

## Introduction

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Men's bile, in short, is striving incessantly to employ sophistry with their lies against the female sex; they never stop blaming us for no other reason than envy, for since they cannot lord it over us by their merits, they must do so by their tongues.<sup>1</sup>

And like Jove who struck down the giants with bolts of lightning, she with her *Antisatire* struck down Buoninsegni and other outsized intellects who dared to rise up against the female sex.<sup>2</sup>

### *A Strong Voice in Defense of Women*

At a gathering in 1632 of the Academy of the Intronati in Siena and in the presence of the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinando II de' Medici and members of his court, Francesco Buoninsegni, a prominent Sienese intellectual, delivered a semiserious discourse entitled *Contro 'l lusso donnesco, Satira menippea* (Against the Vanities of Women, a Menippean Satire) that denounced women's fashions as excessive ornamentation and an extraordinary waste of time and money. Menippean satire, an ancient literary form that had a revival in the late Renaissance, is a semiserious satire of ideas, conventions, and institutions written in a combination of prose and verse.<sup>3</sup> Buoninsegni's discourse also belongs to an age-old tradition of misogynist satires, which were popular in Italy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when women's place in society was being widely debated and was a frequent topic of discourse in the literary academies.<sup>4</sup> Buoninsegni's satire was first published in

1. Arcangela Tarabotti, *Paternal Tyranny*, ed. and trans. Letizia Panizza (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 134.

2. Giovanni Dandolo's letter to the signori Guerigli. Arcangela Tarabotti, *Letters Familiar and Formal*, ed. and trans. Meredith K. Ray and Lynn Lara Westwater (Toronto: Iter, Inc. and Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012), 49–50.

3. Menippean satire derives its name from the work of the Greek cynic philosopher Menippus of Gadara (third century BCE). The genre was introduced in Latin literature by Varro in the first century BCE. Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) revived the genre in the Renaissance. See the important catalogue of Menippean satires of the modern age: Eugene P. Kirk, *Menippean Satire: An Annotated Catalogue of Texts and Criticism* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1980).

4. Much has been written on this debate especially in the past fifty years. For an excellent overview see Ginevra Conti Odorisio's *Donne e società nel Seicento: Lucrezia Marinelli e Arcangela Tarabotti* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1979) and *Storia dell'idea femminista in Italia* (Turin: ERI, 1980), as well as Joan Kelly, "Early

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Milan in 1637, according to Giammaria Mazzuchelli, but it seems no copy has survived.<sup>5</sup> It then appeared in Venice in 1638 with a polemical response written by Giovan Battista Torretti, a member of the Venetian Academy of the Incogniti.<sup>6</sup> Torretti's response seems to have garnered little interest and was soon forgotten.<sup>7</sup>

However, not long afterward—around 1641—Buoninsegni's satire came to the attention of the outspoken and spirited Venetian nun Arcangela Tarabotti, who decided to write a response—or, as she claims, was convinced by some important ladies to do so. Her work, the *Antisatira* (Antisatire) as it was called, was published in Venice together with Buoninsegni's satire in 1644 and created quite a furor and public outcry.<sup>8</sup> Tarabotti's response is not only a defense of women's

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Feminist Theory and the *Querelle des Femmes*," in *Women, History, and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). See also the editors' introductions by Margaret L. King and Albert Rabil, Jr. to volumes of *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Chicago Series*. For the debate that flourished in response to Giuseppe Passi's *I donneschi difetti*—to which Tarabotti's works contributed—see Suzanne Magnanini and David Lamari, "Giuseppe Passi's Attacks on Women in 'The Defects of Women,'" in *In Dialogue with the Other Voice in Sixteenth-Century Italy: Literary and Social Contexts for Women's Writing*, ed. Julie D. Campbell and Maria Galli Stampino (Toronto: Iter Inc. and Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2011), 143–94. On the subject of academy discussions, Giovanni Francesco Loredan mentions his speech to the Incogniti on the defects of women in a letter to Arcangela Tarabotti. See *Lettere del Signor Gio. Francesco Loredano, nobile veneto, divise in cinquantadue capi e raccolte da Henrico Gible* [pseud. of Loredan] (Venice: Guerigli, 1657), 243–44. Ludovico Sesti, *Censura dell'Antisatira della signora Angelica [sic] Tarabotti fatta in risposta alla Satira menippea, Contro il lusso donnesco del sig. Franc. Buoninsegni scherzo geniale di Lucido Ossiteo* [pseud.] *accadem. aristocratico* (Siena: Bonetti, 1656), 117, acknowledges that many academic discourses of his day speak ill of women.

