

**“Acts and signs pleasing to children”: Musical Angels and Young Viewers in the Fifteenth-Century Florentine Home**

**Volume I**

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**Abstract**

The Renaissance home was the very first space in which the fundamentals of moral education were imparted to new-borns and children, before they began formal schooling. This thesis investigates the hypothesis that images of musical angels would have been intended to act as models for these young members of the household to imitate, with the purpose of “shaping the mind” towards virtuous behaviour. To date, the role of musical angels has only been addressed as part of broader studies dedicated to angels as a whole, or else has focused on the identification of their instruments and music notation.

Using an inter-disciplinary approach, this thesis provides fresh insight into the role of musical angels, and their pedagogic effect on young viewers within the Renaissance home, giving special attention to Florentine sources and case studies. The focus on children and efforts to shape their character involves a consideration of Renaissance education and the overlap between discourses on education and ethics, and in particular contemporary humanist notions advocating the use of positive *exempla*, intended for imitation, in order to impart moral values. This work then highlights a number of similarities between the child-like figures of angels, their musical practice, and contemporary children and their experiences. In order to further explore this theory, this thesis then provides new interpretations of the musical angels within a number of specific artworks that were intended for domestic settings, focusing in particular on Florentine *tondi*, which provide a particularly rich opportunity for the re-evaluation of these figures.

This thesis argues that musical angels, almost always youthful in appearance, were intended to engage young viewers in the home; and that their musical activities were not simply generic, but intended to build specific links with the broader role of musical training in elite education, including moral and religious instruction.

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# Introduction

“Paintings of Angels and Saints are permitted and recommended for the mental benefit of the youngest …

Let your children mirror themselves in [this] first mirror, as soon as they open their eyes.”

Giovanni Dominici, ca. 1400[[1]](#footnote-1)

With these words, the Dominican preacher Giovanni Dominici (1356-1419) gives advice to a Florentine noblewoman about the education of her children. As a testament to fifteenth-century practices, this text has been used time and again in scholarship, especially when discussing the involvement of parents in the moral education of their children – in particular the mother’s – and recommendations on the use of images as pedagogic tools.

The belief that images exercise power over the viewer was a fundamental concept during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and members of the clergy and scholars, such as the artist Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), provided advice on which subjects would be appropriate for display in domestic environments. Among the recommended subjects were stories taken from Roman history in which the protagonist demonstrated their possession of specific virtues, such as courage, charity or chastity; portraits of illustrious individuals or ancestors that would have alluded to similar admirable qualities; and, of course, religious subjects taken both from biblical accounts and from later narratives such as Jacopo da Voragine’s *Legenda Aurea*.

However, while the importance of images in general and the role of particular subjects such as the Virgin Mary as *exempla* have been discussed at length by scholars, Dominici’s statement on the importance of depictions of angels has been somehow neglected, and deserves some long-overdue attention. Dominici’s advice to show images to children that would look similar to them, to fascinate or enchant them (“come simile e dal simile rapito”), has been widely accepted and used in scholarship with regards to images of the Infant Christ and the young Saint John the Baptist. However, angels too were depicted as children of varying ages, from infants, as in *putti*, to young adolescents.

As one of the most ubiquitous presences in the Renaissance Italian world, angels have almost been taken for granted, and their significance has been limited to their role as God’s messengers, and to the rather dutiful task of praising the Lord and adoring the Virgin and Child. The role that these figures could have played in the life and education of an individual has never been comprehensively considered in scholarship. Nonetheless, their common identification as guardians and guides helps to frame them within a moral, pedagogical context. In this light, it is striking to observe that one of the activities in which they are often shown engaged is strongly associated with education and ethical training: making music.

Theories concerning the ethical power of music had developed in antiquity, both in the thought of the ancient Greek mathematician Pythagoras and its transmission through Plato and his late-antique imitators, and in Roman mythography, poetics and rhetorical theory. Such texts were available in fifteenth-century Italy on an unprecedented scale, through both the printing of ancient sources and the revival of their stories and concepts in contemporary texts, most obviously in expert music theory but also, much more ubiquitously, in non-specialist discussions of music.

The study of music was advocated in numerous treatises on education, which were often dedicated to young rulers. Children were encouraged to undertake musical training with private teachers or were taught by other members of the family. They participated in singing and playing musical instruments during public religious celebrations, such as sacred plays and processions. In this last context the connections between children’s musical education and their emulation of angels were made completely explicit, as they took on the role of musical angels in theatrical performances.

In this thesis I will argue that the figures of musical angels within a Christian context, with their childlike features and their gestures familiar from the world of music education, fulfilled Dominici’s advice in providing a model to imitate for young members of the household, contributing to the broader project to instil morality in children by providing them with a readily relatable exemplar. I believe that this was, at least in some specific cases, and likely more generally, the *intention* of artists and commissioners when devising domestic images featuring musical angels. Additionally, and equally importantly, in this thesis I argue that this was the likely *effect* of such images, even when the artist’s intention is impossible to gauge.

Considering this remit, this thesis inevitably crosses several different scholarly fields and topics, each with their own literature and approaches. The focus on children and efforts to shape their character requires engagement with research into Renaissance education, and the intersection between discourses on education and ethics, something that has been a particular concern for writers focussed on the phenomenon of “humanism.” At the same time, the adoption of angels in particular as exemplars draws the thesis also into the realm of domestic devotional practices, a field that has enjoyed particular interest over the past decade, with several major projects and publications. Of course, angels are also a topic in themselves, straddling philosophical and theological domains, along with studies of their distinctive iconography. However, it is not only the images themselves that are important to this thesis, but also their context within the domestic environment, and so literature on Florentine domestic interiors is also fundamental to the project. The study of interior decoration and furnishing, meanwhile, is not only a study of material practices and account books, but considers the role played by images in the ethical lives of viewers, a topic that has been highlighted in much recent art history focussed on the Italian Renaissance, a trend exemplified in Syson and Thornton’s *Objects of Virtue* (2001). Finally, it is very significant to this study that not only images, but also music was commonly associated with moral training, and moreover was ubiquitous in the very same domestic environments; thus, this study deploys research into domestic music-making and the ideologies that supported it.

Various studies have examined the principles and methods of formal education during the Renaissance. William Harrison Woodward’s classic *Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance 1400-1600* (1906), although now more than a century old, remains fundamental for any investigation in this field. Woodward made several fifteenth-century treatises on education available in English translation in his *Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators* (1897), work that has since been updated by Craig W. Kallendorf in an important volume of the I Tatti Renaissance Library entitled *Humanist Educational Treatises* (2002). Eugenio Garin’s mid-twentieth century studies are also significant contributions to the field, especially his *L'educazione in Europa 1400-1600* (1957) and the portfolio of sources published as *Il pensiero pedagogico dello Umanesimo* (1958). More recently, important studies in this area have been carried out by Paul F. Grendler and Robert Black. Grendler’s comprehensive analysis of the changes that took place in curricula between the Late Middle Ages and the Reformation, in particular in relation to the humanistic movement, in his *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning 1330-1600* (1989) and *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (2002), has been particularly influential. Black’s publications on schools and teachers in Late Medieval and Renaissance Florence and Tuscany, such as *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (2003) and *Education and Society in Florentine Tuscany* (2007), have made available an extensive analysis of passages relating to education and study from the 1427 and 1458 *catasti*, and from unpublished Florentine *ricordanze* from the fifteenth century up to 1507.

As the principal efforts of scholars in this field concentrate on formal schooling and university education, the realm of pre-school teaching and its link to the moral development of children has been studied almost exclusively in relation to the wider topic of the history of childhood. Since the publication of Philippe Ariès’ ground-breaking *L'enfant et la famille sous l'ancien régime* in 1960, scholars have analysed attitudes toward children, and the relationship between them and their parents, with some studies focusing on specific parts of the child-rearing process, such as childbirth, wet nursing and the role of the mother. The mother’s role as a “teacher” in the education of children has been re-evaluated in recent decades, primarily thanks to studies carried out by Margaret King, who linked maternal teaching through history with theories on early learning taken from the modern fields of psychology and sociology in her 2008 essay “The School of Infancy: The Emergence of Mother as Teacher in Early Modern Times,” and then at greater length in her book *How Mothers Shaped Successful Sons and Created World History: The School of Infancy* (2014).

While all these studies are fundamental to understanding the context and the specifics of the educational process, they do not consider the way in which morality could be imparted by parents in a more subtle way, by using images and music. Both these devices were thought to be powerful and persuasive in their own right, especially on young, malleable minds. In images of musical angels, their powers of influence are combined, and imbued with Christian meaning. Such images can thus be seen to present a powerful combination of pedagogical practices, aimed at moral and religious instruction. The Renaissance home was the very first space in which the fundamentals of moral education were imparted to new-borns and children before they went out to school; and, in the case of elite families, education often continued in the home at school age, through the use of private tutors. This thesis argues that images of musical angels would have been intended to act as models for these young members of the household to imitate, with the purpose of “shaping the mind” towards virtuous behaviour.

To date, the role of musical angels has only been addressed as part of broader studies dedicated to angels as a whole. Studies such as Marco Bussagli’s *Storia degli angeli: Racconto di immagini e di idee* (1991), Francesco Buranelli and Robin C. Dietrick’s edited collection of essays *Between God and Man: Angels in Italian Art* (2007), and Meredith J. Gill’s *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (2014) have focused mainly on the theological significance and on the evolution of the iconography of the angelic figure, only touching upon musical angels as a relatively small part of a wider context. An exception to this is Reinhold Hammerstein’s remarkable study, *Die Musik der Engel: Untersuchungen zur Musikanschauung des Mittelalters* (1990), which has analysed musical angels from varying perspectives, including their role as models in the self-fashioning of monks. This particular element has also been discussed by other musicologists such as Katherine Powers and Amy Gillette, producing a useful strand of literature that establishes the principle of angels as models to emulate, but locates it in a very different context, namely the ecclesiastical setting. Additionally, some research has focused on the musical instruments that angels play in visual representations and on the techniques depicted, including classic studies by Emanuel Winternitz, and more detailed recent work by Timothy McGee.

Research into musical angels, although acknowledging and exploring their significance during the Renaissance, has yet to consider their function in relation to young viewers in the domestic sphere. When studying the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century domestic interior, the many archival documents that survive from the Florentine area provide an extremely rich foundation upon which to base further investigation. The many decades of intense research into the domestic environment as a whole in Renaissance Florence provides a detailed context within which to seek further insights into the role that images of musical angels in particular played within the home – especially in the case of wealthy families. In 1908, Attilio Schiaparelli’s book *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV e XV* laid the foundations for the study of visual art in the home, using Florence as a case-study. Subsequently, several scholars have focused on Italian, and in particular Florentine, case-studies of domestic art. John K. Lydecker’s PhD dissertation ***The domestic setting of the arts in Renaissance Florence*** (1987**), for instance,** has examined the organisation of the house and its contents, focusing on the acquisition and accumulation of art; while Peter Thornton’s *The Italian Renaissance Interior, 1400-1600* (1991) has analysed the different types of domestic furnishings present in the home.

More recently, the Victoria & Albert Museum’s exhibition and associated publication *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (2006-07), curated by Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis, has shed light on domestic devotional practices and the presence of music within the home, among many other topics. Dennis’ study of music in the home was extended into an important essay on music rooms, published in the major anthology *The Music Room in Early Modern France and Italy* (2012). In 2013, these topics were further developed in the collection of essays *The Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior, 1400-1700. Objects, Spaces, Domesticities*, edited by Erin J. Campbell, Stephanie R. Miller and Elizabeth Carroll Consavari, with each essay focusing on a different regional perspective. Of particular relevance to this thesis is Maria DePrano’s essay “‘Chi vuol esser lieto, sia’: Objects of Entertainment in the Tornabuoni Palace in Florence”, which gives an insight into the types of musical instruments that would have been kept in the domestic space, and in which room. The aforementioned studies touch upon the importance of the involvement of physical senses in the experience of art, especially sight and hearing. The sense of touch is explored by Adrian W. B. Randolph’s *Touching Objects: Intimate Experiences of Italian Fifteenth-century Art* (2015), in which he analyses works of arts in light of their multisensory potential. Despite this extensive body of existing literature, figures of musical angels and their function have not been specifically included in studies on Florentine domestic art.

Recently, a shift can be perceived within domestic studies from a strong focus on domestic art towards an increased awareness of devotional practices within the home. Several recent studies have shed light on personal piety and the intimate relationship of the individual with the divine, including publications which resulted from the University of Cambridge research project “Domestic Devotion: the place of piety in the Italian Renaissance home” (2013-2016), led by Abigail Brundin, Deborah Howard and Mary Laven: *The sacred home in Renaissance Italy* (2018) and *Domestic devotions in Early Modern Italy*, edited by Maya Corry, Marco Faini and Alessia Meneghin, both published in 2018. A similar approach was taken in the anthology *Pregare in casa: Oggetti e documenti della pratica religiosa tra Medioevo e Rinascimento* edited by **Giovanna Baldissin Molli, Cristina Guarnieri and Zuleika Murat (**2018).

Although these publications focus solely on devotional practices within the home, surprisingly none of them consider the function of musical angels within the home. This thesis will seek to contribute to the current body of research by undertaking an interdisciplinary investigation into the role played in a child’s education by these musical companions within the Florentine Renaissance home.

Little, if any, direct written evidence upon this topic survives, and therefore establishing a comprehensive understanding of the context is crucial. The validity of the broad argument presented in this thesis is established in Chapters 1 and 2 by combining several contemporary perspectives which individually are very well attested, and which together strongly imply that young viewers encountering youthful musical angels in their domestic environment would see them as an invitation to emulate their behaviour, in its musical as well as its devotional and ethical dimensions. Chapter 1 considers educative practices in the domestic sphere from childbirth, especially as they pertain to the acquisition of the skill of moral judgement. The importance of the imitation of *exempla* in contemporary theories of education is highlighted. Two sections of the chapter run in parallel, showing that Italians considered both images and music to be morally effective, and indeed that childhood instruction in music was commonly advised as a means of cultivating moral judgement. A final section serves to establish the kinds of musical instruments found in the home, their disposition throughout the house and their relation to younger members of the family. Chapter 2 presents contemporary perspectives on angels, focussing especially on the wide acceptance of these figures as exemplary beings, and as guides and teachers. The common association of angels with children is noted, for example in the casting of theatrical performances. This combination of contextual perspectives, built upon an extremely large portfolio of primary sources, establishes a frame of reference in which the interpretations of individual artworks put forward in the following two chapters appear legitimate and plausible.

Chapters 3 and 4 take different approaches to overcoming the challenge of locating individual artworks within a domestic – as opposed to ecclesiastical or institutional – context. Chapter 3 takes inspiration from Roberta Olson’s study of the *tondo* as an art format associated particularly with domestic devotion, *The Florentine Tondo* (2000). Following a review of the evidence placing *tondi* in the home, this chapter develops Olson’s suggestion that the morphological relationship between *tondi* and circular mirrors offers a powerful metaphor for artworks that were intended to function as moral “mirrors” for their viewers. The chapter then presents detailed interpretations of several Florentine *tondi* that feature musical angels, including examples by Sandro Botticelli, Filippino Lippi and Raffaellino del Garbo. Chapter 4 considers other kinds of artwork for which a domestic setting can be presumed, including domestic furniture, architectural mouldings, mural painting, and mass-produced images, in order to provide a sense of the ubiquity of musical angels in Florentine interiors.

