

*SISSA is now hosted in what was known in Trieste as the sanatorium “Sanctorio Santorio” named after a physician from Koper and professor at the University of Padua, remembered by his bronze bust which nowadays welcomes visitors at SISSA entrance. But who was Sanctorius Sanctorius? This seminar will shed light on his life and work.*

## **Sanctorius Sanctorius Reconsidered: A New Look on the Origins of Quantification in Medicine**

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**Wednesday, May 19 at 5:30 pm.**

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://sissa-it.zoom.us/j/84200371808>

At the turn of the seventeenth century, the Venetian physician Sanctorius Sanctorius (1561–1636) developed instruments to measure and to quantify physiological change. As trivial as quantitative assessment with regard to health issues might seem to us today – in times of fitness trackers and smart watches – it was a highly innovative step at the time. With his instruments, Sanctorius introduced quantitative research into physiology.

Historical accounts of Sanctorius and his work tend to tell the story of a genius who, almost out of the blue, invented a new medical science, based on measurement and quantification, that profoundly influenced modernity. The aim of my talk is to reconsider this “genius narrative,” examining Sanctorius and his work in the broader perspective of processes of knowledge transformation in early modern medicine. By examining not only those parts of Sanctorius’ works that are or appear to be innovative, but by considering his entire work in the context of its time and in its different facets, I try to shed light on the epistemic processes that made Sanctorius develop his quantitative approach to physiology. In this connection, not only the intellectual, but also and especially the practical dimensions of Sanctorius’ activities are considered. Hereby, I markedly depart from past studies that have usually focused on Sanctorius’ thinking rather than on his making and doing.