5. Francesco Buoninsegni, *Il lusso donnesco, Satira menippea* (Milan: Filippo Ghisolfi, 1637). See Giammaria Mazzuchelli, *Gli scrittori d'Italia, cioè Notizie storiche e critiche intorno alle vite e agli scritti dei letterati italiani*, vol. 2 (Brescia: Giambattista Bossini, 1763), 4:2398–2400, esp. 2399.

6. Francesco Buoninsegni, *Del lusso donnesco, Satira menippea ... con l'Antisatira apologetica di Giovanni Battista Torretti* (Venice: Giacomo Sarzina, 1638). A brief biography of Torretti (active in the 1630s and 1640s) is found in the anonymous *Le glorie degli Incogniti, ovvero Gli hvomini illvstri dell'Accademia de' Signori Incogniti di Venetia* (Venice: Valvasense, 1647), 229–31; his portrait at age thirty-one is on page 228. Among his numerous published works are *Il leon corno panegirico ... all'immortalità della Sereniss[im]a Republica di Venetia consecrato* (1635) and *La pietà trionfante panegirico ... al serenissimo Ferdinando 2 il pio granduca di Toscana* (1636).

7. Torretti's response, solicited by Loredan, opens with a defense of women's beauty—a tour de force of Baroque conceits of description with which the author portrays the beauties of women. He defends their right to enhance their beauty through art and argues that husbands should be proud to see their worth displayed on their wives. He takes on Buoninsegni's other points as well—agreeing with some, disagreeing with others—but, after the rather spectacular conceits with which his response opens, the remainder seems perfunctory and obsequious.

8. *Contro 'l lusso donnesco, Satira menippea del Sig. Fran. Buoninsegni con l'Antisatira [di] D[onna] A[rcangela] T[arabotti] in risposta* (Venice: Francesco Valvasense, 1644). Valvasense published two editions in 1644, which I refer to as V1 and V2; another edition appeared in Siena in 1656 (see the

fashions and a denunciation of men, their clothes, and their hair styles but also a strong condemnation of men's treatment of women and, in general, of the subordination of women in society—central issues in all the writings of the talented literary nun. In this debate both Buoninsegni and Tarabotti write with the exaggeration and absurd arguments typical of Menippean satire; they show off their knowledge of ancient and contemporary literature in a prose style interspersed with poetry, as the genre required, and replete with the astonishing Baroque conceits that delighted their contemporaries. What perhaps most surprised the readers of this literary exchange and demands our attention today is that Tarabotti, an enclosed nun with only the rudimentary education available in the convent, displays a level of culture in no way inferior to that of her adversary—who had frequented the period's best institutions of learning as well as prestigious literary and scientific academies—and that she was not fooled by the supposedly semiserious nature of the academic discourse and in her response exposed its serious misogynist underpinnings.

### *The Protagonists of the Debate*

Francesco Buoninsegni, a citizen of Siena and of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, was born at the beginning of the seventeenth century and was still alive in 1655, when he is known to have recited a Latin elegy before the grand duke.<sup>9</sup> He studied in Rome at the Collegio Romano, first letters and philosophy, and later jurisprudence. When he returned to Siena, he served as secretary to Leopoldo de' Medici, then governor in the absence of his brother Mattias, who had been sent to lead the Tuscan army in Northern Italy and Germany. When Mattias returned to Siena, Buoninsegni entered his service. In Siena and Rome he frequented the academies, for which he wrote various discourses; he was also a member of the Venetian Academy of the Incogniti. In addition to his satire of women's fashions, he later wrote another in which he denounced the foolishness of men. He is also the author of an elegy in Latin on the death of an elephant and a meditation on the stigmata of Saint Catherine of Siena; he wrote sonnets, especially occasional poetry, some on scientific topics such as the clock, the silkworm, and astronomical discoveries.<sup>10</sup>

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Note on the Text and Translation). The modern edition is Francesco Buoninsegni and Arcangela Tarabotti, *Satira e Antisatira*, ed. Elissa Weaver (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1998). References to this edition of the *Satira* appear as Buoninsegni, *Satira* (Weaver) and to this edition of the *Antisatira* as Tarabotti, *Antisatira* (Weaver).