In sum, this thesis builds upon, and attempts to reach beyond, existing studies of musical angels, to present the first account of the musical angel as a subject in domestic art, extensively informed by art-historical scholarship on the ethical and devotional role of images in the domestic sphere. The thesis argues that musical angels, almost always youthful in appearance and presented at presented at heights that would have been clearly visible to children, were intended to engage young viewers in the home, precisely as Dominici indicated; and that their musical activities were not simply generic or ancillary to this function, but intended to build specific links with the broader role of musical training in elite education, including moral and religious instruction.

The images referred to in the text will be presented in a separate volume. The translations in the text are mine unless otherwise stated.

# 1. Moral Education in the Domestic Space

For fifteenth and sixteenth-century Italians, moral education was considered extremely important, and the domestic environment would have been a child’s first classroom, forming the location of many of their earliest lessons. This formative period would have been highly significant in a child’s life, and was considered a hugely important part of their upbringing.

This chapter will introduce the attitudes, theories and historical context which underpinned moral education, and will consider in particular the importance of domestic settings as part of this. This will provide the foundations for the subsequent discussion on the role that depictions of musical angels within the domestic environment would have played, and their intended effect on the moral education of children.

The first section will cover the earliest phase of a child’s life, and how breastfeeding was considered to be fundamental in influencing a newborn’s moral development. The second section will cover teaching in the home, and domestic educational practices which would have formed the next phase in a child’s education. The following two sections, on imitative learning and how images could be used as exempla for learning, will introduce a number of humanist educational theories that were used as a basis for this, and the widespread impact they had on Italian society at this time. Finally, the last two sections will explore the use of music as a tool for teaching morality, and the effect that the presence of music, musical instruments and musicians within the domestic environment would have had on the children who lived within it.

1.1 Beginning the Process: Moral Milk

According to Renaissance Italian sources, the development of virtue began during the earliest stages of life, just after childbirth, and breastfeeding was the very first means used to instil morality in children. Contemporary writers derived this notion from ancient authors, including the philosopher Aristotle (ca. 384-322 BC) and the physician Galen (ca. AD 130-ca. 200).[[2]](#footnote-2) From the surviving literature, it can be understood that the practice of breastfeeding was widely encouraged, and it was considered to be a very important factor in a child’s upbringing, as the milk produced by a mother was reputed to be identical to the blood that sustained the foetus in the womb. The milk produced by women was thought to carry not only physiological nourishment, but also to have the power to shape the mind of the new-born.[[3]](#footnote-3) For this reason, fifteenth-century authors advocated that children should be breastfed by their own mothers rather than by nurses, so that, through this practice, the family’s dignity and nobility would be passed on to her offspring.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Among the ancient texts to which Renaissance writers referred in support of maternal breastfeeding was the treatise *De liberis educandis* (On the Education of Children), attributed to the Greek author Plutarch (ca. AD 46-120). Here, the author states that,

Mothers ought … themselves to feed their infants and nurse them themselves. For they will feed them with a livelier affection and greater care, as loving them inwardly, and, according to the proverb, to the finger-tips … Nature too makes clear the fact that mothers should themselves nurse and feed what they have brought into the world, since it is for this purpose that she has provided for every animal which gives birth to young a source of food in its milk … Mothers would come to be more kindly disposed towards their children, and more inclined to show them affection. Not unnaturally either, I swear; for this fellowship in feeding is a bond that knits kindliness together.[[5]](#footnote-5)

According to Plutarch, breastfeeding was not only a way to provide nourishment to new-borns, but also a strategy through which mothers would develop feelings of care and fondness towards their offspring. Plutarch’s ideas were certainly known by the majority of fifteenth-century scholars, as this treatise was circulated widely, and was printed at least seven times in Italy between 1471 and 1501. For instance, this advocacy of lactation is repeated by the Venetian diplomat Francesco Barbaro (1390-1454), in his 1415 Latin treatise on marriage and wifely duties *De re uxoria* (On Wifely Duties), compiled as a wedding gift for Lorenzo de’ Medici the Elder and Ginevra Cavalcanti. In providing advice on the qualities that a suitable wife should possess, the author gives the greatest importance to her virtue, as this would be a source of inspiration for both her offspring and for all the members of the household.[[6]](#footnote-6)

As highlighted by Margaret King, wives fulfilled a key role in the Renaissance family: they were expected not simply to bear children, but to produce “noble” progeny.[[7]](#footnote-7) The first step towards this was, therefore, that their progeny be breastfed. In Barbaro’s words, “the power of the mother’s food most effectively lends itself to shaping the properties of [a child’s] body and mind to the character of the seed.”[[8]](#footnote-8) Maternal milk was seen as an instrument through which virtue could be transferred from mother to child, “for just as the limbs of an infant can be properly and precisely formed and strengthened, so can his manners be exactly and properly shaped from birth.”[[9]](#footnote-9) Although Barbaro’s treatise was not printed prior to the mid-sixteenth century, it circulated in numerous manuscript copies in Italy, and Barbaro himself declared how pleased he was by its popularity in a letter to Luigi Barozzo dated 10 December 1447, fulfilling a desire he had specifically expressed in the last section of his treatise.[[10]](#footnote-10) The historian and public official Matteo Palmieri (1406-1475), in his *Vita Civile* (Civil Life, ca. 1432-1436), goes even further, stating that “noble mothers who refuse to breastfeed their own children deserve to be hated by them.”[[11]](#footnote-11) This treatise survives in at least eighteen manuscript copies, kept in Italian and European libraries, and was printed twice around the mid-sixteenth century.[[12]](#footnote-12)

Maternal breastfeeding, if the mother was healthy, was also recommended by the physician and professor at the Universities of Padua and Ferrara Michele Savonarola (ca. 1385-1466) in his treatise *Ad mulieres Ferrarienses de regimine pregnantium et noviter natorum usque ad septennium* (To the Women of Ferrara on the Regimen of Pregnant Women and of the New Born up to the Age of Seven Years). [[13]](#footnote-13) This treatise on gynaecological and paediatric matters dedicated to the women of Ferrara, of which two codices survive in Italian libraries, was written in the vernacular between 1450 and 1460.[[14]](#footnote-14) In it, Savonarola reminds mothers that God has given them breasts (*i pecti*) so that they may nourish their children (*a ziò i fioli tuoi nutrichi*).[[15]](#footnote-15) Similar ideas are expressed by the poet and canon in the Papal Curia Maffeo Vegio (1407-1458), in his treatise *De educatione liberorum* (On the Education of Children), written between 1445 and 1448, and printed in Milan in 1491.[[16]](#footnote-16) Vegio highlights that maternal milk is the most appropriate nourishment to feed a mother’s children, as it would not only make them stronger and more resistant to disease, but would also create a bond between them and their mothers.[[17]](#footnote-17)

In promoting maternal breastfeeding, Renaissance writers also generally advised against wet-nursing, which was seen as a hazardous practice for the education of a new-born. Plutarch had already established the basis for this, describing the dangers of having children raised by poorly-educated servants who might act as a bad influence upon them:

The good will of foster-mothers and nursemaids is insincere and forced, since they love for pay … Mothers must endeavour, if possible, to nurse their children themselves; but if they are unable to do this, either because of bodily weakness … or because they are in haste to bear more children, yet foster-mothers and nursemaids are not to be selected at random, but as good ones as possible must be chosen … For youth is impressionable and plastic, and while such minds are still tender lessons are infused deeply into them; but anything which has become hard is with difficulty softened.[[18]](#footnote-18)

It was probably for these reasons that fifteenth-century authors stressed the great care that was to be taken in the choice of an appropriate wet nurse for a child. Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), in his treatise in the form of a dialogue *Della famiglia* (On Family), has one of the characters (Aldovardo) comment upon the qualities to be sought in a wet nurse: she should not be “of immoral character”, and it was advisable to find a woman who was “free, clear and cleanof those vices and defects which infect and corrupt the milk and the blood”.[[19]](#footnote-19) In response to this suggestion, Aldovardo’s cousin Lionardo replies that a father should not worry about finding a wet nurse, as the best choice would always be the child’s mother, whose milk was praised “above any others” by ancient authors.[[20]](#footnote-20) This treatise was written between 1433 and 1434, in the vernacular and therefore more easily accessible to less educated readers.[[21]](#footnote-21) This testifies to the popularity of these beliefs, and although the text was never printed in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, it survives in at least ten manuscript copies in Italian libraries.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Other authors also wrote about this topic: for example, Barbaro emphasised the importance of choosing a well-mannered wet nurse in order to avoid the transmission of detrimental behaviours to the child.[[23]](#footnote-23) The same idea is expressed by Bishop Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464; Pope Pius II from 1458), in his *De liberorum educatione* (On the Education of Children), written in 1444 and dedicated to the ten-year-old King of Bohemia, Ladislas, in which he noted that “training should begin in the very cradle,” and nurses should “have sound judgement, if possible, so that no contagion could be contracted from them, for bad habits stick to you more tenaciously and good ones easily take a turn for the worse.”[[24]](#footnote-24) Even though it was not printed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Italy, this letter of pedagogical advice is further evidence of the common currency of this belief.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Furthermore, Vegio suggests that a wet nurse should be aged between twenty-five and thirty-five years, should be healthy, should not be irascible or melancholic, and should be honest and chaste. To support his argument, Vegio reports his own experience of being breastfed by a nurse who was modest and shy, whose attitude was passed to him as if he had suckled “her heart and soul” (*cor eius atque animam*) together with her milk.[[26]](#footnote-26) In a similar vein, Michele Savonarola lists ten desirable qualities in a nurse, including advice similar to that given by Vegio regarding the nurse’s age and health, with the addition of some specific physical characteristics (such as a strong neck, wide chest and adequate-sized breasts, and that she should be muscular but not fat), and that she should have recently given birth but not be pregnant, and ideally mother to a son, which would be a sign of purer and better blood.[[27]](#footnote-27) In addition, Francesco Patrizi, in his *De regno et regis institutione* (On Ruling and the Institution of Rulers, 1481-1484) dedicated to Alfonso of Aragon, advised on the education of a prince. The author states the importance (even more so than in the case of a common citizen) of finding a nurse who is well-spoken, and fit in both body and soul, “because together with the milk, a man suckles drunkenness, irascibility, laziness, numbness and other similar things.”[[28]](#footnote-28) Together, these treatises provide a comprehensive picture of the link between education and lactation in fifteenth-century Italy.

Although it is difficult to establish the prevalence of maternal breastfeeding versus wet nursing, these treatises testify to the existence of both practices. It could be said that the mere presence of advice on maternal lactation in prescriptive texts was indicative of the widespread practice of hiring wet-nurses, which seems to be confirmed by *ricordanze* records of children being sent out to the countryside to be nursed.[[29]](#footnote-29) However, as Rudolph M. Bell has suggested, it is more likely that this practice was actually not very popular, as prescriptive manuals do not provide advice regarding visiting children who were put out to nurse, but rather provide advice for infants cared for by their own birth mother or by a wet-nurse living in the same house.[[30]](#footnote-30)

As well as moral qualities, it was also believed that brestfeeding could even transmit practical skills. The artist Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), in a conversation with the artist and biographer Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574), declared that, having been wet-nursed by a woman who was a daughter of one stonemason and wife of another, “I suckled, with the nurse’s milk, the chisels and the mallet with which I make figures,” thus crediting her with the fact that he had become a sculptor.[[31]](#footnote-31) Similarly, in his biography of Raphael, Vasari recounts that the artist gained his qualities and exceptional virtues of character through being breastfed by his own mother, in accordance with his father’s will.[[32]](#footnote-32)

Vasari’s observations provide an indication of the popularity that this concept still maintained in the second half of the sixteenth century; and while he only mentions in passing the anecdote about Raphael in the first edition of his *Lives* in 1550, the second edition of 1568 expands upon it further, adding that Raphael’s father knew about the importance of being breastfed by one’s own mother rather than by a wet nurse, and of being raised in the paternal home, rather than in the home of commoners through which his child might have learned coarse manners.[[33]](#footnote-33) It is interesting to note that during this period the verbs “to feed” (*nutrire*) and “to educate” (*educare*) were used almost interchangeably to mean both suckle and educate.[[34]](#footnote-34) This blurring of meanings suggests that nursing, with all the implications of the transmission of virtues or vices, was viewed as an educative practice and was seen to be part of the moral upbringing of children.

The advocacy of maternal nursing is also closely linked with its religious and spiritual connotations. Saint Elizabeth, mother of Saint John the Baptist, and the Virgin Mary, were described in the act of nursing their sons in many writings and were frequently depicted in this attitude in works of art. In one of her sacred tales, probably written during the late 1470s, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, the mother of Lorenzo il Magnifico, envisioned Saint Elizabeth, who held her son and “gave him her breast” while waiting for him to be named.[[35]](#footnote-35)

At the same time, images of the nursing Virgin Mary proliferated across Italy. In a number of depictions, the Virgin Mary is shown appearing to Saints in holy visions, in which her milk acts as a metaphor for her intercession on behalf of humankind. Far more frequently, however, the Virgin is depicted in the act of breastfeeding her son as *Madonna lactans* (fig. 1.1), which, as Megan Holmes suggests, could be interpreted as an idealised model for mothers and wet nurses to follow.[[36]](#footnote-36) This use of images of the Virgin Mary was, for example, advocated by the physician Michele Savonarola, who states, “woman, you should always want to place before your eyes the humble Virgin, mother of the son of God, who breastfed her own child and took good care of him”.[[37]](#footnote-37)

Although prescriptive literature does not necessarily present an accurate picture of contemporary practice, it still exemplifies contemporary advice and recommendations on what was thought best on the topics of marriage and child-rearing, at least from the perspective of their male writers. This contributed to the dissemination of ideas on domestic life and education and testified to the increased attention to household management.[[38]](#footnote-38) With all its moral and spiritual connotations, lactation was the very first method used by parents to instill morality in their offspring, initiating a commitment that would see them involved in their children’s education for many years to come. As a domestic practice, maternal breastfeeding was the most intimate way through which positive values could be passed on in order to encourage the development of virtue.

