

## The Trouble with Odours in Petrarch's *De Remediis*

Alessandro Arcangeli

A chapter of Petrarch's Latin work *De remediis utriusque fortunae* [*Remedies for Fortune Fair and Foul*] is devoted – to say it in the style of its Elizabethan translator, the doctor Thomas Twyne – to 'pleasaunt smelles'. Considering the immense popularity that the book enjoyed in Europe for centuries, and the relative obscurity of the chapter on odour today, this essay revisits this short text with the aim of moving towards a fuller understanding of it and a better sense of its position within the framework to which it undoubtedly belongs – the cultural history of smell. In the context of the present collection of essays and of its *fil rouge*, the collaboration of the other senses with the visual, the fact that a dialogue on smell is there at all in the *De Remediis* is of some interest. Its presence allows us to perceive that Petrarch attached a significant importance to that sense and believed it relevant to the overall discursive project of his book. This is not to deny that the surrounding sections of the volume also abound with reference to the visual. However, as the present reader will be able to sense, even these few pages testify to the value attached to olfactory experience, which was characterized by a rich cultural tradition and social significance. By examining the representation of odours in a woodcut illustration drawn from the later, printed edition of the *De remediis*, we also have the opportunity to test in one example how Renaissance visual culture engaged with the sense of smell.

As nowadays the *De remediis*, completed in 1366, is far from being Petrarch's best-known work, I begin by introducing in brief the textual framework of the chapter, subsequently describing and commenting on its subject matter, style and the form of its argument. I conclude by looking at a selection of near contemporary writings on smell to give a sense of the context of Petrarch's attitudes.

Given that Petrarch's chapter on odours is short and not particularly idiosyncratic, it would prove more difficult in this case than with the other chapters from the same book, to establish a clear history of its afterlife in

Renaissance intertextuality. Sixteenth-century writers tended to borrow (often silently) from one another, and provide contemporary audiences with infinite variations on popular themes: a practice which turned quotations into commonplaces and made multiple texts echo in readers' memories. Whilst reconstructions of the circulation of ideas are easier to negotiate for other sections of the *De remediis* it must certainly have been the case that multitudes of Renaissance readers and writers would have been familiar with the chapter on smell. Ideas from it would immediately come to mind when thinking of its subject matter in other contexts.

First, let us set Petrarch's text loosely in relation to the current, growing secondary literature on the history of the senses. The field of sensory history is obviously one of *longue durée* and virtual immobility of habits and perceptions. However, in a tour-de-force characteristic of some German *Kulturgeschichte*, the late Middle Ages has emerged as a period that witnessed a major social differentiation in the forms of sensual perception and in their cultural evaluation – though, according to this interpretation, the sixteenth-century represented the really critical turning point:

Smell perception began to change when it came under the impact of the optimistic anthropology that took shape in the Renaissance. While retaining the perception of the body as a source of smell, anthropologists praised the beauty and excellence of the human body, and supported requests for purposeful actions to the end of preventing smell emission and closing off the body against its physical and social environments. These demands were fuelled by the novel perception of the nose as an organ in itself rather than as a mere tube connecting the brain to the outside world. The art of creating good scents developed into an aspect of the culture of the rulers' and aristocrats' courts. [...] By contrast, the absence of the willingness and capability to comply with the novel code of ethical norms and educational standards among the peasant farming population and urban artisans characterised these groups as uneducated folk.<sup>1</sup>

It would be interesting to examine Petrarch's text against such historiographical background. However, generalizations are always problematic; and Mark Jenner has efficaciously warned us against histories of the sensorium in which 'sight is always triumphing just as the middle class is always rising'.<sup>2</sup>

Although smell is considered to be the most neglected of the five senses,<sup>3</sup> it is far from lacking a history. Odours undoubtedly played an important role in the ritual and symbolic life of Classical Antiquity and, precisely because of that background, subsequently posed specific problems of Christianization.<sup>4</sup> The odour of death inspired fear, and stench was inevitably attached to sin and hell. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the odour of sanctity – not intended as pure metaphor – developed as a topos, and was also represented in medieval narrative sources.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout the whole of Europe, Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortunae* was for centuries the best-known work of the Italian poet and humanist, and one of the most frequently consulted and cited secular manuals of moral advice.<sup>6</sup> It survives in scores of manuscript copies and early printed editions, both in the original Latin and in a variety of European vernacular