9. On Buoninsegni's life, see the entry by Martino Capucci, *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1972), 15:254–55, and *Le glorie degli Incogniti*, 149–51; his portrait at age forty-three is on page 148. See also Mazzuchelli, *Gli scrittori d'Italia*, vol. 2, 4:2398–2400.

10. Two copies of *Delle sciocchezze degli huomini* (The foolishness of men) are found in Florence at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale (BNCF), Magl. VII 456: a fair copy on fols. 53r–84r and an incomplete

Arcangela Tarabotti was born on February 24, 1604 to Stefano Tarabotti and Maria Cadena dei Tolentini in the section of Venice known as Castello;<sup>11</sup> she was baptized Elena Cassandra.<sup>12</sup> The family, if not of the citizen class, was certainly of considerable means. Elena was the fifth of their ten children, the eldest of seven daughters. Two of her sisters married: Innocenza Elisabetta to Francesco Dario, the family doctor, and Lorenzina to the lawyer Giacomo Pighetti. Four sisters, Camilla Angela, Angela Lorenza, Lucia Caterina, and Caterina Agnese remained at home, while Elena was destined for the religious life, perhaps because she was the least likely to marry, being born with a limp and having somewhat precarious health. At the age of eleven, as she writes, or thirteen, as convent documents attest, she entered the Benedictine convent of Sant'Anna, a fate she deplored. Nevertheless, she was clothed in 1620, taking Arcangela as her religious name, professed in 1623, and was consecrated in 1629. She died on February 28, 1652, at the age of forty-eight. Arcangela Tarabotti did not have a religious vocation but had to submit to the will of her family; she made protesting the practice of forced

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autograph copy on fols. 97r–109v. The opening quatrains of the *Sciocchezze* (fols. 55v–57v) refer to the earlier satire against the vanities of women and the negative reaction Buoninsegni had received from women. On his literary production see also Roser Melchor i Fenollosa, “Sonets esparsos de Francesco Buoninsegni” (PhD diss., University of Valencia, 2005), which includes an edition of thirty sonnets and a general overview of his opus. Poetry by Buoninsegni is found in the following manuscript collections, also at the BNCF: Magl. VII, 357, 359, 369, 456; and Palatino 263, 248, 268.

11. Stefano Tarabotti was a chemist, perhaps involved in the production of paints: see Mario Infelise, “Books and Politics in Arcangela Tarabotti’s Venice,” in *Arcangela Tarabotti: A Literary Nun in Baroque Venice*, ed. Elissa B. Weaver (Ravenna: Longo, 2006), 57, and note 1. This chapter also appeared in Italian as Mario Infelise, “Libri e politica nella Venezia di Arcangela Tarabotti,” *Annali di storia moderna e contemporanea*, 8 (2002): 32–45.

12. I take the details of her life from the biography by Emilio Zanette, *Suor Arcangela: Monaca del Seicento veneziano* (Venice: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1960), updated with Arcangela Tarabotti, *L’Inferno monacale” di Arcangela Tarabotti*, ed. Francesca Medioli (Turin: Rosenberg & Sellier, 1990), esp. 109–92 (“Chiavi di lettura”); Medioli, “Alcune lettere autografe di Arcangela Tarabotti: Autocensura e immagine di sé,” *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 32 (1996): 133–55; Medioli, “Arcangela Tarabotti’s Reliability about Herself: Publication and Self-Representation (Together with a Small Collection of Previously Unpublished Letters),” *The Italianist* 23 (2003): 54–101; and Medioli, “Des liaisons dangereuses? Réseaux hérités, supposés et déguisés d’une nonne vénitienne au XVIIe siècle,” *Genre & Histoire* 11 (Fall 2012) <<http://journals.openedition.org/genrehistoire/1750>>. I have also consulted Natalia Costa-Zalessow, “La condanna all’Indice’ della ‘Semplicità ingannata’ di Arcangela Tarabotti alla luce di manoscritti inediti,” *Nouvelles de la république des lettres* 1 (2002): 97–113; Margherita Valenti, “Sant’Anna di Castello. Inventario archivistico di un monastero benedettino femminile” (PhD diss., University of Venice, Ca’ Foscari, 2005/2006), esp. 22–30; Meredith K. Ray, “Letters and Lace: Arcangela Tarabotti and Convent Culture in Seicento Venice,” in *Early Modern Women and Transnational Communities of Letters*, ed. Julie Campbell and Ann Larsen (Aldershot, Farnham, Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 45–73; and Lynn L. Westwater, “A Rediscovered Friendship in the Republic of Letters: The Unpublished Correspondence of Arcangela Tarabotti and Ismaël Boulliau,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (2012): 67–134.

monachization and, more generally, the denial to women of free will the driving passion of her life. There is no doubt that she hoped through her writing to effect change, if only in the minds of men, and that she should be considered an early feminist thinker and activist.