1.2 Domestic Teaching: Learning the Basics

Having initially absorbed moral values through the natural process of breastfeeding, the next stage of a child’s development required parents to be involved in the teaching process. Scholars and members of the clergy encouraged parents to educate their children at home while they were still of pre-school age.[[39]](#footnote-39) According to Vegio, parents should focus all their effort on “the education of their children” (*in erudiendis filiis*), in order to provide them with the treasures (*thesauros*) of letters and liberal arts (*litterarum ac bonarum artium*), until they reached the age of seven.[[40]](#footnote-40)

The children of the household were cared for mainly by women, a tendency which was supported by Alberti in his book on family care, who declared that, “this whole tender age is more properly assigned to women’s quiet care than to the active attention of men … so let the earliest period be spent entirely outside the father’s arms. Let the child rest, let him sleep in his mother’s lap.”[[41]](#footnote-41) As they would care for children in their first years of life, mothers were largely considered to be responsible for the initial education and development of their children. In Barbaro’s words, “after their offspring have passed their infancy, mothers should use all their skill, care and effort to ensure that their children are endowed with excellent qualities of mind and body”.[[42]](#footnote-42)

It was of great importance that the woman nursing the child was able to speak in a dignified manner, because the child would learn how to speak by imitating her. Fifteenth-century scholars and pedagogues, basing their advice on ancient sources, were very concerned about the acquisition of proper speech by children.[[43]](#footnote-43) For example, Piccolomini declares that, “the words of a mother seasoned with patience and elegance have often been profitable to sons; many have written of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, the fragrance of whose eloquence could be scented in her sons.”[[44]](#footnote-44) Other authors stressed the importance of the way in which a child’s mother taught them language and advised avoiding wet nurses or servants from whom they might learn improper speech. Regarding this, Francesco Barbaro notes that, if the employment of a wet nurse was absolutely necessary, mothers should choose one who was “endowed with dignified speech” (*exquisitio sermone praeditas*). [[45]](#footnote-45) Similarly, Matteo Palmieri recommends that a nurse should “neither stammer nor mumble” (*none scilingui né parli mozo*) so that her child would not acquire such habits, which would be difficult to correct in later years.[[46]](#footnote-46) A warning against the employment of a wet nurse who could not speak properly was also given by Jacopo di Porcia (Jacobi Comitis Purliliarum), in his *De generosa liberorum educatione* (On the Noble Education of Children), written around 1470, and by Vegio in his *De educatione liberorum*.[[47]](#footnote-47)

Aside from contemporary writings, many ancient sources, in which great importance was given to proper speech and the mastery of language, were also reprinted several times during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, suggesting that they were widely read and had become extremely popular. For example, Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* (Institutes of Oratory, first century AD) was widely available in printed form, with several editions starting from 1470 as well as a vernacular translation printed in 1536. In this treatise, the Roman rhetorician recommends choosing a nurse who could speak in a clear and accurate way.[[48]](#footnote-48) Similarly, around thirty Latin editions of Cicero’s *De Oratore* (On the Orator, first century BC) survive from 1465 onwards, while the first vernacular edition of the text appeared in the mid-sixteenth century. It is clear from the recommendations given by fifteenth-century authors that acquiring accurate speech was considered to be a significant part of a broader moral educational process and the evidence of the impressive print circulation of ancient texts on oratory certainly attests to the popularity of this belief.

Having learned how to speak properly, a child was considered to be ready to start learning how to read. Matteo Palmieri was an advocate of early learning, and in his *Vita Civile* advised that it was better to introduce some (even if only a little) “likeness of teaching” (*similitudine di doctrina*) as early as possible in the life of a child, although contemporary pedagogues generally recommended that formal schooling only started when a child reached seven years of age.[[49]](#footnote-49) Palmieri even advised that “in the first years [of a child’s life], which are the dominion of the nurse, it is useful to provide some teaching on reading and writing to the little ones.”[[50]](#footnote-50) Thus, it was advisable for children to begin basic learning when they were still being nursed. For this purpose, Palmieri adds that it would prove useful to employ the type of games that children would enjoy, to avoid them turning against the lessons, and he suggests following the example of:

He who shaped fruit, sweets and other types of food for infants into the form of letters; then, encouraging his young boy, would promise to give them to him if he recognised them, saying: “This curved one is an S, this circle an O, the half circle is a C” and similarly for the other letters.[[51]](#footnote-51)

Identical instructions are given by Giovanni Rucellai in his *Zibaldone*, a notebook of miscellaneous content compiled between 1457 and 1481, in which the author advises his reader:

As soon as [the child] is taken from the nurse, shape some letters with fruits, sweets, sugary treats and other types of food for infants; [then] encourage the young boy with them, promising to give them to him if he recognises them, saying: “This curved one is an S, this circle an O, the half circle is a C” and similarly for the other letters.[[52]](#footnote-52)

Food was not the only culinary product used to teach the alphabet to children. In another example, taken from a book of *Ricordanze* (family memoir), Tribaldo de’ Rossi notes the expense he incurred in buying a fork made of steel, to be given to his son Amerigo most likely as a reward or as an incentive for learning, but in particular to be used by the child “when he was learning the alphabet by tapping on the table.”[[53]](#footnote-53) Unfortunately, the author of the memoir does not explain the details of this technique, although a suggestion is made by Danièlle Alexandre-Bidon, who proposes that the child might have tapped with the fork on the table to chant the interval between each letter, in the same way as punctuation was used to isolate each letter in medieval spelling books.[[54]](#footnote-54) In March 1468, the noblewoman Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi, in one of her letters to her son Filippo, reports that she was teaching her fifteenth-month-old grandson (Filippo’s son) to read.[[55]](#footnote-55) Although it is impossible to guess what technique she chose to use to accomplish this task, this example and the ones mentioned above represent evidence of the importance given to early learning in Italian Renaissance society and the primary role played by women as part of the learning process.

As well as gastronomic tactics, parents could also follow more formal procedures, by making use of introductory textbooks, such as the board (*tavola*), which was a single sheet, or the psalter (*salterio*), which had several pages. These were used for teaching the alphabet, the syllables, and also devotional texts such as prayers and psalms.[[56]](#footnote-56) Once reading was mastered, children could begin to read the *Fior di Virtù* (Flower of Virtue), a moralising vernacular religious text written between 1300 and 1323, by an author whose identity had been lost by the fifteenth century. The aim of this book was to educate children in moral conduct, by means of around forty stories in which animals, human beings and maxims illustrate virtues and vices, along with their respective outcomes, as inspired by Christian principles. With over sixty printed editions, it can be inferred that the *Fior di Virtù* was remarkably popular in Italy between 1470 and 1510.[[57]](#footnote-57)

Domestic teaching continued to be a recommended practice throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as demonstrated by later sources. For example, in 1554, Fra Sabba da Castiglione (1480-1554), in his *Ricordi overo ammaestramenti* (Memories or Teachings), advises that a “virtuous and good wife” (*virtuosa & buona moglie*)should devote herself diligently to teaching her children (both boys and girls) how to read, “so that they would learn at least as much as is enough to read clearly the Office, the psalter, and other devout and holy orations.”[[58]](#footnote-58) The fact that this practice was recommended by a member of the clergy highlights the priority given to a spiritual destination for the skill of reading.

In the sixteenth century, manuals were also published as an aid to domestic education, not only to teach reading, but also writing and basic arithmetic. The Venetian GiovanniAntonio Tagliente’s *Libro maistrevole* (Teaching book),published in Venice in 1524, in its author’s words “teaches anyone who knows how to read to teach his son or daughter or dear friend who knows nothing about reading, so that each could learn; and even adults and young women who do not know anything could learn to read”.[[59]](#footnote-59) In 1550, another Venetian, the economist Domenico Manzoni published a manual entitled *La vera et principal ricchezza de’ giovani, che disiderano imparar ben legere, scrivere et abaco* (The Real and Principal Wealth of the Young, Who Wish to Learn how to Read, Write and Count Well)in which he highlighted the inexpensive convenience of home teaching and stressed the importance of acquiring basic skills for a virtuous child.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Several records survive as testament to home-teaching practices. Children who were taught the basics at home were able to start school in more advanced classes than pupils who had no pre-existing knowledge. This, for example, was the case for Francesco, the six- or seven-year-old son of Bernardo Ranieri, who was sent to a priest called ser Bartolo in 1469 to learn how to read and write. On 4 December 1469 his father records that the teacher “started to teach him the *Donadello*, because [Francesco] had [already] learned the *tavola* and the psalter from Bartolomea, my wife.”[[61]](#footnote-61) In another instance, the son of Piero di Guccio, Giovanni, who was six years of age, is recorded as “reading the *tavola* at home” in 1480.[[62]](#footnote-62) However, mothers were not the only tutors in the house, as older brothers could also act as teachers. It should be noted that, in any case, the mother was still likely to be the first source of education, as she would have taught the older children, who would then have passed on their knowledge to their siblings. Nicola di Girolamo di Nicola Bonciani taught his younger brother Antonio to read and write.[[63]](#footnote-63) This was specifically recommended by Vegio, who thought that this practice was of “great benefit” (*summam utilitatem*)to help younger siblings to “learn better and more quickly”.[[64]](#footnote-64) Unfortunately, records such as this about domestic teaching are rare. Such records only survive in the *catasto*, thedeclaration of tax payers, if there was an expense incurred, such as in cases where private tutors were employed.[[65]](#footnote-65) However, from the few records available, it is still possible to infer that domestic teaching was a widespread phenomenon amongst wealthy families and, as Paul F. Grendler suggests, manuals directed toward parents for teaching at home would not have been written or published otherwise.[[66]](#footnote-66) Despite this, it can still be surmised that this practice was probably more popular among families from the higher echelons of Italian society, who were more likely to possess the skills and time needed to teach their children themselves.[[67]](#footnote-67)

Home teaching practices are not only described through personal records and manuals, but also appear in contemporary visual art. Images depicting the Virgin Mary in the act of teaching the infant Christ to read or to write are frequently encountered, such as in the case of Sandro Botticelli’s *Madonna of the Magnificat* in the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (fig. 3.33), and of Filippino Lippi’s *Madonna and Child* in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (fig. 1.2). This type of iconography is a testament to the fact that this practice existed, and, as well as fulfilling domestic devotional purposes, such images would likely have served as visual *exempla* for mothersto follow.[[68]](#footnote-68)

Education, with all its moral implications, seems therefore to be well-established in domestic environments. The importance of the involvement of parents in overseeing the educative process is stressed in Pier Paolo Vergerio the Elder’s *De ingenuis moribus et liberalibus studiis adulescentiae* (The Liberal Studies and Morals of Youth, 1402-03). This treatise, dedicated to Ubertino da Carrara (the twelve- or thirteen-year-old son of the ruler of Padua), became extremely popular, even being taught in schools.[[69]](#footnote-69) Vergerio states that the most durable resource that parents could provide for their children was instruction in “honourable arts and liberal discipline” (*honestis artibus et liberalibus disciplini*), adding that “in youth … the foundations for living well are to be laid, and the mind must be trained to virtue while it is young and impressionable”.[[70]](#footnote-70)

However, the education of young children seems to be largely confined to the female domain. Although the paternal role was regarded as being highly influential in raising a child, it was rare that fathers would take any direct responsibility for the education of their offspring, with occasional exceptions such as the case of the Venetian Jacopo Antonio Marcello, who had a particularly close relationship with his son, Valerio, by the standards of their time.[[71]](#footnote-71) However, contemporary writers continued to recommend paternal involvement. For example, Palmieri advised that “a father to whom a son is born should before all else have hope for him, and believe that he will become virtuous and respectable among men.”[[72]](#footnote-72) Similarly, Alberti recommended that “a father, more than anyone else, should, as much as he can, with his hands and feet, and with all his nerves, with all industriousness and advice, strive that his sons would be well-mannered and the most honest.”[[73]](#footnote-73) Despite this, in practice fathers would more often only be involved when it was required that someone outside their family nucleus was to be employed, such as in selecting wet nurses or private tutors.[[74]](#footnote-74)

Until six or seven years of age, children were often taught by their parents or by other members of their family in their domestic environment. There, they would learn to read and, in some cases, also to write and do arithmetic. It is only at this stage that the educative process would diverge between boys and girls. In general, boys were then sent by their fathers to formal schools, while girls would continue to be taught by their mothers, or by nuns in convents, although both boys and girls from wealthy families could be instructed by private tutors at home, a practice discussed in greater detail in the following section.[[75]](#footnote-75)

1.3 Humanism and Education: Imitating Exempla

Once a child had acquired the more basic skills, and laid the foundation for their moral education, it was time for them to begin formal education. As well as imparting valuable knowledge, this was also seen as an opportunity to shape the character of a young person, with the aim of equipping them with all of the necessary qualities that they would need as adults.[[76]](#footnote-76) In the fifteenth century a new curriculum was created, to be taught in the schools and universities, which promoted the study of humanistic subjects. While the Medieval curriculum focused primarily on Medieval authors and a few ancient writers (Virgil and Ovid among others), humanist scholars and pedagogues advocated a more substantial understanding of classical sources and endorsed training in “liberal studies”, which were thought to influence children’s personalities in ways that would lead to virtuous conduct.[[77]](#footnote-77) The humanistic curriculum included history and moral philosophy, which used the study of classical literature to define the moral standards which should be aspired to, especially for those who were destined to hold important positions in society.[[78]](#footnote-78) The aim of humanistic education was to shape the ideal man, who was intended to be a well-rounded member of society, mixing culture with heroism, and religiosity with leisure.[[79]](#footnote-79) This was to be achieved by studying classical writers, and subsequently imitating them.[[80]](#footnote-80) Education contributed to active participation in civil society, especially in contexts where citizens were encouraged to be directly involved in government, such as in the republic of Florence. This phenomenon had been described by Hans Baron as “civic humanism.”[[81]](#footnote-81)

Among the pioneers of humanistic studies was the teacher Guarino da Verona (1374-1460), who, in his letters, frequently refers to the virtues that an individual could attain through knowledge of these subjects. In a letter from 19 September 1419 to the chief magistrate of Bologna Gian Nicola Salerno, Guarino stresses the importance that humanistic subjects, which Salerno studied during his childhood, had had in his administration of state business as a ruler, stating that,

You … owe no small thanks to the Muses with whom you have been on intimate terms since boyhood, and by whom you were brought up. They taught how to carry out your tasks in society … Hence you are living proof that the Muses rule not only musical instruments but also public affairs … How much then must we prize this learning and praise those arts with which one educates the future ruler of the state.[[82]](#footnote-82)

From this statement it is clear that a connection between humanistic studies and princely education was being developed. This is further reinforced by the fact that in 1430, Guarino was employed as tutor to the young prince Leonello d’Este, who was to become the ruler of Ferrara in 1441.[[83]](#footnote-83) Similarly, the schoolmaster Vittorino da Feltre taught children from the Gonzaga court in Mantua from 1423 onwards at his boarding school, and between 1434 and 1436 he was also tutor to Federico da Montefeltro, who would become the ruler of Urbino in 1444.[[84]](#footnote-84) Thanks to the teachings of Guarino and Vittorino, humanistic studies increased in popularity, and disseminated from the towns in which they worked to the rest of northern and central Italy, helped by the influence of some of their pupils who went on to become teachers themselves.[[85]](#footnote-85)

The contribution of humanists to the education of princes and rulers is also evident from the treatises that were written specifically for this particular audience. This type of literature, known as *specula principum* (Mirrors of princes), had a didactic purpose, being intended to offer moral guidance to rulers, providing them with a model in which they could metaphorically mirror themselves.[[86]](#footnote-86) Referring back to ancient sources such as Cicero’s *De Officiis* (On Duties), which was printed several times in Italy from 1469, Renaissance educators focused on the importance of virtues such as justice, wisdom, fortitude and temperance (*iustitia*, *sapientia*, *constantia*, *temperantia*). These qualities, founded upon an education in the *studia humanitatis*, were each thought to influence the moral behaviour of future rulers.[[87]](#footnote-87) The popularity of this genre can be observed in the number of treatises and manuals dedicated to rulers during the fifteenth and the sixteenth century, and in the revived popularity of older sources, such as Giles of Rome (Egidio Colonna, 1243-1316)’s *De regimine principum* (On the Government of Rulers), which was made available in printed form.[[88]](#footnote-88) A copy of this treatise was, for example, part of the library of Niccolò III d’Este (1383-1441) and was an important source for Michele Savonarola’s *De felici progressu* (On the Successful Development)*,* written between 1454 and 1461.[[89]](#footnote-89)