translations: a checklist of extant manuscripts compiled by Nicholas Mann counts 150 of the whole text and major fragments, plus another 100 between minor fragments, epitomes and tabulae, particular versions, and translations (into Catalan, English, French, German, and Italian); while an earlier bibliographical note by Willard Fiske on printed editions numbers nearly hundred, between independent editions and inclusion in collective works (among them, translations into an even wider variety of languages).<sup>7</sup> *De remediis* subsequently went out of fashion, which turned it into a literary work only familiar to a community of scholars. And given that it has not yet benefited from a critical edition, and that until very recently the most practical way of consulting it was through early modern editions, a short presentation of its structure and philosophy is appropriate here.<sup>8</sup>

The work is divided into two books. The first regards remedies against the moral dangers implicit in good fortune, the second deals with how to cope with adversity, both in the case of external misfortune and as an effect of voluntary sin. Accidental circumstances of life therefore offer individual conscience the opportunity to prove itself and find the rewarding path of virtue. The final section leads the reader to a careful meditation on death. The model is classical and has ancient and medieval precedents; it has been shown to include resonances from both Christian and classical philosophy, not excluding an unusual degree of scepticism. The literary ploy adopted by Petrarch is that of a psychomachia, a spiritual struggle between Reason (*Ratio*) and a selective representation of human emotions – Joy (*Gaudium*), Hope (*Spes*), Sorrow (*Dolor*) and Fear (*Metus*) – that form the characters of a dialogue, each intervening when the subject matter calls for them.<sup>9</sup>

Notwithstanding the dominant moral argument against worldly values, it would be a mistake to identify too quickly the persona of Reason as the mouth-piece of Petrarch himself. After all, the dialogue is precisely the literary genre that allows the author to explore different points of view and the *De remediis* would not seem to form an exception to the rule. Also, although 'in accordance with a catechetical dialogue model, Joy, the opponent, cannot get more than a sentence in at any time', it could express some values and concerns from which the author may be far from immune.<sup>10</sup>

Given the limited space or low status that modern *Weltanschauungen* appear to reserve to the nose and olfactory sensorium, it perhaps comes as a surprise to find that, within the first book (that is, *Remedies for Fortune Fair*), a series of chapters devoted to pleasures, which are presented as a mark and a gift of prosperity (I, 22–8), opens with one *de suavi odore*. The implication seems to be that, to the fourteenth-century literary mind, odours featured among the first types of pleasure requiring citation and some degree of attention.

The text is constructed by recourse to classical exempla and commonplaces. Modern editions and translations offer us help on the front of the identification of possible sources Petrarch may have known and utilized, although precise references prove to be more difficult due to the wide circulation of ancient and medieval topoi via anthologies, florilegia

and encyclopedias, as well as via direct reading of classical texts. Naturally, Petrarch, as one of the leading European humanists – and, on a variety of fronts, the man to whom we credit the invention of modern intellectual life – had access to and familiarity with a good number of original ancient texts.<sup>11</sup>

In the dialogue, Joy expresses a delight in pleasant odours; Reason classifies them as pertaining either to food or apparel, and therefore judges them within the context of the moral concerns traditionally attached to these two fields. It touches on a variety of topics of significant interest, such as the relation between food and climate, the contrast between the artificial and the natural (and its variation through time), and the gender connotations of fragrance.

From the opening, Reason distinguishes between the odours pertaining to food (*victus*), and thus provoking appetite, and those related too apparel (*vestitus*), leading to ‘wantonnesse’. She also identifies a third category – namely, smells desired for their own sake: women’s perfumes are mentioned as belonging in this group, whose smell is worse (*turpior*) than that of such natural products as flowers and apples, and is sought for pure vanity, not unlike some pleasures which appeal to the eyes and the ears. Reason feels that her interlocutor should know this lesson from his acquaintance with classical authors but Joy keeps repeating, with variations, his refrain: ‘My studie is upon sweete odours’. Reason warns him that he should rather invest his efforts in gaining a good reputation. The twist in moral advice is allowed by recourse to the metaphor of the odour of fame: that of a good one is said to be good; much stronger, however, is the stench of ill repute (‘more strong then the sent of any spices whyle they are a beatyng, or of brymstone whyle it is a burnyng’). To this Reason attaches the comment: ‘of these savours, the mynde judgeth, and not the nose’ (*non nares, sed mens iudicat*).