Convents in Italy by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had become the home of a large percentage of women of the elite and merchant classes; they were a safe, respectable, often prestigious place for the daughters for whom families could not find appropriate marriage partners. Many factors went into the decision, but it was always the family that decided and rarely, if ever, the daughters. The considerations were many, primarily economic and social. Convent dowries were much lower than those required for marriage, and when a daughter entered religious life she renounced all claim to her family's fortunes, which would be handed down through one heir and the patrimony preserved. There was also the important concern of maintaining family prestige only through marriages that reinforced or improved a family's social standing; and, certainly a girl's physical endowments, her appearance and health, were factored importantly into the decision. There were many women, too, who had a religious calling and who chose to live their lives in prayer in a community where they prepared for the next life and earned respect here for their contributions to their families and society. It is difficult to know, however, who of these were the truly willing and who understood that there was no alternative available to them. The church, in the years following the Council of Trent, made free consent a requirement, but did not and generally could not support reluctant women (or men) if their decisions contradicted those of their families. Many convent women protested, claiming to be "prisoners," and often exacting privileges in exchange for acceptance of their situation. Arcangela Tarabotti spent her life denouncing her incarceration and she took up the defense of all women who, like her, were unwilling nuns.<sup>13</sup>

13. Much has been written on the subject since the early nineteenth century when Alessandro Manzoni created the unforgettable character of the forced nun Gertrude in his novel *I promessi sposi* (The Betrothed, 1827), inspired by the seventeenth-century trial of Suor Virginia Maria de Leyva, the so-called "nun of Monza." Most contemporary studies take their initial inspiration from the work of Gabriella Zarri and especially her seminal essay "Monasteri femminili e città, secoli XV–XVIII," in *Storia d'Italia: Annali*, vol. 9: *La Chiesa e il potere politico dal Medioevo all'età contemporanea*, ed. Giorgio Chittolini and Giovanni Miccoli (Turin: Einaudi, 1986), 357–429. See also Zarri, "Monasteri femminili in Italia nel secolo XVI," in Gabriella Zarri, Francesca Medioli, and Paola Vismarra Chiappa, "'De monialibus,' secoli XVI–XVII–XVIII," *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 33 (1997): 643–69; and Francesca Medioli, "Monacazioni forzate: Donne ribelli al proprio destino," *Clio: Trimestrale di studi storici* 30 (1994): 431–54; and on Venice, Jutta Sperling, *Convents and the Body Politic in Late Renaissance Venice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 18–71. An excellent, well-documented account of forced monachization, male and female, is found in Anne Jacobson Schutte, *By Force and Fear: Taking and Breaking Monastic Vows in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).

The convent, it must be said, allowed Tarabotti—however much she rightfully protested—to live a life of study and writing that would not have been so easily hers had she remained in the secular world. In the convent she had time to devote to her studies since she was exempt from holding convent offices. It was not uncommon for families who could afford it to pay the convent for an exemption for their daughters, often a way of acknowledging their social rank but perhaps, in Tarabotti's case, because of her intellectual interests and ability—and to make it less painful for her to accept her condition. She also had the privilege of writing and receiving letters without the oversight of the convent abbess and she could receive visitors of her choosing and converse with them at the grate in the convent parlor.

