Croll's *Basilica Chymica* – which championed spagyric remedies and opposed the Galenic ones. Minuzzi thoroughly explores the vicissitudes of the 1617 'official' *Pharmacopaea* that was immediately withdrawn from sale after the powerful Collegio degli Speziali's veto. Special attention is paid to the numerous private Venetian pharmacopoeias, including the grandiose *Nuovo, et universale theatro farmaceutico* (1667) produced by the Spezieria allo Struzzo and aiming at providing a *summa* of all medicines, both Galenic and chemical.

The chapter on botany contains fresh information about Johannes Behm (*c.*1640–1731) – Italianized as Giovanni Beni – a little-known German chemist and botanist who settled in Venice in 1669, practised medicine, prepared chemical remedies and corresponded with eminent botanists from many European countries, besides building up a rich natural-history collection.

The third part of the book is devoted to the domestic production of medicines, containing a number of case studies, including one on Colochi-Olivieri, a remarkably successful family who managed to sell the Health Office their medical secret to cure the plague. Making use of fresh archival evidence, Minuzzi sheds light on a number of distillers, barbers, herb sellers, dyers, artisans, clergymen, lay practitioners and women, who played a relevant part in the production and trade of 'secret medicaments'. Though the licences granted to women were predictably a small part of the number of licences, female medical practitioners were not on the margins of the Venetian medical world; they often interfaced household medicine with the emerging structures of public health.

The book ends with appendices containing inventories of pharmacies, pictures from Venetian pharmacopoeias and diagrams related to the licensing of the sellers of medical secrets. Drawing on a wide range of primary sources and on rich, largely untapped, archival resources, *Sul filo dei segreti* marks a substantial contribution to our knowledge of the medical world of early modern Venice.

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Florike Egmond, **Eye for Detail: Images of Plants and Animals in Art and Science**. London: Reaktion Books, 2017. Pp. 280. ISBN 978-1-7802-3640-7. £35.00 (hardback).
doi:10.1017/S0007087418000614

As Florike Egmond explains in the introduction to this illuminating book, the scholarship on the visual culture of early modern science has for the most part dealt with the images found in printed books. *Eye for Detail* calls attention to another body of evidence, thus far largely overlooked: the thousands of original drawings made and acquired by collectors during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Gathered by figures diverse in both their interests and social standing, from highly educated naturalists such as Conrad Gessner and Felix Platter to modest autodidacts like the Dutch fish merchant Adriaen Coenen, these drawings testify to a widespread interest in making and collecting realistic depictions of plants and animals. The surviving collections, moreover, form a decidedly visual corpus, without the lengthy texts accompanying images in printed works of botany and natural history. Egmond therefore sets out to interpret this body of evidence in equally visual terms. Astutely tracing patterns of change and continuity in the application of visual strategies, from time lapses to zoomed insets, she makes an important contribution to our understanding of how putatively modern scientific forms of representation emerged.

For much of the book, Egmond challenges the idea that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed a revolutionary transformation in the visual representation of nature. Through an exhaustive survey of surviving picture albums, she dismantles the once widespread suggestion that technological change – especially the development of printing and optical instruments such as the microscope – led to the emergence of the visual regime we now associate with scientific objectivity. She shows, for instance, that naturalists such as Otto Brunfels and Conrad Gessner used zoomed insets depicting the parts of plants deemed crucial either to identification or to figuring out their life cycles long before such images began to appear in print during the second half of

the sixteenth century. In her words, 'printing did not revolutionize visual techniques, but slowly consolidated inventions that had been made and tested elsewhere' (p. 185). Egmond makes a similar – and even more important – argument when it comes to the microscope. Inspired in part by the rhetoric of astonishment mobilized to such great effect by its earliest proponents, historians for a long time argued that the development of the microscope in the early seventeenth century ushered in a new age of visual inquiry. Mobilizing her own discovery of Felix Platter's images of insects, however, Egmond shows that many of the anatomizing visual strategies adopted by early users of the microscope had already been developed by the end of the sixteenth century. Indeed, she shows that pictorial formats expressing a desire to peer into and cut up the smallest of natural things appeared in drawings long before the rupture supposedly brought about by the microscope, in the botanical images made under the supervision of Federico Cesi, and in the charming paper mites depicted by Adriaen Coenen.

The book's methodological claim, however, is less compelling. Egmond argues that her visual corpus should be analysed on its own terms, through a sharp-eyed attentiveness to visual detail. Nobody would deny, of course, that we should deploy visual methods in the study of visual evidence. The advantages of this approach, moreover, are already clear from the author's important revisions to the history of scientific images. Sometimes, however, Egmond's commitment to visual connoisseurship manifests itself as a resistance to meaning. At several places, admittedly, she acknowledges that we need to acknowledge that the meanings and uses of visual strategies change over time, pointing out that 'historical images cannot be taken for granted just because they look familiar' (p. 234). Yet it is equally true that, by largely excluding texts from her analysis, Egmond misses opportunities to tell us what the images she so adeptly analyses meant to the people who made and used them. This resistance to meaning, moreover, makes some of the author's historiographical claims less effective than they otherwise might have been. In Chapter 3, for instance, Egmond criticizes William B. Ashworth Jr's argument that Renaissance natural history was characterized by an 'emblematic' view of the relationships between nature and humanity, citing the fact that her corpus of original drawings manifests more of an interest in regular natural phenomena than in monsters and curiosities. Yet the emblematic view of nature was not a generalized fascination with the rare and the marvellous, but rather a system for assigning meaning to things. Indeed, naturalists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries applied the symbolic logic of the emblem to things common as well as rare, seeing moral value in the behaviour of foxes, and regarding the walnut as a microcosmic representation of the human cranium. Without attending to meaning, in other words, it is difficult to successfully challenge arguments about what people in the past thought and felt when they made and collected images of plants and animals.

Despite this criticism, *Eye for Detail* stands as a highly important contribution to the study of scientific images, substantially changing our understanding of the links between the visual worlds of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries through its insightful and thorough analysis of hitherto overlooked original drawings. Featuring 128 colour images, many of them never previously published, this book will, moreover, be valuable to anybody with an interest in the visual culture of the early modern sciences.

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Domenico Bertoloni Meli, **Visualizing Disease: The Art and History of Pathological Illustrations**. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2017. Pp. xvi + 294. ISBN 978-0-2261-1029-5. $55.00 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0007087418000626

In *Visualizing Disease* Domenico Bertoloni Meli presents himself as taking the reader down the proverbial road less travelled in the history of medical illustration by focusing on the formative