The reference to the organ that makes the judgment, and is thus responsible for the complete human olfactory experience, signals an ongoing debate in Western intellectual history. In fact, the status of the sense of smell was fairly problematic in ancient and medieval science and philosophy. Aristotle’s account of smell in his *De anima* admitted from the start that its definition was rather difficult, since the object of the sense in question was less clear than in the case of colours and sounds, and smell in humans is less developed than in other animals. Odours do not have separate names and tend to be called by the names of flavours, via an analogy between smell and taste that is evident throughout the literature. A minor scientific controversy developed during the Middle Ages about the means by which odour is transmitted. While Plato had thought in terms of vapours emanating from the odoriferous object, the fact that some birds could apparently smell a decaying carcass from a remarkable distance seemed to prove Aristotle’s opinion of air and water as means of transmission.<sup>12</sup>

Medicine had an obvious interest too, holding that corrupted air and bad smells played a dominant role in explanations of the etiology of disease.

Doctors in the Hippocratic tradition were always alert to these dangers. The senses were an integral part of Hippocratic medicine, from the use of the patient's sensory in diagnosis, to interventions in specific forms of therapy. Although it has been observed that Galen's techniques at the bedside did not rely much on the exercise of the physician's olfactory capacities,<sup>13</sup> Galen's physiological description of how olfaction works is the ultimate source of Petrarch's comment on how we perceive strong smells, since, for the ancient physician, the actual organ of smell was the brain, the nose being only a channel through which air travels. During the Middle Ages, Avicenna supported the Galenic theory, while some compilers of encyclopedias of natural philosophy preferred to side with Aristotelian physiology.<sup>14</sup> I am not aware of any specific source for Reason's apparent suggestion that degree matters, and that a stronger odour would be the department of the mind, while a feeble one could remain the dominion of the nose. It may suffice to say that the whole matter was controversial, and a medieval intellectual would probably have been exposed to a multiplicity of forms of understanding and explanation of sensorial experience.

According to Reason the seeker of pleasure (*voluptas*) is 'led by sense', however, if odours are sought for the purpose of health, they are acceptable in moderation, 'for a mylde smel comforteth a fayntyng spirite'. Consideration then moves from individual idiosyncrasy to the variations that depend on culture and ethnicity. Invoking a tribe 'that dwel about the head of Ganges', and who 'eate no meat at al', but are instead 'noorished only by the smel of a wyld apple', Reason explains: 'whensoever they traveyle abrode they cary nothyng els with them then that good & holsome fruite: and are so impatient of stynke, that as the pure ayre noorysheth them, so an infected smel stiflith them. A delicate complexion, which so lyveth and dyeth.'

Petrarch's source here is Pliny (*Nat. hist.* vii, 25), synthetically retold by such a popular medieval compilation as the *Gesta Romanorum*.<sup>15</sup> This passage clearly appealed to the imagination of the Renaissance reader and this detail of the chapter was selected for visual representation in the woodcuts that accompanied the sixteenth-century German translation of the *De remediis*. Whilst Petrarch's book was the object of decorative illumination already in its manuscript tradition, the images tended to concentrate on selective topics and the main allegories of the treatise, rather than proposing a visual counterpart to the subject of each chapter. However, the first complete German translation of the book, edited by the Strasbourg humanist Sebastian Brant, was extensively illustrated. Although Brant died in 1521 before seeing the publication, it is allegedly from his specific iconographic suggestions that the anonymous Petrarch Master, sometimes identified with the Augsburg artist Hans Weiditz, illustrated the text with 260 vivid woodcuts, which subsequently appeared in several, variously titled editions of two different German translations of the work.<sup>16</sup>

A view of the interior of an apothecary's shop dominates the right-hand side of the woodcut illustrating the dialogue on smell (Figure 1.1). Vases



1.1 Anonymous Petrarch Master, woodcut illustration from Francesco Petrarch, *Von der Artzney bayder Glück, des guten und widerwertigen* (Augsburg, 1532).