Tarabotti would have learned to read and write at home before entering the convent of Sant'Anna, where, if we can take her at her word, she learned little more from convent teachers. She claims to be entirely self-taught. Society's failure to educate women was a subject about which she was passionate and to which she returns frequently in her writing. In one of the digressions in the *Antisatira*, she explains that most of her learning has come from "reading good books, both religious and profane, Latin and vernacular, through which, however crudely, and without anyone to teach me, I have somewhat smoothed out the roughness of my intellect" (69).<sup>14</sup> In her letters she often discusses her access to books and makes it clear that she read widely.<sup>15</sup> To her critics who accuse her of writing without art and order (which in fact is not the case), she responds that she prefers to be guided by her caprice rather than by the rules of rhetoric and that her talent is a gift from God.<sup>16</sup>

It was probably through her brother-in-law Giacomo Pighetti, a member of the Venetian Academy of the Incogniti, that Tarabotti was introduced to members of the Venetian literary and publishing world and her voice reached an audience beyond the walls of Sant'Anna. Her contacts with the secular world also extended to members of the French diplomatic representation in Venice, to their wives and children, and to many men and women of elite society who corresponded with her and who visited her at the convent. Her correspondence, much of which she

14. All in-text page references are to the present edition of the *Satire* and *Antisatire*. References in the notes to the present edition appear as follows: Buoninsegni, *Satire* [page(s)]; Tarabotti, *Antisatire* [page(s)]. Translations of quoted texts, unless otherwise noted, are mine throughout.

15. Tarabotti often refers to an exchange of books with friends in the Academy of the Incogniti. In a letter to Girolamo Brusoni, commenting on his novel *Orestilla*, she writes that she reads everything that appears in print and has read the best books of the greatest thinkers—even Machiavelli—with the permission of her superiors. She seems pleased that, in the *Orestilla*, suor Laura, a forced nun, is a scarcely disguised version of herself. See Tarabotti, *Letters*, 250–51 (letter 213).

16. For an excellent, detailed analysis of Tarabotti's style and language, see Simona Bortot, "Introduzione: La penna all'ombra delle grate," in Tarabotti, *La semplicità ingannata: Edizione critica e commentata*, ed. Simona Bortot (Padua: Il Poligrafo, 2007), 138–47.

published, attests to her many friends and associates—and also to difficult as well as friendly relations with some among them, especially with several members of the Incogniti. These were writers whose support she could not always count upon, some of whom would betray her trust—like the itinerant friar and book collector Angelico Aprosio, who wrote against her, and the prolific novelist Girolamo Brusoni, whose friendship with her ended in a literary dispute.<sup>17</sup> Giovan Francesco Loredan, a prominent member of Venetian society, the founder of the Venetian Academy of the Incogniti, and a power in Venetian publishing at the time, was a continued influence in her literary career. He admired her talent and, in the exaggerated literary style of the period, he wrote in a letter to her that “the world has become a theater of the marvels of your pen!”<sup>18</sup> He helped her publish several of her works, though his misogyny was often a subject of disagreement between them.

It was undoubtedly the libertine bent of many of the Incogniti that attracted their attention to such an outspoken nun, and their common intellectual interests that caused them to take notice of her intelligence and her protest. They were freethinkers, disdainful of dogmas and conventional morality; their work and lives were characterized by scandal and impertinence.<sup>19</sup> Prominent figures in the

17. Angelico Aprosio (1607–1681), known as “il Ventimiglia,” was an Augustinian friar, itinerant book collector, and the member of several academies, including the Academy of the Incogniti. See the entry on Aprosio by Alberto Asor-Rosa, *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 3 (1961): 650–53, and the more recent study in Quinto Marini, “Angelico Aprosio da Ventimiglia ‘tromba per far conoscer molti,’” in *Frati barocchi: Studi su A. G. Brignole Sale, G. A. De Marini, A. Aprosio, F. F. Frugoni, P. Segneri* (Modena: Mucchi, 2000), 153–79, at 170–76 for his relationship with Tarabotti. Girolamo Brusoni (1614–after 1686) was a prolific writer, ex-Carthusian monk, and libertine, who in his early career was known especially for his novels. He was a member of the Incogniti and for a time a friend and correspondent of Tarabotti. He angered Tarabotti by using her work in his novel *Le turbolenze delle vestali* (written between 1640 and 1642) and he wrote the *Antisatira satirizzata* (1645), which may never have been published; Tarabotti considered it the best of the responses to her *Antisatira*. Tarabotti, *Letters*, 151 (letter 99). On Brusoni, see Zanette, *Suor Arcangela*, 132–34, 277, and Gaspare De Caro, “Girolamo Brusoni,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 14 (1972): 712–20.