These treatises are a testament to the relationship between the importance of morality and the study of humanistic subjects in Italian society at the time, in particular history and moral philosophy. The latter of these, divided into ethics, economics and politics, was mainly derived from the writing of Aristotle, whose texts (especially the *Nicomachean Ethics)* were used for teaching in universities and were widely available through translations and commentaries.[[90]](#footnote-90) Frequently mixing classical ethics with Christian principles, humanist scholars used moral philosophy to encourage individuals to pursue a virtuous life.[[91]](#footnote-91) Although a contemplative life dedicated to the consideration of divine matters was desirable, following Aristotelian teaching, the scholars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries recognised its elitist character and accepted that an active life was frequently more appropriate.[[92]](#footnote-92)

The importance of Moral Philosophy and the study of History is also evident in pedagogical treatises directed specifically toward young learners, such as Vergerio’s *De ingenuis moribus et liberalibus studiis adulescentiae*, Piccolomini’s *De liberorum educatione*, and Battista Guarino’s *De ordine docendi et studendi* (On the Order of Teaching and Studying, 1459). In his treatise dedicated to the young son of the ruler of Padua, Vergerio describes the qualities which were considered fitting for a nobleman, and details the many advantages of liberal studies, which served to guide the learner along a path to wisdom and virtue such that a student would be prepared well for civic duties. As noted above, significant importance is given to the study of Moral Philosophy and History, which he declares to be necessary in order to develop virtuous behaviour, through the imitation of the examples from the past. The author states that, “in philosophy we find rules explaining what one may profitably do or shun, but in history we find examples.”[[93]](#footnote-93) Schooling in Classical History was heavily advocated, so that students could learn from the experiences and deeds of ancient figures, and be encouraged by this to lead their life in accordance with positive moral principles.[[94]](#footnote-94) Much like Vergerio, Piccolomini advises the recipient of his book, the young Ladislas, King of Hungary and Bohemia, and Duke of Austria, that “it is … advantageous to know a great deal of history and to train yourself in it, so that by following the example of others you may know how to seek what is useful and to avoid what is harmful.”[[95]](#footnote-95) Moreover, Piccolomini incites Ladislas to follow the example of his ancestors who ruled the Roman Empire, as well as his father, Albert.[[96]](#footnote-96) Similarly, Battista Guarino encourages the young Maffeo Gambara of Brescia to study History, especially the writings of Justin and Valerius Maximus,[[97]](#footnote-97) as well as Cicero for his teachings on moral philosophy, which he considers to be a “vital subject” (*pernecessaria*)for an orator.[[98]](#footnote-98)

While not specifically directed towards children, the use of examples as references is also encouraged by Leonardo Bruni, in his *De studiis et litteris liber* (The Study of Literature) dedicated to the noblewoman Baptista di Montefeltro, composed in the early fifteenth century.[[99]](#footnote-99) In Bruni’s view, the “knowledge of the past gives guidance to our counsels and our practical judgement,” and “history will be the most commodious source of that stock of examples of outstanding conduct with which it is fitting frequently to embellish our conversation.”[[100]](#footnote-100)

The custom of teaching young people anecdotes taken from ancient poets and writers was also noted by Vegio in his *De educatione liberorum*. In his words, these stories “would offer them readymade examples to imitate as needed.”[[101]](#footnote-101) The study of history is presented by these authors as a moral tool, as it is filled with examples of virtuous and heroic deeds, which the reader was encouraged to follow. It is also easy to imagine how other members of the family might help children to assimilate exemplary models. Alberti recommends that fathers, in order to “animate youths to virtue” (*inanimare i giovani … alla virtù*), should express their admiration of virtuous individuals “in every conversation” (*in ogni ragionamento*), much like ancient people did with heroes and gods, not only as a tribute to their qualities but also to “ignite in men a passion for virtue” (*incendere agli uomini uno ardore a virtù*). At the same time, Alberti encourages fathers to voice disapproval of wicked deeds. In this way, children, who crave praise, would follow these examples as set out for them so that they would likewise be praised.[[102]](#footnote-102)

Similarly, Matteo Palmieri supports the view that a father should take care to ensure that only suitable examples propagate within his family, in order to “avoid and eradicate his son’s vices” (*per fuggire e torre via i vitii del filiuolo*), and goes on to state that “in the house one should reason on matters that are good and honest, and even the tales told by women should be acclamations of honest living,” providing teachings that will stay in the young person’s memory when he leaves the paternal home.[[103]](#footnote-103)

Valuable *exempla* were provided by the lives of illustrious men from antiquity, as described in biographies like the *De vita Caesarum* (On the Life of Caesars) by the Roman historian Suetonius (first-second century AD), the *Vitae illustrium virorum* (Lives of illustrious men)compiled by Plutarch, and the *Cyropaedia* (On Cyrus the Great) by Xenophon, which were all widely available in printed form from the 1470s onwards.[[104]](#footnote-104) In addition to men, renowned women could also be considered *exempla* to follow. Ovid’s *Heroides* (Heroines) became hugely popular in the fifteenth century and was added to the school curriculum.[[105]](#footnote-105) As well as these ancient examples, models to imitate could also be provided by contemporary individuals, such as the eminent women found in Giovanni Boccaccio’s *De claris mulieribus* (On Famous Women, 1374).[[106]](#footnote-106) Although never printed, collections of biographies compiled during the fifteenth century, such as the one hundred *Vite di uomini illustri del secolo XV* (Lives of Illustrious Men from the Fifteenth Century) of distinguished contemporary individuals written by the book merchant Vespasiano da Bisticci, and the *De viris illustribus* (On Illustrious Men) by the historian Bartolomeo Facio, show that this practice was still well-established.[[107]](#footnote-107)

Humanist authors based their theories on the imitation of *exempla* principally on two classical sources, which were rediscovered in the early decades of the fifteenth century: Quinitillian’s *Institutio Oratoria*, in which the author suggests that children should be surrounded by people worth imitating,[[108]](#footnote-108) and Cicero’s *De Oratore*.[[109]](#footnote-109) However, while ancient tales from the classical past would certainly have provided a vast pool of *exempla* from which to draw when educating children, Christian history provided an equally plentiful supply. Many religious subjects, such as apostles, saints and martyrs, were presented as paradigms of virtue, and, as a result, also as role models to follow and imitate. In the fourth century, for example, Saint Basil stated that the lives of saints and holy men were recorded for our benefit, and for our imitation.[[110]](#footnote-110) Some religious texts, such as the *Legenda Aurea* (The Golden Legend), a collection of lives of saints written by the Dominican Jacobus da Voragine around 1260, were translated from Latin into the vernacular, making them not only accessible to a much wider audience than they would have been otherwise, but also making it easier for them to emulate these examples.[[111]](#footnote-111) Printed evidence demonstrates the popularity of this text, which enjoyed numerous Italian editions both in Latin and in vernacular translation from 1475 onwards.[[112]](#footnote-112)

Further advice on this matter was also provided by the Dominican preacher Girolamo Savonarola, at the end of the fifteenth century, in Florence. In one of his sermons, Savonarola advocated the imitation of exemplary saintsthat appear in artworks, and he assumed this to be one of the artworks’ primary purposes.[[113]](#footnote-113) Perhaps to an even greater extent, the Virgin Mary was to be viewed as the ideal woman and the perfect mother, and her son Jesus Christ was to be imitated both during his childhood and later in his life.[[114]](#footnote-114) This tradition helps to explain the popularity of the treatise *Imitatio Christi*, written during the first decades of the fifteenth century, which was printed countless times in Europe during the Renaissance, and editions both in Latin and in translation were produced in Italy, including three in the vernacular printed in Florence between 1491 and 1494.[[115]](#footnote-115) From this, it can be inferred that imitation was thought to be an extremely efficient method of learning morality.[[116]](#footnote-116)

Apart from virtuous historical and religious characters, Renaissance Italians were more generally encouraged to imitate well-mannered people. On this topic, the preacher Giovanni Dominici, in his *Regola del governo di cura familiare* (Rule for the Management of Family Care), makes reference to a biblical assertion by King David which states that “you will be a saint with saints, the virtuous with the virtuous, the chosen with the chosen and the evil with the evil.”[[117]](#footnote-117) Here, Dominici is referring to the belief that individuals are likely to emulate the manners of those who surround them.

From this, it is clear that the belief that people would emulate those with whom they were surrounded was strongly held, whether these were good or bad. Similarly, Vergerio, quoting Socrates, suggests that young people should contemplate the behaviour of revered individuals, especially those who were still alive, treating them as a “living mirror” (*vivum speculum*), as the examples of virtue they provided would be enormously powerful.[[118]](#footnote-118)

The prospect of moulding children according to their parents’ wishes was based upon the belief that a child’s mind was extremely malleable and impressionable. This concept appears frequently in Renaissance treatises. For example, Dominici states that at a young age a child “is like soft wax, and takes the imprint of whatever is put near it.”[[119]](#footnote-119) Likewise, Francesco Barbaro, when suggesting mothers be careful in the choice of a nurse in his *De re uxoria*, states that “at this tender age a child’s unformed character is very susceptible to being moulded, and, as we impress a seal in soft wax, so the disposition and faults of a nurse can be sealed upon an infant.”[[120]](#footnote-120)

Vergerio, in his treatise on good character and appropriate studies for a child, first cited in Chapter 1.2, states that “in youth … the foundations for living well are to be laid, and the mind must be trained to virtue while it is young and impressionable, for the mind will preserve throughout life the impressions it takes on now.”[[121]](#footnote-121) Later in his treatise, the author also borrows a statement from the ancient Roman poet Virgil (first century BC) and declares that in childhood “young minds are malleable, while they [the children] are young enough to change,” and he therefore advises letting them start studying or working at a young age, in order to raise them well.[[122]](#footnote-122) Virgil’s *Georgics*, from which this quotation is derived, was itself printed frequently from 1469 onwards, and would therefore have been widely circulated and commonly available.

This concept is also found in other ancient sources, such as in Plato’s *Republic*. In a passage describing the best way to educate a man, the philosopher asserts that “[a child at a young age] is most plastic and each thing assimilates itself to the model whose stamp anyone wishes to give to it,”[[123]](#footnote-123) and continues by suggesting that “we shall persuade nurses and mothers to tell appropriate stories to their children, and to shape their souls with tales more than their bodies with hands.”[[124]](#footnote-124) Additionally, Plutarch, in his *De Liberis educandi*, states that “youth is impressionable and plastic, and while such minds are still tender lessons are infused deeply into them … for just as seals leave their impression in soft wax, so are lessons impressed upon the minds of children while they are young.”[[125]](#footnote-125)

It follows that the novelty of humanistic studies, and in particular the study of History and Moral Philosophy, was intended to contribute to the moral education of elite Italians from their earliest years. The use of *exempla*, not only from the ancient past, but also from religious sources and from living contemporaries, was seen as a pedagogical instrument that could mould personalities towards more virtuous behaviour, by influencing malleable young minds.

1.4 Images as Moral Teachers

“Wherever man and wife come together, it is advisable only to hang portraits of men of dignity and handsome appearance; for they say that this might have great influence on the fertility of the mother and the appearance of future offspring.”[[126]](#footnote-126) With these words Alberti, in his treatise *De re aedificatoria* (1452; printed in Florence in 1485), advises his readers that things seen can have a powerful influence and need therefore to be carefully controlled.[[127]](#footnote-127) This statement is clearly related to the belief that the sense of sight was the most important of the five senses.[[128]](#footnote-128) The notion that the sight of particular objects could actively influence the character of the viewers contributed to the idea that visual sources could be used as effective instruments in guiding the beholder towards morality. Particularly in the domain of moral education, images could be employed to provide examples that would influence behaviour and help guide people towards honour and virtue.

Religious texts also contributed to the dissemination of this idea. Among these, Pope Gregory the Great’s *Cura pastoralis* (Pastoral Care,around AD 590) records the use of images as a pedagogical tool. The author highlights the educational function of visual sources, stating that paintings could be used in churches so that those who do not know the alphabet would at least be able to “read” the episodes depicted on the walls.[[129]](#footnote-129) He also expands on this idea in a well-known letter to Serenus, bishop of Marseille (AD 600), in which he states that “what writing presents to those who read, that the picture provides to the unlearned; so even the ignorant can see in it what they should follow; even the illiterate read. Hence especially for the barbarianspictures are a substitute for reading.”[[130]](#footnote-130) The popularity of Gregory the Great’s *Cura pastoralis* led to its publication in a Venetian edition in 1492. During the fifteenth century, Gregory the Great was also credited with a passage in a letter to the recluse Secundinus (although this is now believed to be a later addition), in which the author emphasises the importance of the use of images in devotion.[[131]](#footnote-131)

As well as Gregory the Great, other medieval sources on the use of imagery in devotional contexts were still popular in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For example, the Thomas Aquinas’ commentary on Peter Lombard’s *Sententiae*, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* (1252-55), also supported the use of images. In this text, the author gives three reasons for the presence of visual material inside the Church: first, images serve for the instruction of the illiterate; second, they are *exempla* to remember; and third, they stimulate private piety.[[132]](#footnote-132) The same three reasons reappear in the Latin dictionary *Catholicon* compiled by the Dominican Johannes Balbi da Genova in 1286, which was popular in France and Italy during the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth, and survives in both several Italian manuscripts and early printed books,

Know that there were three reasons for the institution of images in churches. First, for the instruction of simple people, because they are instructed by them as if by books. Second, so that the mystery of the incarnation and the examples of the Saints may be the more active in our memory through being presented daily to our eyes. Third, to excite feelings of devotion, these being aroused more effectively by things seen than by things heard.[[133]](#footnote-133)

In the late fifteenth century, these reasons appear again as part of a sermon given by the Franciscan friar Michele da Carcano, which was published in Venice in 1492.[[134]](#footnote-134)

In order to support their devotional practices, Italian devotees also had access to manuscript copies and printed editions of a text about the Passion of Christ from the *Meditationes vitae Christi* (Meditations of the Life of Christ), compiled in Tuscany in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century by a member of the Franciscan congregation, but attributed by Renaissance authors to Saint Bonaventure or to Johannes de Caulibus.[[135]](#footnote-135) This text, which was incredibly popular in Italy during the fifteenth century and also available in the vernacular, was written with the aim of encouraging active participation in worship, helping devotees to use their inner sense of sight to picture the events narrated in the Gospel.[[136]](#footnote-136)

In addition to performing this role in religious practices, images could also be used for pedagogical purposes in secular environments. The practice of displaying educative imagery in domestic settings had already been documented in antiquity; for example, Plato, in his *Republic*, advocates displaying paintings and decorated furniture inside the house which show “good grace, good harmony and good rhythm,” in virtue of their power to create a positive impression upon young people, as these qualities were held to be analogous to a “moderate and good disposition.”[[137]](#footnote-137) This text was translated from Greek by Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) and available in printed form from 1484 onwards, furthering the dissemination of these ideas among the literate classes.