decorated with coats of arms contain spices and labelled bottles holding perfumed liquids occupy shelves at the rear of the shop. In the background, a youth pours perfume on his hair while apparently smelling more perfume from his right hand; on the right, a woman scatters herbs on linen in a chest. In the foreground stands a dandy, his head wreathed, smelling a flower, while holding an apple in his other hand. The detail that concerns me here, however, appears on the left-hand side of the woodcut. Outside the shop's door, we see a garden where a woman and bearded men in exotic clothing look at and smell fruits and flowers. They do not resemble Pliny's *astomi* (literally, mouthless) tribe, but they surely suggest the passage – in likely connection with the hunger for travel writing and the exotic which European readers developed in the age of discoveries.<sup>17</sup> Thus the German woodcut presents the reader with a combination of a scene from everyday life and a supposedly ethnographic *exemplum*; the two parts together unite to convey a significant amount of information on the issues under investigation in the chapter, and so testify to the successful effort made by a humanist in turning argument and narrative into image: it was the fate of this iconographic series to remain in circulation over the following two centuries and therefore exercise some cultural influence.<sup>18</sup>

The case of the perfume eaters is the device by which Reason introduces the wider issue of cultural variation. This is exposed by a contrast between people living in different zones and under diverse climates. Environmental theories had enormous influence on European intellectual history, and found

their first systematic exposition in the Hippocratic treatise *Airs, Waters, Places*, which was well known during the Middle Ages in more than one Latin translation.<sup>19</sup>

The information related by Reason tends to be more specific and derived from literary and encyclopedic sources. That 'every nation towards the East, beyng pampered with the delicacie of the ayre, as they are less careful of meate, so have they less plentie, and are more desirous of sweete odours; and from thence forsooth this curiositie came first unto us' could be read, again, in Pliny and Solinus, already charged with the negative connotations of a morally corrupting foreign custom. People from the Middle East ('the Assyrians, the Arabians, and Sabei') – continues Reason to Joy – 'when they were vanquished by your weapons, overcame you with theyr odours' (thus, silently, Joy turns here into a representative of Roman civilization, and is faced with the reality of its decline). An edict of the Censors in 188 BCE – adds Reason – tried to stop the import of foreign ointments into Rome, but subsequent generations ignored it by bringing them even into the Senate.

The dialogue introduces several *exempla* (from Livy, Suetonius and Florus), which show people variously falling into disgrace because of their love for perfumes. The most dramatic is perhaps the suggestion that the eventual defeat of the Carthaginian army owed something to Hannibal's attraction to perfumes. A range of issues are at stake here. The protagonists of the moral tales are all male; thus, as well as a story of foreign influence, the power of odour also bespeaks issues of gender: while women are warned not to put scent on, a man doing it is unequivocally labelled as effeminate. Moreover, embedded therein is a general question of contrast between artifice and nature.<sup>20</sup> On the one hand, 'it cannot be otherwyse, but that those thynges which of nature are delightsome and pleasaunt, should entice a man'. However, 'straunge odours, and the art of perfumyng, and pleasauntly smellyng, is an argument of no natural good smel, and a token of some secrete defectes' – that is, the very fact that a man resorts to the use of perfumes tells us that he has something unpleasant to hide. This tale of deception must always fail, because the sweet smell is a sign of the bad smell it conceals.

A similar scepticism appears again in a passing reference to the topos of Christ having his feet anointed by Mary Magdalene. The sensual (and unmanly) appeal of smell is played down by imagining that Christ is 'not delighted with the pleasauntnesse of the odours, but with the affection and teares of the offerer'. On the whole, though, the author's choice of topics falls within a tradition of learned writing on the sense of smell as morally suspect and ends with a quotation, from Augustine's *Confessions* (x, 32), recommending indifference toward perfumes.

In the neighbouring field of medieval Christian ethics, after the Seven Deadly Sins and the Ten Commandments, the Five Senses offered one of the most frequently adopted systems of classification of sins, both in the literature specific to the administration of the sacrament of penance and in pastoral literature in general. It is interesting to register that, in this context too,

moral condemnation of excess did not exclude an appreciation of the positive potential of the medium: while the senses could lead to sin and be significantly tarnished for so doing, they were by no means perceived as negative *per se*.

