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**'Of air, water, rice and waste: the management of public health in early modern Milan (XVII-XVIII centuries)'**

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Public health (*pubblica sanità*) in Renaissance Milan encompassed ideas as well as practices related to how to maintain the health of the metaphorical (as well as physical) body of the community, at epidemic as well as non-epidemic times. Indeed, Milan's Health Board, founded in 1534, did not deal exclusively with the containment measures aimed to limit epidemics, but also with various, more mundane and sometimes environmental questions such as the management of waters, the cultivation of rice, air salubrity, the disposal of organic waste and the cleanness of streets and dwellings, with the overall goal to preserve public good (*bene pubblico*) and maintain the integrity of the community. By using some untapped early modern (XVI-XVII centuries) archival sources related to the management of environmental threats, this paper will highlight how the practice of public health was the result of complex and somehow unexpected processes of negotiation between several social constituencies (and cultures of knowledge), such as physicians, engineers, landowners, farmers, religious orders, institutions and city dwellers.