In early modern Europe, the bodies of many saints, popes, and prominent individuals were ritually dissected to investigate their spiritual state. Saintly autopsies brought together religious authorities and natural philosophers to understand the boundaries of nature. The dissections of Filippo Neri, Francis de Sales, and Gregory Barbarigo help illustrate how religious authorities searched for signs of the holy in human bodies and medical experts proved their existence.

This project examines the acquisition, circulation, collection, and display of German clockwork automata between 1550 and 1650. These objects engendered new social realities; their imagery and movement directly engaged the imperial politics of the Holy Roman Empire during a period of confessionalization, European global expansion, and the dissolution of the medieval notion of a universal Christian monarchy.

Francis Bacon and his followers envisioned society as a complexly integrated whole, structured by underlying laws and patterns. Such a vision was both realized and refined through social models, which used fictions to reveal the operation of laws and correlations that could not simply be seen in the world at large. Bacon's *New Atlantis* reveals the possibilities and the problems of this approach, illustrating the opportunities for misinterpretation associated with building models.

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