A range of theological works from different genres, written between the late twelfth and the mid-thirteenth century, devote a significant space to the moral examination of sense perception.<sup>21</sup> *Perambulavit Iudas* is a *forma confessionis* probably written by the thirteenth-century Oxford scholar and Bishop of Lincoln Robert Grosseteste for the personal use of an acquaintance, apparently an abbot. In a remarkable exercise of introspection, a paragraph warns its reader, among others, against the sins connected with the sense of smell. He is invited to confess to have sought inordinate pleasure by applying perfumed herbs to his nostrils and by sprinkling perfumes in places where he intended to sleep or read and work, and to admit to having excessively delighted in the odour of spices, ointments, food, drink and sauces, in a way that satisfied his pleasure for smell before even experiencing taste. The penitent also acknowledges desiring more succulent food than it may be sufficient or appropriate for him to savour, for instance when illness obliges him to consume simpler meals, but the perceived smell of roasting meat stimulates his appetite. However, there is another, far less predictable and highly significant side to this model confession. Smell is also a means of social interaction, a sense that may reveal the status or some personal circumstances about our neighbour, and which a devout Christian should not use to mark distances or express negative judgement, particularly if he is a person in a position of authority and responsibility towards others, as is the case for Grosseteste and the religious community for which this moral lesson was conceived. The penitent confesses having excessively turned up his nose when sitting, standing or walking with others, if he smelt some bad air or any other unpleasant odour, as if he were all scented and clean ('whereas I am very much unclean'). Similarly, he repents for turning his head away or by any other form of gesture displaying intolerance of the disgusting vapours exhaled by other people around him, either by breathing or spitting, or for some kind of sickness. The fact that such behaviour was labelled as sinful bears significant witness to the concern expressed by medieval religious thought about the capital vice of pride and the value attached to mutual respect and social cohesion.<sup>22</sup>

A few years earlier, the Parisian master Raoul Ardent (d. c. 1200) expressed similar concerns within the detailed analysis of the sensorium included in his *Speculum universale*. The theological nature of the text orientates a classification of *odoratus*, which includes more metaphorical 'moral' and 'intellectual' varieties. Its more concrete *corporalis* species is further articulated into a clean (*mundus*) version, to which Raoul contrasts a series of negative forms: the lustful (*luxoriosus*) sense of smell typical of whores; the 'voluptuous' and the 'gluttonous'; but also, the turning up of one's nose (*subsannans odoratus*) out of pride (*per superbiam*), thus displaying annoyance and contempt towards everyone and everything; as well as the blowing one's nose (*exsufflans odoratus*) to show disgust for 'the smell of the poor, the breath of the sick, the



smell of and contact with the dead'.<sup>23</sup> If olfaction is known to our own day to mark distinctively 'the odour of the other', awareness of this fact has itself a long history, and cultural attitudes on the matter do not always fit simplified visions of historical developments.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, far from implying a wholesale condemnation or demonization of smell and the other senses – as the black legend of the Middle Ages would have us believe – the standard Christian doctrine on the matter aimed at supervising these aspects of human experience, by warning against improper use and thus liberating their innocent and even pious potential. How far Petrarch was aware and in tune with these attitudes and concerns, is not explicitly revealed in *De remediis*. But his biography would suggest, at least, a likely familiarity. We should not ignore the strength of the pastoral theology of the contempt for the world and for man, and the close family resemblance it presented, for a humanist, with moral concerns inherited from ancient philosophy. Nevertheless, the sources we have just revisited would suggest a more nuanced picture of predominant cultural orientations.

If Petrarch's text testifies to classical and Christian moral concerns, it brings us back to a cultural world in which the olfactory was a highly significant dimension, and does not completely deny the value of natural positive sensation: Reason's only apparent monologue is intermittently troubled by Joy's insistence on his love for sweet smells. A century later, their power would play a paramount role in the ideas on how to nourish and refresh the spirit that were held and preached by Marsilio Ficino.<sup>25</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Harald Kleinschmidt, *Perception and Action in Medieval Europe* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 59–74 (quotation from pp. 70, 72). As examples of 'anthropologist' the author cites Giannozzo Manetti and Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola.
- 2 Mark S.R. Jenner, 'Civilization and Deodorization? Smell in Early Modern English Culture', in Peter Burke, Brian Howard Harrison and Paul Slack (eds), *Civil Histories: Essays presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 127–44 (quotation from p. 143).
- 3 See the recent statement, opening a chapter on the subject: 'Historical writing on the history of smell, measured by quantity, has some way to go before it catches up with that on hearing.' Mark M. Smith, *Sensory History* (Oxford, 2007), p. 59.
- 4 Béatrice Caseau, 'Euodia. The Use and Meaning of Fragrances in the Ancient World and their Christianization (100–900 AD)' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 1994); Smith, pp. 59–74.
- 5 Martin Roch, 'Odeurs extraordinaires et émotions au haut Moyen Age', in Pirooska Nagy and Damien Boquet (eds), *Le Sujet des émotions au Moyen Âge* (Paris, copyright 2008, 2009 printing), pp. 433–63.
- 6 It has been stated that 'until after the days of Erasmus, no secular production in modern Latin literature was familiar to so large a public': Willard Fiske, *Francis*