Various different moral subjects can be found in fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century domestic decoration. In particular, bedroom furniture was often richly ornamented, such as *cassoni* or *forzieri*, a type ofchest usually presented to couples in celebration of their betrothal or their wedding, mainly used for the storage of household goods and valuable objects, but which could also serve as seats when their lids were closed. They could be decorated in a variety of ways, including with *intarsia*, carvings and paintings, with subjects which were usually chosen by the commissioner, often with symbolic meanings.[[138]](#footnote-138) They frequently show scenes taken from ancient history or mythology, intended to inspire their owners to pursue specific virtues or to instigate particular behaviours.[[139]](#footnote-139) As they were kept in the bedroom, only members of the household would have been able to access and see the images depicted on them, especially those painted on the interior side of the lid. This part of the chest could also carry symbolic decoration: for example, some of them are painted with male and female nude reclining figures that were likely intended to be messages addressed to the imagination of a newly wedded couple, in order to inspire them to procreate.[[140]](#footnote-140) Moralising scenes such as the *Rape of the Sabine Women* can sometimes be found painted on the frontal panel, and were likely meant to encourage women to embrace their marital duties.[[141]](#footnote-141)

However, images were not only considered to be able to influence viewers in a positive manner, but also in a negative way, depending on the subject depicted.[[142]](#footnote-142) This is evident in a passage from Girolamo Savonarola’s sermon on the Psalm *Quam bonus Israel Deus*, in which the friar reproaches parents who “keep in the home beds and daybeds [painted] with very indecent images of naked women with men in certain indecent acts,” which could be seen by children who would be inappropriately influenced by them.[[143]](#footnote-143)

Depictions of illustrious and virtuous men and women from the past were also popular artistic subjects, used as *exempla* to follow, in much the same way as has been discussed previously with regard to the literary study of History. For instance, Vergerio cites Publius Scipio, Quintus Fabius and Julius Caesar, who were greatly impressed by seeing images of famous men such as Alexander the Great, and states that “the images of our ancestors perhaps inspire us to rival them in glory still more.”[[144]](#footnote-144) These figures appear in paint in fifteenth-century Italy mainly in palaces owned by wealthy families. For instance, Eleonora d’Aragona, duchess of Ferrara, commissioned the painter Ercole de’ Roberti to paint a series of honourable ancient women in the mid-1480s (fig. 1.3).[[145]](#footnote-145) The heroines depicted in this cycle, Lucretia, Portia and the wife of Hasdrubal, allude to the motto *Malo mori quam foedari* (I prefer death to dishonour). Other examples can be found in the cycle of twenty-eight illustrious men, both historical and contemporary, that adorned Federico da Montefeltro’s studiolo in Urbino (fig. 1.4) and in the fictive reliefs of eight Roman emperors frescoed by Mantegna in the roundels on the ceiling of the Camera Picta, in the Ducal Palace in Mantua (fig. 1.5).

Such educational domestic imagery was not only present in the homes of rulers and wealthy families, but was also advocated for the decoration of the interiors of dwellings for members of the clergy. For example, the bishop of Urbino Paolo Cortesi, in his *De Cardinalatu* (On Cardinalship), written around 1500 and printed in 1510, describes the most appropriate decoration for a Cardinal’s palace, which should include historical figures, because:

Men are fascinated by that type of painting by which they may benefit from the lessons of history brought to life. For [by the sight of these paintings] either the appetite of the soul is aroused or the capacity for motion … may be prompted by the striking life-like imitation, in the painting, of the thing represented.[[146]](#footnote-146)

Among the subjects suggested by Cortesi are the deeds of Christian emperors, scenes taken from the Old Testament, rebels being overthrown by the Church, and those who repented and appealed once more to the rule of the Pope, along with more typical paintings of the Virgin and the Saints in the domestic chapel. In Cortesi’s words, images hanging on the bedroom walls “should be symbols of virtue so that by this matutinal reminder, the soul will be excited to similar virtuous acts [throughout the day]”.[[147]](#footnote-147)

Apart from paintings, the same moralistic subjects could be present in everyday household objects. A small casket now in the British Museum in London provides an excellent example: it is decorated with classical scenes featuring Lucretia, the embodiment of chastity, who committed suicide after being raped, and Marcus Curtius, who sacrificed himself bravely to save the Roman Forum (fig. 1.6).[[148]](#footnote-148) Images portraying illustrious characters were also illuminated in manuscripts. For example, the frontispiece of a manuscript of Valerius Maximus’ *Facta* *et* *Dicta* *Memorabilia* (Memorable Acts and Sayings), a popular text in the fifteenth century, shows miniatures of illustrious men paired with female personifications of virtues, such as Hercules with Fortitude and the Emperor Augustus with Prudence (fig. 1.7).[[149]](#footnote-149)

As noted previously, figures from the ancient past were not the only source of exemplary behaviour, and religious figures were also used for pedagogical purposes. Girolamo Savonarola, in his treatise *Triumphus Crucis* (The Triumph of the Cross), printed in Florence in 1497 and based on a sermon given in 1492, promoted the use of images of Saints, as “we erect their images in order to recall them to our memory, to excite ourselves to virtue by their examples, and to raise our hearts in prayer to God, through their intercession.”[[150]](#footnote-150) The Dominican friar also recommended private use of artworks representing holy images to encourage religious meditation, but only if they were of minimal material value.[[151]](#footnote-151) He states that images act as aids for illiterate men in order to approach God and achieve divine knowledge, and, echoing Pope Gregory the Great, declares that “there can be no doubt that pictures and statues, representing holy objects, are as helpful as books, especially to unlettered and simple folks.”[[152]](#footnote-152)

Usually, the decoration of the house, and especially the bedroom, included a devotional painted or carved image of the Virgin and Child hanging on the wall.[[153]](#footnote-153) During the fifteenth century this type of depiction was the main focus of private devotional practices within the house. These representations became increasingly popular and were produced in a variety of formats and materials, both by local artists and also imported from abroad, such as the seven hundred icons ordered from Crete in 1499 by Venetian merchants, to be sold for domestic use.[[154]](#footnote-154) Several instances of the ownership of Virgin and Child images survive in household inventories, which reveal the widespread dissemination of this custom even among manual workers and other less affluent members of society.[[155]](#footnote-155)

Images of the Virgin and Child could also represent the ideal woman, as an embodiment of a perfect model to which women in the household were encouraged to aspire.[[156]](#footnote-156) Indeed, women and wives were likely to be the primary audience for domestic religious images, which would have been intended to assist them in shaping their behaviour to emphasise virtues such as chastity, purity and modesty, which they would have been expected to possess.[[157]](#footnote-157) This role was recognised by Saint Bernardino of Siena, who, in a sermon delivered in Siena’s main square in 1427, recommended that unmarried girls stay inside the house, emphatically stating,

Let’s talk of where the Angel found [the Virgin]. Where do you think she was? At the windows or engaging in some other sort of vanity? Oh, no! She was enclosed in a room, reading, to give an example to you, girls, so that you will never be tempted to stay either at the doorway or the window, but that you will remain inside the house, reciting Ave Marias and Our Fathers.[[158]](#footnote-158)

Women were concerned not only with their own moral standing, but also with laying the foundations for the religious education of their children, and so depictions of the Virgin and Child would have provided examples which demonstrated how they should guide their children along a virtuous path. Images of the Virgin reading to her Child from sacred books, or teaching him to read, would have also served the purpose of encouraging this type of activity, thus acting as *exempla* to be emulated.[[159]](#footnote-159) In this way, the image of the Virgin with the infant Jesus could achieve several objectives simultaneously, such as inspiring religious devotion, providing an example of an ideal mother to follow, and at the same time promoting conception and childbearing.[[160]](#footnote-160)

Didactic narratives targeted every type of audience, both laymen and members of the clergy, men and women. However, children were also considered as a distinct category of viewers. Images were often used as part of the education of children, and children themselves were thought to understand their value, as demonstrated in a passage from an eighth-century letter that at the time was attributed to Pope Gregory II, directed to the Byzantine Emperor Leo III, but which was actually compiled by an anonymous writer, in which the author defends the use of images against the Emperor’s iconoclastic claims:

You say: We worship stones and walls and boards. But it is not so, O Emperor; but they serve us for remembrance and encouragement, lifting our slow spirits upwards, by those whose names the pictures bear and whose representations they are. And we worship them not as God, as you maintain, God forbid! ... Even the little children mock at you. Go into one of their schools, say that you are the enemy of images, and straightway they will throw their little tablets at your head, and what you have failed to learn from the wise you may pick up from the foolish.[[161]](#footnote-161)

It was believed that these malleable young individuals were particularly affected by the sight of specific subjects. In the same way as mothers could mirror themselves in the Virgin Mary, children could recognise their features in works of art portraying the Infant Christ or the young Saint John the Baptist. This led to an identification of the real with the divine prototype, evident in the production of images of children, dressed or posing as their spiritual models. Marble busts of children portrayed as the Infant Christ or as the young Saint John the Baptist populated the Renaissance house, especially in Florence, most likely with the intention of exerting moral influence over their young beholders, as suggested by Arnold Victor Coonin (figs 1.8 and 1.9).[[162]](#footnote-162)

A striking example of the way in which it was thought the sight of particular images could affect the behaviour of children is given in the treatise *Regola del governo di cura familiare*, written in the vernacular by the Florentine Dominican friar Giovanni Dominici around 1400-1405 with guidelines for the management of family life, much-quoted by any scholar who has dealt with this topic.[[163]](#footnote-163) Dominici dedicated this work to the unfortunate noblewoman Bartolomea degli Obizzi, who was left alone with her four children when her husband Antonio degli Alberti was exiled from Florence.[[164]](#footnote-164) This treatise can be interpreted as Dominici’s attempt to comfort Bartolomea, giving her support as well as practical advice and guidance on the best way to raise her children. It is divided into four parts, which are designed to answer specific questions asked to the author by Bartolomea on various aspects of familial affairs. The first two parts of Dominici’s work focus on ways to regulate the reader’s own self (both soul and body), while the last two are devoted to rules that should be followed in order to govern a family effectively.

For the purposes of this chapter, the fourth part is of particular interest, as it is entirely dedicated to the moral education of children. In this part of the text, Dominici declares that, in order to educate children about the love of God, it was thought better “to have in the home paintings of young saints or young virgins, in which your child, still in swaddling clothes, may take delight and be blissful for being similar [to them], with acts and signs pleasing to children. And what I say of paintings applies also to statues.”[[165]](#footnote-165) It can be inferred that the features of the depicted figures were used to attract the attention of the children, in which they were supposed to recognise themselves. Dominici even includes a list of recommended scenes for children to look at, taken not only from both the New and the Old Testaments, but also from popular Christian stories of saints and martyrs. Desirable subjects were the Virgin Mary and Child holding a bird or a pomegranate, the infant Christ nursing, sleeping, or standing in front of his mother, Jesus drawing a profile and his mother sewing it, the young St John the Baptist in the desert or playing with birds, the infants Jesus and Saint John together or, for a female child, the eleven thousand virgins, Saint Agnes, Saint Cecil, Saint Elizabeth or Saint Catherine.[[166]](#footnote-166)

Dominici also describes the use of images of Angels and Saints with a pedagogical aim, explaining that they are useful for the mental benefit of young children, who should see themselves reflected in this “mirror” (*specchio*) as soon as they open their eyes.[[167]](#footnote-167) In this passage, Dominici outlines a complete educational plan to support Bartolomea, in which he advises that human beings are the most appropriate example to follow when children start to speak, at the midpoint of their learning process (*mezzani*), while Biblical teachings are suitable for children at a later stage of their education, when they are learning to write.[[168]](#footnote-168)

Although Dominici’s work was never printed, that it survives in at least eleven manuscript copies testifies to the fact that its popularity went beyond being read only by its recipient, Bartolomea, and that its teachings were considered valuable by some at least until 1526.[[169]](#footnote-169) Based on this, it seems apparent that moral education could be imparted by parents using pictures, with the features of the depicted figures being used to attract the attention of children who were supposed to recognise and mirror themselves on them, and, in turn, that these visual stimuli were intended to shape receptive young minds. Evidence of the resonance of Dominici’s assertions can still be found many decades later, such as, for example, in a record that states that an image of the Virgin Mary was left to Niccolò Strozzi by a female servant in 1484, who recorded that the image was left “to give pleasure to the children”.[[170]](#footnote-170)

The use of images as aids to devotion is also advocated by Dominici’s disciple Antonino Pierozzi, who eventually became the Archbishop of Florence between 1446 and 1459, although in this particular case the contemplation of these images served as preparation for the meditative practice of mental visualisation. In a chapter of his vernacular treatise *Opera a ben vivere* (ca. 1454), Saint Antonino advises his female readers on how to engage with physical images in order to stimulate the imagination and experience a more intense feeling of participation in the depicted events.[[171]](#footnote-171) Here, Saint Antonino recommends starting with the sight of a material object: “in church or in your room, kneel before a crucifix and with the eyes of the mind, more than with those of the body, consider his face”.[[172]](#footnote-172) He subsequently gives considerable prominence to the visualisation of the narratives and to this particular form of active participation in them. In this way, this practice was connected to the moral development of his readers.[[173]](#footnote-173) Once again, in Saint Antonino’s work the domestic space is presented as a location for devotional moralistic practice. It is interesting to note that the decoration of the cells occupied by Dominican friars of San Marco, realised by Fra Angelico during Saint Antonino’s priory, is likely to have been connected to his advocacy of the use of images.[[174]](#footnote-174)

Saint Antonino’s views on how physical vision led to moral growth appear also in his *Summa theologica* (ca. 1454).[[175]](#footnote-175) In this text, he states that “images of saints are made in church not to show [people] reverence of worship, but to impress their excellence effectively on the minds of men.”[[176]](#footnote-176) Once again, the use of images as moral *exempla*, rather than simply as idols to be revered, is validated.[[177]](#footnote-177)

Having considered how Renaissance bedrooms in palaces belonging to the privileged wealthy classes of Italian society would be filled with decorated furniture and works of art, and in light of the way in which the use of images in the domestic environment was recommended by both secular and religious writers, it is possible to assert that the decoration of the interiors of domestic dwellings offered a rich source of visual influences for their inhabitants, both for adults and for younger members of the household. Religious subjects, together with historical scenes that were popular at the time, could function as *exempla* and inspire specific attitudes in their beholders. These effects would have been even more pronounced in children, who were considered to be malleable and easily impressionable. It is therefore possible to imagine how parents would attempt to influence the behaviour of their children by using the decoration and the works of art present in their home, so that they would imitate the attitudes of these “companions,” leading to the conclusion that material objects could possess educative functions, especially in the earliest years of a child’s life, when moral instruction was a particularly pressing concern.