18. “La carriera delle lodi di V. S. non dee restringersi in questo foglio; già che il mondo l’è divenuto Teatro delle meraviglie della sua penna.” See Loredano, *Lettere*, 431. Giovanni Francesco Loredan (1606–1661) was a member of the Venetian nobility and a senator of the Venetian Republic. In 1630 he founded the Academy of the Incogniti. He was a prolific writer of, among many other works, *Degli scherzi geniali* (1632), *La Dianea* (1635), *Bizzarrie accademiche* (1638), *L’Adamo* (1640), *Novelle amorose* (1643, 1651), and his *Lettere* (1657). He also wrote plays and published an edition of Giovan Battista Marino’s *Lira* (1633). Loredan dedicated the third part of his novel *Hibraimo* to Tarabotti. See Loredano, *Lettere*, 435; see also Letizia Panizza, “Volume Editor’s Introduction,” in Tarabotti, *Paternal Tyranny*, 8n16.

19. On the libertine character of members of the Academy of the Incogniti, see Giorgio Spini, *Ricerca dei libertini: La teoria dell’impostura delle religioni nel Seicento italiano* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1983), 145–76. On Loredan’s influence on the Venetian press, see Mario Infelise, “Ex ignotus notus? Note sul tipografo Sarzina e l’Accademia degli Incogniti,” in *Libri, tipografi, biblioteche: Ricerche*

literary scene in Venice at the time, they read her work and shared it with others.<sup>20</sup> Yet Tarabotti's relationship with these and other members of the Academy of the Incogniti, as a recent critic has put it, was characterized by "a precarious equilibrium, in which sincere appreciation and demonstrations of esteem existed alongside an impossible divide that separated the fierce and unmitigated misogyny of the members of the academy and the feminist assertions of the nun."<sup>21</sup>

Tarabotti's first work, probably begun shortly after her entrance at Sant'Anna, was a polemical treatise in three books initially entitled *Tirannia paterna* (*Paternal Tyranny*). In it she accuses men of incarcerating women in convents out of avarice and pride; she denounces the state for encouraging the practice in order to limit the size of the nobility and the church for failing to uphold the decrees of the Council of Trent against forced monachization and for not permitting the involuntary religious to dissolve their vows. She argues for the education of women and their participation in public life; she decries the misogyny of men and their cruel treatment of women, which men justify by insistence on female inferiority and necessary subjection. She extolls the virtues of women and argues that the world would recognize their superiority were they allowed an education.

Tarabotti claims to have written the treatise over a period of nine months while she recovered from a bout of the illness that plagued her throughout her life, but she returned to the work again and again over the years, making changes to it as late as 1644. She renamed it *La Semplicità ingannata* (Innocence deceived), perhaps hoping to improve her chances for publication, but her outspoken criticism of specific individuals, the church, and the state proved to be too great an obstacle for publication in Italy. She had hopes to publish it in France but they too were frustrated. Despite these setbacks, she persisted until she found persons sympathetic to her cause and a publisher out of the reach of the Roman Church: in the last two years of her life she had the satisfaction of learning that printing

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*storiche dedicate a Luigi Balsamo*, ed. Arnaldo Ganda (Florence: Olschki, 1997), 207–23, and Infelise, "Books and Politics."

20. Bissari read the *Antisatira* to members of the Academy Olimpica in Vicenza; Buoninsegni to friends in the academy in Siena. For her renown in Vicenza, see Pietro Paolo Bissari, *Le scorse olimpiche, trattenimenti accademici* (Venice: Francesco Valvasense, 1648), 12–13, 190–91. Bissari calls her "quella divina Tarabotta, anzi terremoto, ... pregio delle donne, rossor de gli huomini, portento delle virtù, stupor del sesso, miracolo dell'età" (that divine Tarabotti, indeed an upheaval on earth ... pride of womankind, an embarrassment for men, a wonder of virtue, a marvel of her sex, a miracle of the age). Bissari, *Le scorse*, 190–91. For Siena, see Giuseppe Portigliotti, *Penombre claustrali* (Milan: Fratelli Treves, 1930), 285.