- Petrarch's Treatise 'De remediis utriusque fortunae': text and version* (Florence, 1888), p. 2; repr. in François Petrararch, *Les Remèdes aux deux fortunes. De remediis utriusque fortune (1354–1366)*, ed. and trans. C. Carraud (2 vols, Grenoble, 2002), vol. 2, pp. 95–142.
- 7 Nicholas Mann, 'The manuscripts of Petrarch's "De remediis": a checklist', *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 14 (1971): 57–90; see Fiske, *Francis Petrarch's Treatise*. The earliest vernacular translation was the French one, achieved in 1378 at the request of King Charles V. Between 1502 and 1606 translations in Czech, Spanish, French, German, Italian, English and Dutch were printed.
  - 8 As well as modern translations – such as the English one provided by Conrad H. Rawski (ed. and trans.), *Petrarch's Remedies for Fortune Fair and Foul: A Modern English Translation of De remediis utriusque fortune, with a Commentary* (5 vols, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Ind., 1991) – we now have at our disposal the Latin text included in Petrarch, *Remèdes*.
  - 9 On Petrarch's book: Klaus Heitmann, *Fortuna und Virtus: eine Studie zu Petrarca's Lebensweisheit* (Cologne, 1958); Timothy Kircher, 'On the Two Faces of Fortune', in Victoria Kirkham and Armando Maggi (eds), *Petrarch: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works* (Chicago, Ill., 2009), pp. 245–53. On the Renaissance dialogue: Leonid M. Batkin, *Gli umanisti italiani: stile di vita e di pensiero*, trans. G. Alifredi (Rome, 1990); Peter Burke, 'The Renaissance Dialogue', *Renaissance Studies* 3 (1989): 1–12; Virginia Cox, *Renaissance Dialogue: Literary Dialogue in its Social and Political Contexts, Castiglione to Galileo* (Cambridge, 1992).
  - 10 The point is made by Eva Kushner, 'Renaissance Dialogue and Subjectivity', in Dorothea Heitsch and Jean-François Vallée (eds), *Printed Voices: The Renaissance Culture of Dialogue* (Toronto, 2004), pp. 229–41 (quotation from p. 231), with reference to a series of dialogues dealing with intellectual matters (books, authors, academic and professional titles), particularly close to Petrarch's heart. The same group of chapters has been the object of a separate English edition: Francesco Petrarch, *Four Dialogues for Scholars*, ed. and trans. C.H. Rawski (Cleveland, Ohio, 1967).
  - 11 Text and notes in Petrarch, *Remèdes*, vol. 1, pp. 114–19; vol. 2, pp. 235–7. Rawski, vol. 1, pp. 65–9; vol. 2, pp. 122–5. My quotations are from Francesco Petrarch, *Physicke against Fortune, aswell prosperous, as adverse, conteyned in two Bookes*, trans. T. Twyne (London, 1579); a facsimile reproduction with an introduction by B.G. Kohl (Delmar, N.Y., 1980), fols 29r–30v.
  - 12 Thomas K. Johansen, 'Aristotle on the Sense of Smell', *Phronesis* 41/1 (1996): 1–19; T.K. Johansen, *Aristotle on the Sense-Organs* (Cambridge, 1998); Simon Kemp, 'A Medieval Controversy about Odor', *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 33/3 (1997): 211–19.
  - 13 Vivian Nutton, 'Galen at the Bedside: The Methods of a Medical Detective', in W.F. Bynum and Roy Porter (eds), *Medicine and the Five Senses* (Cambridge, 1993, repr. 2004), pp. 7–16.
  - 14 Richard Palmer, 'In bad odour: smell and its significance in medicine from antiquity to the seventeenth century', in Bynum and Porter (eds), *Medicine and the Five Senses*, pp. 61–8; also Jenner, 'Civilization and Deodorization?'. See Avicenna, *Canonis libri I, III et IV*, trans. Gerardo da Cremona, comm. J. Despars (3 vols, Lyons, 1498), liber 3, fen 5, tract. 1, 'De olfactu' (the authoritative mid-fifteenth-century commentary is by a physician who was Chancellor of the University of Paris, and makes also reference to the work of Aristoteles and Averroes; I thank Vivian Nutton for this reference).