1.5 Music as Moral Practice

In the dedicatory remarks that precede his treatise *Practica Musicae* (The Practice of Music), the music theorist and composer Franchinus Gaffurius states that “nothing stirs people so quickly to diverse emotions as music does.”[[178]](#footnote-178) In addition to the educative practices discussed in the previous sections, such as breastfeeding, repeating exemplary anecdotes, studying history, and using inspiring images, morality could also be taught through the understanding and practice of music, based on the idea that music had the ability to directly influence the behaviour of individuals. The first edition of Gaffurius’ treatise, which was dedicated to the Duke of Milan, Ludovico Sforza, was printed in Milan in 1496 and would become tremendously influential over the next century.[[179]](#footnote-179) In this, and in his other works, Gaffurius borrows from ancient writers the idea that music could be used to affect the ethical education of human beings.[[180]](#footnote-180) In particular, he reports that the ancients recognised the importance of music and “cultivated it with the utmost zeal as the mother and nurse of morals.”[[181]](#footnote-181) This concept is restated by the author when writing about his own study of music, the aim of which was to “enhance character” (*moribus conferret*).[[182]](#footnote-182) He then stipulates that music, unlike other merely theoretical disciplines, also has a practical application, and “is connected with morality” (*moralitatiq[ue]… est co[n]jungitur*).[[183]](#footnote-183)

Particularly important among the sources used by Gaffurius was Boethius’ *De istitutione musica*.[[184]](#footnote-184) Originally written at the beginning of the sixth century by a Roman patrician, this treatise had been the standard text for the understanding of music theory since the Carolingian period, and it was also printed as part of Boethius’ *Opera* in Venice in 1491-92.[[185]](#footnote-185) Music, understood as a mathematical science, is described as “so naturally united with us that we cannot be free from it even if we so desired.”[[186]](#footnote-186) In this text, Boethius differentiates music from the other three disciplines of the *quadrivium* (i.e. arithmetic, geometry and astronomy) because music was associated not only with mathematical principles, but also, and most importantly for us, with morality, “for nothing is more characteristic of human nature than to be soothed by pleasant modes or disturbed by their opposites.”[[187]](#footnote-187) Citing Plato, he goes on to state that human beings are attracted to music because they sense something similar to themselves in it, and this leads to “radical transformations in character” (*morum quoque maximae permutations fiunt*), affecting their disposition, either in a positive or in a negative manner.[[188]](#footnote-188) The author then presents several examples from history of how music could calm or arouse the soul.[[189]](#footnote-189)

Boethius identified and described what he considered to be three different types of music: cosmic music(*musica mundana*), human music(*musica humana*) and instrumental music(*musica quae in quibusdam constituta est instrumentis*).[[190]](#footnote-190) The first is the music produced by heavenly bodies, the second can be perceived by discerning one’s inner self and soul, while the third is found in instruments, and is produced by strings, breath and percussion.[[191]](#footnote-191) For the purpose of this study the notion of *musica humana* is particularly important, for Boethius describes it as the harmony (*coaptatio*)that “unites the incorporeal nature of reason with the body.”[[192]](#footnote-192) Therefore, the notion of *music humana* is charged with ethical significance, having the purpose of attaining a virtuous life through the harmonisation of the body with the soul.[[193]](#footnote-193) This led to the idea that the human voice, the sounding instrument of divine creation, was worthy of being part of *musica humana*, and that singing was the highest perceivable form of music.[[194]](#footnote-194)

The concept that music is capable of inducing specific feelings in its listeners is echoed in the writings of Marsilio Ficino, who was himself a musician.[[195]](#footnote-195) In his *De vita libri tres* (Three books on life), written in 1489 and published several times in Italy from 1490 onwards, Ficino gives music the role of mediator between the body, the soul and the universe, which were thought to correspond to one another by virtue of harmony and movement. The twenty-first chapter of the third book is devoted entirely to the way in which songs should be used in conjunction with astrological knowledge in order to attract favourable heavenly influence. Ficino outlines some rules to follow in order to harmonise tunes to corresponding stars, so that a “celestial power” (*coelestem virtutem*)can be invoked by imitating them in music.[[196]](#footnote-196) He goes on to state that song, being a powerful means of imitation, “wonderfully arouses our spirit upwards to the celestial influence and the celestial influence downwards to our spirit.”[[197]](#footnote-197) Ficino continues by bestowing music with a healing power that goes even further than medicine, and becomes divine.[[198]](#footnote-198)

According to Ficino’s theories, through music a musician’s soul would be drawn closer to the divine harmony, and this energy would be then transmitted to the musician’s listeners. Music was therefore thought to be useful in inducing sympathetic responses among the heavens, the soul and audible music, which would resonate powerfully together. The impact that music was thought to have on the human soul is perhaps best explained in Ficino’s letter *De divino furore* addressed to the poet Peregrino Agli, in which he states that,

By the ears … the soul receives the echoes of that incomparable music, by which it is led back to the deep and silent memory of the harmony which it previously enjoyed. The whole soul then kindles with desire to fly back to its rightful home, so that it may enjoy that true music again.[[199]](#footnote-199)

In another letter, entitled *De musica*, written to Antonio Canigiani, Ficino explains that,

Sound and song arise from consideration in the mind, the impulse of fantasy and the desire of the heart, and in disturbing the air and lending measure to it they vibrate the airy spirit of the listener, which is the link between body and soul. Thus, sound and song easily arouse the fantasy, affect the heart and reach the inmost recesses of the mind; they still, and also set in motion, the humours and the limbs of the body.[[200]](#footnote-200)

Ficino was able to read ancient Greek sources directly, and between 1464 and 1469 he translated the entire body of Plato’s work into Latin, which was published for the first time and made available to the public in 1484.[[201]](#footnote-201) Plato was one of the ancient sources most often cited by late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century scholars and, in his writing, it is again possible to detect references to the link between music and morality, such as the power that music was believed to have in moral education. For example, in the third book of his *Republic*, Plato states that “rhythm and harmony most of all insinuate themselves into the inmost part of the soul … and they make a man graceful if he is correctly reared, if not, the opposite.”[[202]](#footnote-202) Plato reiterates these concepts in the second book of his *Laws*, in which he again confirms the central role played by music in the upbringing of children, declaring that “choristry as a whole is identical with education as a whole.”[[203]](#footnote-203)

Along with Plato, other popular authorities on music included Aristotle and his *Politics*,[[204]](#footnote-204) as well as Biblical accounts, such as the episode in which the skilled lyre-player David was sent to play for Saul to relieve his torment (SamuelI,16: 14-23), and the book of *Psalms*, which includes one hundred and fifty songs thought to be composed by David himself, and were used extensively by Renaissance writers to corroborate the importance of music. Both humanists and musical professionals repeated these ideas without question and quoted them in their writing to support their own theories.

Starting from Plato’s ideas, Ficino interpreted music produced by human beings (both vocal and instrumental) as an imitation of divine music (of God and the celestial spheres).[[205]](#footnote-205) This view also echoes Saint Augustine’s ideas as expressed in his treatise *De Musica*, from which Ficino borrows when discussing the immortal soul in his *Theologia* *Platonica*.[[206]](#footnote-206) In addition to linking music to the divine, Saint Augustine was also an important early Christian source on the use of music in the liturgy. In Book 9 of his *Confessiones*, he confesses to God:

How abundantly did I weep to hear those hymns and canticles of thine, being touched to the very quick by the voices of thy sweet church song! Those voices flowed into mine ears, and thy truth pleasingly distilled into my heart, which caused the affections of my devotion to overflow, and my tears to run over, and happy did I find myself therein.[[207]](#footnote-207)

He clearly declares his endorsement of music in ecclesiastical settings in Book 10, in which he states:

Thus float I between peril of pleasure, and an approved profitable custom: inclined the more (though herein I pronounce no irrevocable opinion) to allow of the old usage of singing in the Church; that so by the delight taken in at the ears, the weaker minds be roused up into some feeling of devotion.[[208]](#footnote-208)

As Saint Augustine’s *Confessiones* were printed in Milan in 1475, his ideas would have been available to the literate public not only via the interpretations of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century scholars, but also directly.

The fact that music was thought to have a powerful resonance with the soul is noted in the treatise *De studiis et litteris liber*, written by the historian Leonardo Bruni between 1422 and 1429, in which he admits that sometimes, during Mass, only the poetical refrain would wake him from his sleep, and declares that “it is for this reason that certain of the ancients believed the soul to be a number and a harmony … all things in accordance with nature enjoyed that which was most similar and related to themselves, and there was nothing which … delighted our souls as harmony and number.”[[209]](#footnote-209)

Music was thought to have the ability to influence the listener in many other positive ways. Vergerio in his *De ingenuis moribus et liberalibus studiis adulescentiae*, after having cited Socrates’ commitment to learning music and to encouraging young people to learn it themselves, stressed that this interest was not “to stimulate licentious behaviour but to moderate the movement of the soul under the rule of reason.”[[210]](#footnote-210) Later in his treatise, in imitation of ancient Greek accounts of the differing effects of the ancient musical modes, Vergerio lists the effects of the different modes that were familiar to him, each identified by their geographical provenance: Sicilian modes rest and relax, French modes excite and motivate, while Italian ones are between these two.[[211]](#footnote-211) In another passage, Vergerio reports that music is “highly effective in relaxing the mind and calming the passions.”[[212]](#footnote-212)

The many positive effects of music on the listener were listed in a specialist treatise dedicated entirely to this topic, appropriately entitled *Complexus effectuum musices* (A Compendium of Music’s Effects), written by the composer and music theorist Johannes Tinctoris around 1473 and dedicated to his Neapolitan pupil Beatrice of Aragon. The first part of this treatise lists as many as twenty different effects of music, and he expands upon each one in the subsequent pages. The effects described vary greatly, and, in brief, include moral and religious benefits, improvement in mood, and talismanic and medical properties. Tinctoris does not limit music to only having a “psychological” effect on the mind of the listener (such as to enhance joy or to banish sorrow), but also states that music could be effective in physically healing the sick, as stated in the fourteenth item in his list.[[213]](#footnote-213) Similar effects were also noted by Carlo Valgulio, from Brescia, secretary of the papal treasurer and Ficino’s friend, in his *Contra vituperatorem musicae* (Risposte to a Slanderer of Music)printed in Brescia in 1509. Valgulio’s defense of music begins by listing its qualities and positive effects, among which are benefits for the listener’s mind, and music’s capacity “to rouse the lazy and slothful to virtue.”[[214]](#footnote-214)

Renaissance sources, both from ecclesiastical and secular environments, stress the important role of music in moral training. For example, the bishop Paolo Cortesi, in his *De Cardinalatu*, suggests cardinals should seek out music both for enjoyment during their leisure time and for educative purposes.[[215]](#footnote-215) In addition to its function in training clergymen, music was also prescribed as part of the education of young people, because of its connection to morality. This idea was already known from ancient sources, such as Quintilian, who stressed the importance of the study of music in the education of the orator.[[216]](#footnote-216) Music education is also advocated by Piccolomini, in his treatise devoted to the education of boys, in which he states that: “[Music] is surely not an art to be despised, nor should its use be censured … Therefore a moderate knowledge of this art ought not to be shunned, if good instructors may be found.” [[217]](#footnote-217)

In his *Contra vituperatorem musicae*, Valgulio repeats Plato’s and Aristotle’s idea that music should be taught to children.[[218]](#footnote-218) Particularly, the author reports that these ancient writers advocated the study of this subject so that “children learn and get used to righteous loving and righteous hating: that is, to pursue virtue with love and vice with hatred.”[[219]](#footnote-219) In addition, Gaffurius, at the very beginning of his *Practica Musicae* (indeed, on the first page of the first chapter), when defending the practical application of music versus its theoretical study, stresses the fact that for the ancient Pythagoreans, Platonists and Peripatetics, “the practice of singing and playing is highly recommended for the education of youth.”[[220]](#footnote-220)

Gaffurius was not the only music theorist to recommend musical practice for young people. Tinctoris also touched upon this topic, expanding on the moralising qualities of music by describing this as a basis for the education of children, while considering the adults that they would eventually become. Quoting from Aristotle’s *Politics*, he stated that “the young should give themselves to the practice of the art of music so that, as old men, they can judge and enjoy it correctly”.[[221]](#footnote-221)

However, not all types of music were equally advisable. Quintilian, in his *Institutio Oratoria*, specifies that it is the music of the ancients, sung by brave men, and also used to sing the praises of the brave, which he thinks worthy of being learned, as opposed to the type of music used in theatres.[[222]](#footnote-222)

Quintilian’s opinion on music greatly influenced fifteenth and sixteenth-century musical thought.[[223]](#footnote-223) Humanist treatises during this period were keen to praise ancient types of music but, at the same time, show a strong deprecation of amorous compositions. Sources thus make the distinction between types of music that should be listened to, and types that were to be avoided, as the wrong type could direct a person towards sin or a loss of morality. This view on music can be found, for example, in Gaffurius’ writings. In the dedicatory letter of his *Practica Musicae*, heclarifies that, when he talks about music, he does not mean “that theatrical and effeminate music which destroys rather than forms public morals, but rather that moderate, manly music celebrated by the ancient heroes, that music which was presented at the table of kings and festive banquets when the guests … sang famous deeds of famous men, which was certainly a great inducement to kindle their eagerness for brave deeds.”[[224]](#footnote-224)

The use of music by ancient and illustrious men is also mentioned by Pier Paolo Vergerio. He notes that the Pythagoreans used to relax by singing and playing the lute, as did Achilles during battle by “singing [the] praises of mighty men … not love songs.”[[225]](#footnote-225) Similarly, Piccolomini suggests what he considers to be the appropriate use of music, stating that “musical harmony which is neither immoderate nor sensuous greatly refreshes the spirit and cheers the mind for enduring hardship.”[[226]](#footnote-226)

Humanist writers tend to praise music only when its potential lasciviousness was controlled. For the teacher Vittorino da Feltre music was to be praised only when it stimulated spiritual growth.[[227]](#footnote-227) Vegio recognised the importance that music had in the ancient Greek era, but on the other hand he cautions that “the greatest watchfulness is needed in teaching music, for we see so many promising youths lose all vigour of mind and character in their absorption in unworthy harmonies.”[[228]](#footnote-228)

Music, or more specifically, the sense of hearing, is also among the topics touched upon by Giovanni Dominici in his treatise on family care. In a discussion on the use of the five senses to regulate the body, he outlines precisely what was thought to be advisable for children to hear. They should “open [their] ears to listen to the divine commandments, the celestial advice, the divine praise, the holy doctrine, the misery of the afflicted, [and] the melodies that birds sweetly sing to their Lord”; whereas they should avoid listening to “fables and songs … serpentine tongues of scandalmongers … heretics … people possessed by the devil … preachers seeking their own glory, or commentators of pagans.”[[229]](#footnote-229) As one might expect from a clergyman, everything that is not connected with religion should be shunned: melodies addressed to the Lord are in, secular songs are out. In keeping with this idea, Dominici encourages children to sing to God, “keeping mind and voice as far as possible in harmony.”[[230]](#footnote-230)

Children from aristocratic and wealthy households could benefit from private secular tutors, who would teach them scholarly subjects in their domestic environment. This phenomenon, which became more and more popular particularly in Florence, applied not only to Literature and history, but also to the teaching of Music.[[231]](#footnote-231) This could have included either learning how to play a musical instrument, or how to dance. For example, Cresci, adoptive son of Andrea Cresci, was taught how to dance in 1474, as was Alfonso, son of Filippo Strozzi, in 1481.[[232]](#footnote-232) Leon Battista Alberti, son of a musician, learned how to play a range of instruments,[[233]](#footnote-233) while the young Lorenzo il Magnifico was taught how to play the viola or *lira da braccio* by a tutor called Giuliano, known as Catellaccio, an instrument that he continued to play in adulthood.[[234]](#footnote-234) An adult Francesco Guicciardini expressed regret for not having wanted to receive some musical training in his youth, as these skills, among others, would give someone dignity and honour.[[235]](#footnote-235)

Not only boys, but also girls could be taught how to sing and dance by private teachers. Among them, Caterina and Constanza, daughters of Paliano di Falco Paliani, learned how to dance in 1421; and Sveva, daughter of Doffo di Nepo Spini, received singing classes in 1418; while Alessandra di Bartolomeo Sassetti was taught how to dance in 1476, and then to play the organ in 1477.[[236]](#footnote-236) However, due to music’s association with lasciviousness, it should be noted that women were not always encouraged to engage with musical performance.[[237]](#footnote-237) Vividly, the moralist Giovanni di Dio, in a treatise published in Venice in 1471, states that an honourable unmarried woman would certainly not be praised for, among other things, “being able to sing and play [music] like a whore.”[[238]](#footnote-238) Around 1454, Saint Antonino, in his *Opera a ben vivere* (A Work to Live Well by), advises his female readers to avoid attending dances, as far as possible, among other activities, and to cover earthly musical sounds and songs with heavenly angelic music and the choirs of virgin Saints.[[239]](#footnote-239) Music tutors were reputed to pay undesirable attention to their female pupils.[[240]](#footnote-240) For this reason, a century earlier, Francesco da Barberino invited women who engaged with music (either singing or playing instruments) to do it in a discreet and honest way, and only when summoned by family members and removed from the gaze of other men but their husbands.[[241]](#footnote-241) These enduring opinions about the dangers of music for female audiences and practitioners became more and more numerous in the sixteenth century. It is apparent, for example, in Pietro Aretino’s assertion that “music, songs and letters that women know are the keys that unlock the gates of their chastity”[[242]](#footnote-242) and in Pietro Bembo’s warning to his daughter in 1541 that “playing music is for a woman a vain and frivolous thing”, highly incompatible with the desirable virtue of chastity.[[243]](#footnote-243) However, despite the troublesome association of music with licentious behaviour, daughters of wealthy families would still often receive at least some music training.

