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2 **Shepherds with enormous goiters in a Christmas nativity scene (XVI**
3 **century)**

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7 **Keywords** Multinodular goiter · Nativity · Wooden little shepherds

AQ1 *Boccioleto* is a municipality in the Province of Vercelli in the
9 Italian region Piedmont, located about 90 km Northeast of
10 Turin. On leaving the town, along the provincial road leading
11 to Rimasco, the *Oratorio dell'Annunziata* (Sec. XVI), cur-
12 rently deconsecrated, has hosted for several years, by the will
13 of the late priest don Pietro Ferri, works of art from other
14 Chapels recovered throughout the parish territory [1]. The
15 frescoes by Antonio Orgiazzi from 1755, the *cantoria* by
16 Giovanni Antonio d'Alberto in 1767, the wooden altar, work
17 of 1694 by Francesco Antonio d'Alberto are to be mentioned
18 in *Oratorio dell'Annunziata*. The seven wooden statues of
19 the *Compianto sul Cristo Morto* are a sixteenth century work
20 from the sanctuary of the Madonna del Sasso above Palan-
21 cato [1], as also evidenced by D. Minonzio ([http://www.](http://www.societavalsesiana.com/attivita_opere_valsesiane.php)
22 [societavalsesiana.com/attivita_opere_valsesiane.php](http://www.societavalsesiana.com/attivita_opere_valsesiane.php)).

23 Among the works coming from other oratories, we note
AQ2 two wood carvings from unknown artist representing shep-
25 herds with goiters that originally adorned the Christmas



Fig. 1 Two shepherds with enormous goiter by XVI century unknown artist(s), wood, Oratorio dell'Annunziata, Boccioleto (Vercelli), Italy

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nativity scene of the oratory of San Quirico in the hamlet
of Palancato (Fig. 1). Goiter representation was common
in popular art in Italy and in fine arts works, as well, due
to widespread goiter endemia in Italy as suggested by two
recent articles related to goiter representation in Alpes val-
leys and Sicily [2–5].

34 **Compliance with ethical standards**35 **Conflict of interest** The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.36 **Ethical approval** The study was approved by the institutional ethics
37 committee. All procedures performed in the study were in accordance
38 with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments.39 **Informed consent** No informed consent needed.40 **References**

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