- 15 'In oriente contra paradisum sunt homines nihil comedentes, quia os tam modicum habent, ut calamo potum surnant; odore pomorum et florum vivunt. Odore malo subito moriuntur.' *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. 95, 'De hominibus diversarum formarum', available at <http://www.slu.edu/colleges/AS/languages/classical/latin/tchmat/readers/gr/gr10.html> (text adapted from the late-nineteenth-century scholarly edition of an Innsbruck manuscript dating from 1342).
- 16 Francesco Petrarck, *Von der Artzney bayder Glück, des guten und widerwertigen*, trans. P. Stahel and G. Spalatin (Augsburg, 1532); repr., ed. M. Lemmer (Hamburg, 1984). *Hülff, Trost und Rath in allem anligen der Menschen*, trans. S. Virgilius (Frankfurt, 1559). For the editorial history see Fiske.
- 17 The presence in the woodcut of the detail of the perfume eaters is also cited by Palmer, 'In bad odour', p. 63. In an Indian tale recorded by Thompson within the examples of marvels/extraordinary powers of perception, a girl (princess) is so delicate that she can live only on the perfume of flowers: Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* (revised and enlarged edn, 6 vols, Bloomington, Ind., 1955–58), p. F647.12.
- 18 Walther Scheidig, *Die Holzschnitte des Petrarca-Meisters: zu Petrarca's Werk Von der Artzney Baiden Glück des guten und widerwärtigen, Augsburg, 1532* (Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1955), p. 67. For a typology of the woodcuts see: Leopoldine Prosperetti (ed.), 'From Narrative to Image: Petrarck's *Book of Fortune* in the Imagination of a German Humanist', <http://www.library.jhu.edu/bin/y/n/petrarch.pdf>. See also Lina Bolzoni, 'Tra Petrarca e Sebastian Brant: a proposito di una immagine', *Filologia e critica* 30/2–3 (2005): 274–86.
- 19 Genevieve Miller, 'Airs, Waters, and Places in History', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 17 (1962): 129–40; Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore. Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley, Calif., 1967); Jacques Jouanna, 'Notice', in Hippocrate, *Airs, eaux, lieux*, ed. and trans. J. Jouanna (Paris, 1996), pp. 7–173; Federico Borca, *Luoghi, corpi, destini: determinismo ambientale ed etnografia antica* (Rome, 2003).
- 20 On this topic too see Glacken.
- 21 On this topic see Carla Casagrande, 'Sistema dei sensi e classificazione dei peccati (secoli XII–XIII)', *Micrologus* 10 (2002): 33–53.
- 22 Joseph Goering and Frank A.C. Mantello, 'The 'Perambulauit Iudas ...' (*Speculum confessionis*) Attributed to Robert Grosseteste', *Revue bénédictine* 96 (1986): 125–68 (*odoratus* at 151–2); Casagrande, 'Sistema dei sensi'.
- 23 Casagrande, 'Sistema dei sensi' (esp. pp. 44, 52). Closer to Petrarck's own time, the apocryphal *Speculum morale*, which was added early in the fourteenth century to the *Speculum maius* of Vincent of Beauvais, preaches a more traditional advice of taking care (*custodire*) of olfaction, by warning against the sin committed by those who carry scented objects or perfume themselves, houses, beds or clothes, in order to provoke lust. The sensory imagery evoked by the chapter, while discouraging from harming anyone, includes reference to the smell of hell, against which it sets the spiritual odour of God and paradise. See Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum quadruplex*, vol. 3, *Speculum morale* (Douai, 1624; repr. Graz, 1964), col. 880 ('De olfactu').
- 24 On the odour of the other: Constance Classen, *Worlds of Sense: Exploring the Senses in History and across Cultures* (London, 1993), pp. 79–105.
- 25 Palmer, 'In bad odour', pp. 63, 64 and 68.