Sometimes there was no need to employ a private teacher, and children were taught music directly by their parents. This is, for example, the case of Benvenuto Cellini, better known for his work as a goldsmith and sculptor, who was taught music as a child by his father, despite his aversion towards it. He narrates this experience in his autobiography, stating that “My father began teaching me to play the recorder and to sing; and though I was at the very young age when little children like to play with a little recorder and such pastimes, I had an overwhelming dislike for it, and played and sang only to obey [my father].” [[244]](#footnote-244) Cellini persevered, taking music lessons until the age of fifteen, and was later even recruited to play for Pope Clement VII.[[245]](#footnote-245) In addition to these cases, even those children who did not receive professional musical training lived in an environment permeated with music. For example, the practice of singing lullabies to children was so widespread that Giovanni Dominici criticised this and other coddling habits as unnecessary and overindulgent.[[246]](#footnote-246) This practice was also connected to lactation, as shown in Giovanni Pontano’s twelfth Latin lullaby, in which a mother tells her son: “suck, yes, and I’ll sing you a little lullaby. Lul… Lullaby/ D’you not know it, pet, your lullaby, your little lullaby?”[[247]](#footnote-247)

Musical education was greatly sought after and was frequently recommended in treatises and writings.[[248]](#footnote-248) Sassuolo da Prato, teacher in Mantua from 1437, defends music studies in a letter to one of his friends, describing music as an invention of the Muses and praising it for being a pleasant discipline to learn from the very start of the learning process. To emphasise the importance of this subject, the author reminds the reader that in ancient Greece one would not be considered literate if he did not have at least some knowledge of music.[[249]](#footnote-249) Music education in school was also recommended by Matteo Palmieri in his *Vita Civile*, as he believed it to be helpful for the student to exercise the voice in order to improve its clarity.[[250]](#footnote-250)

It is likely that most children learned to sing before even learning how to read, and would learn to read music and text at the same time.[[251]](#footnote-251) Musical textbooks, such as Bonaventura da Brescia’s *Breviloquium musicale* (printed 1497, and often reprinted under the title *Regula musicae planae*), were used to teach the elements of music to children. The text begins with the Guidonian hand, a mnemonic pedagogical device that took its name from the music theorist Guido d’Arezzo (fig. 1.10). This was intended as a memory aid, linking notes to specific points on the hand which were used to help pupils remember the solmisation.[[252]](#footnote-252) The same teaching method is also mentioned by Tinctoris in his *Expositio manus* (Exposition of the Hand, ca. 1477), dedicated to the skilled young singer Johannes de Lotinis, who is described as “highly proficient” (*peritissimum*) in the Guidonian hand, as “there is no more dreadful insult with which to charge a musician than the claim that he does not know his hand.”[[253]](#footnote-253)

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries music was the subject of a debate that saw two opposing alliances.[[254]](#footnote-254) The Spanish scholar Bartolomeo Ramis de Pareia (ca. 1440-after 1491), who taught in Bologna, published his *Musica practica* in 1482, in which he attempted to simplify Boethian principles, so that they would be intelligible not only to theorists, but also to practitioners. Ramis’ innovation, which involved a new method of solmisation of eight notes, was criticised by other theorists, who were keen to perpetuate the traditional system introduced by Guido d’Arezzo.[[255]](#footnote-255) The mathematical teaching of music based on the use of Boethius’ *De institutione musica* was, by this time, seen to be obsolete and inefficient.[[256]](#footnote-256) This shift towards a less technical study of music brought humanists closer to this discipline. This is evident in the *De musica et poetica opusculum* written by the poet Raffaele Lippo Brandolini in 1513 for Pope Leo X (Giovanni de’ Medici), himself a connoisseur of music.[[257]](#footnote-257) Brandolini was more interested in the social and moral significance of music rather than its technical characteristics, and for this reason he uses sources that were familiar to his audience, especially Cicero and Quintilian.[[258]](#footnote-258)

In keeping with other scholars of his time, Brandolini cites the ancients’ understanding of the importance of music, and highlights the emphasis they gave to educating young people in this subject, stating that, “they [our ancestors] did not allow the children they educated to remain ignorant of this art.”[[259]](#footnote-259) Establishing a parallel between music and poetry, he subsequently recommends poetry for any person of any age, gender or rank, and states that: “poetic beauty and dignity … guides adolescents [and] trains youth.”[[260]](#footnote-260) It is again possible to observe the moral aspect of music education in this, which was frequently present in humanists’ writings.

Music education at a young age continued to be advised throughout the sixteenth century. Traces of this can be found, for example, in the manuscript biography of Alfonso d’Avalos d’Aquino, Marquis of Vasto (1502-1546), in which the author states that “the first thing, which is put into the rough mouths of children on the orders of wise fathers and of thoughtful teachers, is music, truly in imitation of Chiron, who raised the valiant Achilles in this way.”[[261]](#footnote-261)

As such, children would have been surrounded by music since the moment of birth, from the singing of lullabies by their mother or nurse, through to more formal training which would have taken place in later years.

1.6 Children, Music and Instruments in the Home

As seen in the previous section, the learning of musical theory and practice for children was encouraged by contemporary scholars, clergymen and music theorists, to help with their moral upbringing. Children in the home were exposed to musical sounds from birth, when their mothers would sing lullabies to soothe them, a practice that could even be perceived as an emulation of the Virgin Mary, who was described by Tinctoris as singing sweet songs to calm her son.[[262]](#footnote-262)

In wealthy households, formal music lessons were sometimes taught by private tutors, as in the case of the young Lorenzo il Magnifico, who learned to play the viola or *lira da braccio* with a tutor named Giuliano “Catellaccio.” In a letter sent by the teacher to his former pupil on 1 December 1466, Giuliano asks Lorenzo for assistance, writing: “I seek help from you, not having any other protector, as the servant of your house that I have always been and am now, because I was your viola teacher.”[[263]](#footnote-263) Musical instruments were kept in the Medici palace during Lorenzo’s rule. According to the inventory taken at his death in 1492, an incredible array of instruments were stored in the palace. This included four positive organs, one portative organ, five harpsichords in various sizes (of which one was adapted to serve as an organ), three clavichords, a viola with keys “in the manner of a clavichord” (perhaps a hurdy-gurdy, or a cetra with prominent frets), a harp, two lutes (one of which is described as broken), three large viole to be identified with *vielle* or *lire da braccio*,and a total of eight recorders in two sets. All of these instruments were kept in only one room, the “chamber of two beds”, on the ground floor.[[264]](#footnote-264)

Of course, the Medici were not the only wealthy Florentine family to own musical instruments. According to an inventory carried out in 1497, a viola was owned by the Tornabuoni family, kept in a chamber by the vestibule on the ground floor of their Florentine palace, together with two “zufoli da suonare” (recorders for playing), and a decorated horn, while a large harp was kept in a room on the upper floor, and another viola was in their countryside villa.[[265]](#footnote-265) Additionally, Francesco Inghirrami also had several musical instruments distributed among various different rooms in his houses, as detailed in an inventory from 1471. A *monachordo* (clavichord) and two small organs were stored in the antechamber of his “chasa picchola” (small house). Another *monachordo*, described as “beautifully painted”, was in a large chamber in a different house. In a room on the ground floor of his residence were two large organs, while at least one book of music was kept in his chamber in the “casa grande” (large house).[[266]](#footnote-266) This phenomenon was not restricted to the Florentine area, as an inventory of a Venetian household also records an organ, two harpsichords, five viole and five lutes as stored in a “camera grande”, along with typical bedroom furniture, such as a bed, storage chests, a mirror and a painting of Saint Jerome.[[267]](#footnote-267)

The presence of musical instruments within the house meant that the young members of the house were exposed to the music played by adults, and, at the same time, that these devices were readily available if children were to learn how to play them. Stephanie R. Miller has pointed out that musical instruments were often stored in rooms on the ground floor, which was also the designated space for the adolescents of the family according to the advice given by Leon Battista Alberti in his *De re aedificatoria* (On the Art of Building). As Miller argues, this suggests an association between young people and musical instruments.[[268]](#footnote-268) There is also evidence that holy images would have been displayed in those same quarters, which further highlights the importance given by parents to the moral instruction of youth.[[269]](#footnote-269)

As discussed in the previous section, musical interest could be passed from parents to their children, such as in the case of Benvenuto Cellini, and possibly Leon Battista Alberti, who were both sons of musicians. This is also certainly true in the case of Ruberto, son of Filippo Strozzi, who sung publicly with his own brother Lorenzo on feast days, and who must have been trained in music since his youth, as he collaborated with the composer Bartolomeo degli Organi for a *mascherata* (a masquerade)in 1507, when he was nineteen-years old.[[270]](#footnote-270) It is also known that Girolamo Savonarola was taught how to play the lute by his grandfather Michele, as reported by his companion Fra Benedetto Luschini in his *Vulnera Diligentis* (The Wounds of a Friend).[[271]](#footnote-271) The involvement of grandparents in musical activities with their grandchildren is also demonstrated by the fact that Cosimo de’ Medici went so far as to interrupt a diplomatic meeting to play the bagpipes with one of his grandsons, much to the bemusement of a group of ambassadors from Lucca who were visiting at the time.[[272]](#footnote-272)

Music making, therefore, was a domestic activity that involved the whole family, and on occasions could involve other visitors as well. For example, in 1477, at a banquet organised by a member of the Florentine Salutati family living in Naples, the guests moved to the *camera* (bedchamber) and *anticamera* (antechamber) to play music after finishing their meals.[[273]](#footnote-273) As this account implies, the *camera* in a Renaissance house was not only a space for resting, and was indeed used by both men and their wives for everyday activities such as keeping accounts and sewing.[[274]](#footnote-274) That musical instruments could be stored in bedrooms is confirmed by a novel written around the middle of the sixteenth century by the Sienese Pietro Fortini in which a keyboard instrument, being moved to the garden, is described as being kept in the *camera* of a character called Constansio “to entertain himself” (*per suo spasso*).[[275]](#footnote-275) Similarly, in a play written by Pietro Aretino in 1546, one of the characters asks another to fetch his lute from a *camera*.[[276]](#footnote-276)

While documentary references to domestic musical practices are unfortunately infrequent, they are, however, complemented by a number of other sources, including depictions of music-making in paintings.[[277]](#footnote-277) A painting from around 1548, attributed to Lambert Sustris (Alberto de Olanda), a Dutch painter active in Venice (fig. 1.11), shows a remarkable example of music being played in a *camera* and of the involvement of children in domestic music practices. Sustris worked in Titian’s workshop during his time in Venice, and would have been intimately acquainted with Titian’s style throughout his artistic development.[[278]](#footnote-278) The primary subject of this painting, *Venus in her bedchamber*, was clearly inspired by Titian’s *Venus of Urbino,* now in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence. In addition to the obvious figure of the reclining Venus in the foreground, the background of Sustris’ painting also makes reference to the source of his inspiration. It does this through the window that opens on to a view of the sky, within which a plant in a vase rests, and through the two women who have opened the lid of a nearby *cassone* and are taking items from inside it. It is known that Titian kept sketches and copies of his best works available for his assistants to copy,[[279]](#footnote-279) and so it is likely that Sustris would have had ample opportunity to study Titian’s painting of Venus in detail. Titian’s *Venus* paintings were incredibly popular and produced in multiple versions with slight differences, and so, working as a painting in Titian’s workshop, it is easy to understand Sustris’ desire to engage with this subject by producing his own versions of the works with which he would already have been familiar. However, in his painting Sustris has added a musical element: a woman is making music using a harpsichord resting on a table, in the presence of a child at her right side. The idea of adding music to this composition may have come from other works by Titian in which a naked Venus is accompanied by a musician.[[280]](#footnote-280) The similarities between Venus’ hairstyle in each painting, tied back and up, also suggests a relationship between the two compositions. However, Titian’s various versions of *Venus with a Musician* treat the musical element in a fundamentally different way. In these, a male figure plays an organ while sitting at the edge of the same bed on which Venus reclines, and turns his gaze towards her. Engaging with the physical senses, Titian’s paintings are erotically charged, especially those in which the figure of the goddess Venus is not immediately recognizable, and can be rather seen as a naked woman.[[281]](#footnote-281) This, of course, leads to a reading of the role of music in these paintings which relates more to its lascivious connotations and links to the licentious behavior discussed in Chapter 1.5.[[282]](#footnote-282) Conversely, in Sustris’ painting, the music lesson that is taking place in the background, not being the focus of the composition, is rather presented as an ordinary practice in a domestic environment, as part of the background noise of the house, and does not seem to lend itself to a reading similar to that of Titian’s Venus paintings. It is possible that Sustris, despite most likely taking inspiration from the presence of music in Titian’s works, decided to re-elaborate the subject in a way that would avoid any negative connotation, replacing the male player with a woman and a child, and placing them in the background, as a common and more desirable domestic activity.

Although Sustris worked in Venice around the middle of the sixteenth-century, it can be reasonably assumed that the music-making in the scene is to some degree representative of common practice in the preceding decades in Florence as well.

From the 1500s onwards, portraits highlighting the sitter’s musical knowledge became more and more frequent, and this also holds true for children and adolescents. As this particular period corresponded with the emergence of a new genre of secular polyphonic composition called the madrigal, Victor Coelho has suggested that portraits of young lutenists from this time may be linked to the practice of singing adaptations of these for solo voice and lute accompaniment in domestic spaces; and the frottola of the 1490s and early 1500s is associated with a like performance practice.[[283]](#footnote-283) The portraits of young lute players made by Francesco Salviati around 1527 (fig. 1.12) and Agnolo Bronzino in 1532-1534 (fig. 1.13) are most likely a product of this culture of lute-song.[[284]](#footnote-284)

These paintings show adolescents with their musical instrument; but portraits of younger children were also painted. In an example from the Venetian area, two boys likely to be identified as the two brothers Gerolamo Melchiorre and Francesco Santo da Pesaro are portrayed by Titian, possibly with the help of his workshop, around 1540-1545 (fig. 1.14).[[285]](#footnote-285) The two children, portrayed half-length, are standing behind a table. Both children look outwards to meet the viewers’ gaze, a strategy to enhance the involvement in the scene that will be discussed in the following chapter on musical angels. This technique was used by Titian in at least one other painting, the portrait of the Vendramin family, in which, again, a child looks out of the frame. The attention of the viewer is drawn to the open book depicted on the table in the foreground, upon which musical notation appears, although it does not appear to be indicating an identifiable work.[[286]](#footnote-286) Both children show ownership of the musical elements in the picture: while the boy on the right is resting his left hand on the book of music, his companion is holding the neck of a lute. While, prior to this, children were portrayed together with their parents or other adults, in this case the painter innovatively elevates them to be independent subjects in their own right.[[287]](#footnote-287) Titian’s workshop produced at least one other painting with children accompanied by musical elements. In the *Music Lesson* kept in the National Gallery in London, which will be discussed in more detail later on, a child is singing from a music book guided by his master who is beating the musical time, while two adult male figures play a bass viol and a recorder (fig. 3.27).

