. The meditation on the picture *Lion's Booth* (Fig. 1) with which this thesis began, and which thematises all the issues discussed as a whole, concluded this dissertation.

The reappraisal of Longhi's work and his career as well as deconstruction of the myth of Settecento Venice pursued by this thesis has offered a deeper understanding of his art, practice and persona, while placing him in relation to recent studies on aesthetic, cultural and historical trends in eighteenth-century Venice and Europe. This thesis has opened up the way for future research on Longhi's large collection of drawings, here only introduced with a few examples, but deserving of further analysis in light of the recent studies on the importance of draughtsmanship in Venice.

Furthermore, Chapter Four has discussed two works of Longhi's followers (Figs. 98 and 102) but several other paintings exist which require further investigation. The identity of only a few of the imitators is known such as Giuseppe de Gobbis and Lorenzo Gramiccia whereas others are recognised by conventional names defying their artistic quality such as *Maestro del Ridotto* (the Master of the Gabling House) known for his interior scenes with elongated figures and *Maestro dei Riflessi* (the Master of the Reflections) identifiable thanks to his bright colours.[583] The existence of a

[583] Several works of Longhi's followers can be found at the Palazzo Leoni Montanari in Vicenza.

group of Longhi's followers raises questions with regards to how these artists became interested in Longhi's works, whether they knew the artist or were trained by him, which elements of Longhi's oeuvre seemed of importance to them and what was the reception of these paintings. Future research of some of these issues could increase significantly our understanding of Longhi's impact on other artists.

The consideration of Longhi's oeuvre also required the exploration of certain items such as peepshow boxes and other optical devices, globes, maps, puppet theatres, flap books and other printed entertainment, etc., which raise questions about the material culture in eighteenth-century Venice and offer opportunities for new research in that field, especially with regards to games, the manipulation of objects by people and of people by objects, how they shaped people's taste, behaviour and lives in general.

Finally, the thesis deconstructed the myth of eighteenth-century Venice as a decadent, promiscuous, and hermetic place and demonstrated that within eighteenth-century Venetian art history, largely associated with the Grand Tour and view paintings — exemplified by a recent surge in exhibitions on Canaletto and other *vedutisti*, there existed other alternative and distinctive painters such as Longhi.[584] The thesis showed that Venice was far from a static place; it was a diverse vibrant, modern, and changing city where "enlightened" ideas and progressive thinking flourished. This merits further

[584] The most recent exhibitions on Canaletto and the view painters include: *Canaletto: Painting Venice* (Holburn Museum, Bath; postponed due to Covid-19; to be opened in January 2021); *Canaletto and Venice* (Doge's Palace, Venice; February 23 – June 9, 2019); *Eyewitness Views: Making History in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Cleveland Museum of Art; February 25 –May 20, 2018); *Canaletto and the Art of Venice* (The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace; May 19 – Nov 12, 2017), *Belotto e Canaletto: L'Avanguardia del Vedutismo Veneziano* (Galleria d'Italia, Milan; November 25, 2016 – March 5, 2017); *The Splendour of Venice: Canaletto, Bellotto, Guardi and the vedutisti* (Palazzo Martinengo, Brescia, January23 – June 12, 2016); *Venice: Canaletto and His Rivals* (National Gallery, London; October 13, 2010 –January 16, 2011).

exploration and invites future research on the Enlightenment in Venice, currently rarely associated with the city and in fact very much neglected in relation to Italy. The reconsideration of Longhi's art and career in this thesis is therefore crucial to enhance our understanding of eighteenth-century Venice and its art world, with the artist occupying a significant place within this field.

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