21. "un precario equilibrio, in cui i sinceri apprezzamenti e le dimostrazioni di stima si affiancarono a un'incolmabile frattura tra la feroce ed esasperata misoginia degli accademici e le rivendicazioni femminili della monaca." Emanuela Bufacchi, "La mia semplicità è stata ingannata dalla sagacia del serpente": Polemiche di Girolamo Brusoni con Arcangela Tarabotti," *Esperienze letterarie* 40, no. 2 (2015): 61.

was underway with the Elzevir Press in Leiden (Netherlands), but she died in 1652—two years before the book appeared.<sup>22</sup> In 1661 it was condemned by the Holy Office and placed on the *Index of Forbidden Books*.<sup>23</sup>

Another work that would not appear during her lifetime—indeed not until it was rediscovered by Francesca Medioli and published in 1990—was a scathing treatise entitled *Inferno monacale* (Convent Hell) in which Tarabotti compared life in the convent to tragic theater and to hell on earth.<sup>24</sup> She mentions another work, *Purgatorio delle malmaritate* (Purgatory of unhappily married women), which was to be part of a Dantean trilogy together with *Inferno monacale* and with her first published work, *Paradiso monacale* (Convent Paradise). If she actually wrote the *Purgatorio* it has been lost, but much of what surely would have comprised it can be found in her defense of women in the *Antisatira*. In her letters she mentions four other works that have been lost: three on religious subjects—the *Contemplazioni dell'anima amante* (Contemplations of the loving soul), the *Via lastricata per andare al cielo* (Paved road to Heaven), and *Luce monacale* (Convent light)—and a play entitled *Ardire, comedia* (Boldness, a comedy).<sup>25</sup>

22. *La Semplicità ingannata di Galerana Baratotti* [pseud.] (Leiden: Gio. Sambix [Elzevir], 1654). Late in the publishing process Tarabotti wrote to Ismaël Boulliau, who was seeing the book to press, asking to entitle it *La tirannia paterna, ovvero Semplicità ingannata di Galerana Barcitotti consacrata a Dio*, but her request must have arrived too late. See Westwater, “A Rediscovered Friendship,” 69–70, 70n9, 71 fig. 1, 74 fig. 3. There was a second edition bearing the same title, date, and place of publication, but entirely reset and probably printed in Venice. For a description of the two editions, see Simona Bortot’s “Nota al testo” to her edition of the *Semplicità ingannata*, 155–62.

23. Costa-Zalessow (“La condanna all’Indice”) provides the full text of the Holy Office’s  *censura* in Latin with commentary in Italian; she includes two lists of objections to the work made by examiners in Natalia Costa-Zalessow, “Tarabotti’s ‘La semplicità ingannata’ and Its Twentieth-Century Interpreters, with Unpublished Documents Regarding Its Condemnation to the ‘Index,’” *Italica* 78 (2001): 320–21. Panizza (“Volume Editor’s Introduction,” in Tarabotti, *Paternal Tyranny*, 27–29) provides a summary of the accusations and, in her notes, direct quotations from some of the Latin documents.

24. Tarabotti, *L’Inferno monacale*. On this text see also Nicoletta Lissoni, “La ‘ragion di stato’ monacale nel pensiero di Arcangela Tarabotti,” in *Amazzoni, sante, ninfe, variazioni di storia delle idee dall’antichità al Rinascimento*, ed. Davide Bigalli (Milan: Cortina, 2006), 247–60, and Nancy L. Canepa, “The Writing Behind the Wall: Arcangela Tarabotti’s ‘Inferno monacale’ and Cloistral Autobiography in the Seventeenth Century,” *Forum italicum* 30 (1996): 1–23.

25. In a letter Tarabotti tells her friend Betta Polani that she is sending her these three works which she may publish, if she sees fit: “Le *Contemplazioni dell’anima amante* (Contemplations of the loving soul), la *Via lasciata del cielo* (The Road to Heaven Abandoned), e la *Luce monacale* (Convent light) siano stampate, se così piace a Voi.” Tarabotti, *Letters*, 82–83 (letter 26). The title of the second of these works appears in a different form in the letter to the signori Guerigli that introduces Tarabotti’s letter collection. This letter, written by Giovanni Dandolo (1613–1661), a Venetian aristocrat, friend of Tarabotti, and her frequent correspondent, instead cites her work as the *Via lastricata per andare al cielo* (Paved road to Heaven). Tarabotti, *Letters*, 49–50. Dandolo’s version fits better in this group of works, and “lasciata” could be a typesetter’s error for “lastricata,” but ultimately both titles are plausible. In a letter addressed to her friend the French ambassador Nicolo Bretel de Gremouville, she claims to be writing