With the help of inventories, records relating to music tuition, and descriptions and portraits of youthful performers, it is possible to reconstruct young people’s affinity with music as a practical skill in Italy in this period. Music, and musical education, would often have been a domestic pursuit, and musical activity would have taken place in *camere* and other domestic spaces. The children of the household would therefore have been in continual contact with musical instruments, and children would have contributed to the broader musical atmosphere by learning how to play instruments and sing, often from a young age. It is also apparent that music education often involved the assistance of older family members, who would have been heavily invested in the child’s wider moral development and the protection of the family’s reputation. This serves to highlight just how integral these musical practices would have been in domestic life.

It is clear that moral education was considered vitally important in Renaissance Italy, and would have been one of the most important civic duties a citizen would perform, protecting their family’s name and reputation, and ensuring that the principles and values which were considered fundamental for virtuous conduct were successfully imparted to the next generation. These principles were derived from a wide range of different sources, of both religious and secular origin, some of which were contemporary while other were drawn from texts passed down from antiquity.

In prescriptive literature, parents were encouraged to plan for moral education from the earliest stages in their child’s upbringing, encompassing a broad range of aspects such as nursing, the sounds they would hear, the images they would see, and eventually incorporating musical studies and practices, which were considered to be closely linked to morality. Although these treatises and advice manuals may not fully reflect reality, they still represent a “model” and a source of inspiration for the members of the household, acting as *Specula*.

It was understood that a key aspect of learning was copying and imitation. Therefore, so that their progeny only learned worthy behaviours, parents were advised to constantly ensure that the examples they saw and heard around them would always serve to reinforce positive moral messages.

This would never have been more true than when children were in the home, due in part to both their regular exposure to the items in this environment, and the fact that it would have been relatively easy for parents to control. Music, and musical education, was considered to have a significant effect on a child’s moral learning, particularly at home, which would be the location for a range of musical practices and influences that could involve many different family members across several generations.

Domestic settings would therefore have been a place of both overt educative practices and a range of less direct methods that were designed to influence children from the very moment of birth. In order to build further on this, the next chapter will look in more detail at how some of these *exempla* were employed, and will focus specifically on how one type of exemplary figure, the angel, was used as part of the educative process.

# 2. Musical Angels and Moral Education

The importance of the concept of virtue in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italian society clearly would have been a significant motivating factor in parents’ efforts to ensure that their children were constantly surrounded by the most compelling examples of virtue. The use of positive *exempla*, and encouragement to imitate these role-models, were well-recognised methods that were used to teach morality from the earliest years of childhood. Domestic furniture, objects and works of art were designed to embed these ideals all around the home, such that young and malleable minds would encounter them at every turn to ensure that they would never have to look far for inspiration and guidance. Through positive examples, such as images of people who were considered admirable and noble, and through practices such as musicianship that were thought to encourage a harmonious temperament and good moral judgement, young people were provided with constant reminders and reinforcement to help them live a virtuous life.

It was common that portraits of ancestors and of illustrious men and women were used as visual inspiration, and stories from classical antiquity and religious accounts focusing on particular virtues such as chastity and courage were employed to explain morality and wisdom. There was, however, another significant category of figure which would have been a constant presence in the Renaissance world: the angel.

Although much has been written on the theology and iconography of the angel through the centuries, musical angels have rarely been differentiated from the broader celestial category.[[288]](#footnote-288) Where they have been analysed, the authors have mainly addressed the evolution of their iconography, focusing on the study of the musical instruments and techniques depicted, and paying particular attention to the accuracy of their representation.[[289]](#footnote-289) However, in this chapter a different perspective will be employed, which examines how angels in general, and depictions of musical angels in particular, could have been used as part of the moral education of young people between the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth century. We will consider the ways in which these angelic companions invoked imitation and acted as role models, how they guided and protected, and the ways in which they would have been intended to interact with particular members of the household. We will also discuss the difficulties we face when attempting to use the surviving evidence to place images of angels in particular locations around the home, while considering how we can make use of the information we do have available to us in order to gain a meaningful degree of insight. By examining the importance of angels as moral teachers, and their musicianship, in the context of their domestic ubiquity, it is possible to uncover fresh resonances that emerge from this already much-studied group of images.

2.1 The Nature of Angels

Fifteenth-century Christians in Italy would have come into frequent contact with angels during their everyday lives. Their presence in the Bible, in addition to their representation in processions and plays, and their depictions in both religious spaces and private environments, would have made them familiar to the vast majority of the populace.

The subject of the angelic nature, including biblical references and patristic notions, has been comprehensively investigated by numerous scholars.[[290]](#footnote-290) This section will outline the history of angels and their iconography in order to provide a contextual framework for the rest of this thesis. It is a concise summary, which does not intend to be exhaustive in any way.

Belief in the existence of angels, understood as divine beings positioned between God and humankind, originated in pre-biblical times within the Jewish community. In the Bible, these ideas were then developed further, with angels acting both as intermediaries carrying humanity’s prayers to Heaven, and as God’s messengers to Earth. They are described as “sons of God” both in the books of Genesis (6:2-4) and Job (38:7).[[291]](#footnote-291)

The first-known depiction of an angel can be found in the Roman catacombs of Priscilla (second-third century AD). This image shows the Archangel Gabriel in the midst of the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary. He has no wings (like all early Christian depictions of angels) and is wearing typical Roman vestments.[[292]](#footnote-292) In early Christian art, angels were usually represented as human beings, and between the mid-third century and the end of the fourth century, in keeping with several biblical descriptions of angels appearing to mortals in the likeness of “men”, they are sometimes depicted even having beards.[[293]](#footnote-293)

Although angels did not start to be represented with wings until the beginning of the Middle Ages, winged figures already existed in the Etruscan civilization in the sixth century BC, probably derived from hybrid beings with animal attributes found in Middle-Eastern cultures. [[294]](#footnote-294) It was around this time in the Greek civilisation that the God of Love, Eros, also began to be represented as having wings. This iconography then became tremendously popular, and eventually passed to the Romans, by whom Eros was given the Latin name of Amor. [[295]](#footnote-295) In this light, it seems likely that the initial decision not to add wings to the shoulders of Christian angels could be attributed to a desire to differentiate them from pagan deities such as the aforementioned Eros/Amor, but also from the female personification of Victory (called Nike in Greek, Victoria in the Latin).[[296]](#footnote-296) Numerous scholars have recognised that the eventual evolution of the iconography of winged angels is indebted to these classical figures. Nevertheless, Marco Bussagli has highlighted that there are striking differences between the Christian angel and the ancient personification of Victory, in particular the gender: male for the former, female for the latter. Notably, in the first half of the sixth century the figure of Nike on Byzantine coins under Justin I was replaced by that of a winged angel, but with enough alteration to the iconography to emphasise the change in subject.[[297]](#footnote-297)

In addition to the influence of the Classical gods as described above, it is likely that depictions of the winds would have had an impact on the development of figures of winged angels, based on the biblical indication that “He [God] makes his messengers winds”.[[298]](#footnote-298) It is interesting to note that the Hebraic word for “wind” (*ruàh*), can also be taken to mean “soul”, and can therefore be associated with angels, as immaterial beings.[[299]](#footnote-299) It is also equally possible that winged figures of angels might be indebted to other Christian sources, such as the biblical passages that described men with wings (Ezekiel 1:5–6 and Revelation 4:7–8) and the iconography of a winged man as a symbol of the evangelist Matthew.[[300]](#footnote-300) Furthermore, the early Christian author Tertullian, in a passage of his *Apologeticum* (Apology) written in the second century AD, states that:

Every spirit is winged, both angels and demons. In this way, in a moment they are everywhere: all the world is for them one place; what is taking place everywhere is as easy for them to know as to tell. It is thought that their velocity is divine, because their substance is not known.[[301]](#footnote-301)

Thus, the attribute of wings was initially symbolic of the angels’ swiftness and ability to move instantly from one place to another, rather than as a real feature pertaining to their substantial nature.[[302]](#footnote-302) Isidore of Seville (560-636) explains that the addition of wings was a conventional way of representing angels’ speed. In his *Etymologiarum sive Originum* (The Etymologies or Origins) he declares that artists can depict winged angels to “express their rapid flight, just as in poets’ fables the winds are said to have feathers, because of their swiftness, of course!”[[303]](#footnote-303)

The first Italian example of a winged angel can be found in a mosaic in the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, from between AD 432-440. Here, an angel flying above the Virgin Mary on the triumphal arch is depicted as having wings. Interestingly, the drawing underneath shows a wingless angel, making this mosaic a significant example of this transition. From this time onwards, throughout the Middle Ages, it became fairly common practice to depict angels with wings on their shoulders.[[304]](#footnote-304)

In his *De coelesti hierarchia* (On the celestial hierarchy), Pseudo-Dionysus the Areopagite, who lived between the fifth and the sixth centuries, codified the necessity of representing angels visually so that they could be comprehended by mortals. The immaterial celestial creatures needed to be adapted into something that is comprehensible to the human mind. In Pseudo-Dionysus’ words:

He [God] modelled it [the sacred institution] on the hierarchies of heaven, and clothed these immaterial hierarchies in numerous material figures and forms, so that, in a way appropriate to our nature, we might be uplifted from these most venerable images to interpretations and assimilations which are simple and inexpressible. For it is quite impossible that we humans should, in any immaterial way, rise up to imitate and to contemplate the heavenly hierarchies without the aid of material means capable of guiding us as our nature requires. Hence, any thinking person realises that the appearances of beauty are signs of an invisible loveliness.[[305]](#footnote-305)

This same concept is also stated by John of Damascus between the seventh and the eight centuries. In his *Expositio fidei* (Exposition of Faith) stressing the importance of the sense of sight to comprehend divine matters, the author defended the use of images of angels in worship.[[306]](#footnote-306) As part of a broader discussion in support of Christ’s artistic representability, John of Damascus states that, even though angels are immaterial and bodiless creatures, they are bound to time and space. This makes them circumscribable and therefore representable visually.[[307]](#footnote-307) In the author’s words:

Physical things which have shape, bodies which are circumscribed, and have colour, are suitable subjects for image-making. Nevertheless, even if nothing physical or fleshly may be attributed to an angel, or a soul, or a demon, it is still possible to depict and circumscribe them according to their nature. For they are intellectual beings, and are believed to be present invisibly and to operate spiritually.[[308]](#footnote-308)

In line with the ideas developed by Pseudo-Dionysus, John of Damascus believed that images are a necessary intermediary to enable human beings to contemplate the spiritual realm: “These [images] give us a faint apprehension of God and the angels where otherwise we would have none, because it is impossible for us to think immaterial things unless we can envision analogous shapes, as the great and holy Dionysius the Areopagite has said.”[[309]](#footnote-309) After this, he quotes his predecessor almost exactly by saying that:

God wills that we should not be totally ignorant of bodiless creatures, and so he clothed them with forms and shapes, and used images comprehensible to our nature, material forms which could be seen by the spiritual nature of the mind. From these we make images and representations, for how else could the cherubim be shown as having form?[[310]](#footnote-310)

Figurative representation of angels became legitimate following the second Council of Nicaea in 787, which took place to settle the iconoclastic dispute. Here, celestial beings were recognised as having a “body”. This was largely based on Psalm 104:4, which, by stating that God’s messengers were winds (*spiritos*) and his ministers were fire and flame, figuratively assigned a “body” made of air and fire to the angels. Their ethereal nature places angels in an intermediary position between men, created from the earth, and God, supreme light.[[311]](#footnote-311) In this way the Council also established the spiritual, “airy” nature of angels.[[312]](#footnote-312)

That angelic bodies are made of air had been asserted by Pseudo-Dionysus in his *De coelesti hierarchia*:

They [the angels] are also named “winds” as a sign of the virtually instant speed with which they operate everywhere … One could add that the word “wind” means a spirit of the air and shows how divine and intelligent beings live in conformity with God. The word is an image and a symbol of the activity of the Deity. It naturally moves and gives life, hurrying forward, direct and unrestrained, and this in virtue of what to us is unknowable and invisible, namely the hiddenness of the sources and the objectives of its movements.[[313]](#footnote-313)

This same idea was echoed in the writings of both Isidore of Seville in the seventh century, and much later by Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth.[[314]](#footnote-314) In art, this idea was translated into depictions of creatures who either sit on or come out of clouds, or whose bodies are only partially material, with the remaining part vanishing into vaporous clouds. This type of representation, which Bussagli called *angelo-nube* (angel-cloud), can be observed throughout the Middle Ages, up until the sixteenth century.[[315]](#footnote-315) For example, it is from a cloud that the top half of the body of the angel stopping Abraham’s hand from sacrificing his son Isaac appears, in two tiles made by Brunelleschi and Ghiberti respectively as part of their participation in the competition to design one of the doors of the Baptistery of Florence in 1401.[[316]](#footnote-316)

Perhaps one of the depictions of angels that most effectively conveys the idea of their immateriality is a panel with the Virgin and Child painted by Gentile da Fabriano, today kept in the Museo Diocesiano of Velletri (fig. 2.1). Here, two transparent angels flank the main figures. The painter probably painted these translucent angels as an indication of their ethereal nature.[[317]](#footnote-317) Other artists have employed different methods to obtain similar results, depicting angels in hues of colours that recall those used to paint the setting, be it a cerulean sky or a golden background.[[318]](#footnote-318)

The physical nature of angels was not the only aspect debated during the Middle Ages. Numerous theologians and philosophers attempted to sort the various different categories of angels into a hierarchy, with each obtaining different results. The most influential scheme was that devised by Pseudo-Dionysius in his *De coelesti hierarchia*. In his system, which was later reused by Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa theologiae*, the author categorised angels into nine separate levels, each grouped into three orders. The highest order comprises the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones, the middle order Dominions, Virtues and Powers, and the lowest order Principalities, Archangels and Angels.[[319]](#footnote-319)

According to Gregory the Great, angels, as archetypes of human behaviour, represent the model that mortals need to imitate in order to be able to comprehend God. The different levels in the angelic hierarchy would therefore represent the different levels of divine knowledge.[[320]](#footnote-320) The angelic hierarchies were officially defined during the Fourth Council of the Lateran, in 1215.[[321]](#footnote-321)

The principal theological ideas surrounding angels were widely-disseminated from the mid-thirteenth century onwards, thanks mainly to the enormous popularity enjoyed by the *Legenda Aurea*, written around 1260 by Jacobus da Voragine. In this text, the author adopts the hierarchical division envisaged by Pseudo-Dionysius.[[322]](#footnote-322) After this, artistic representations of the angelic hierarchies became common, as can be seen, for example, in Nardo di Cione’s *Paradise* in the Cappella Strozzi in the Florentine church of Santa Maria Novella (1351-1357, fig. 2.2).[[323]](#footnote-323)

In addition to being immaterial beings associated with air and wind, angels could also be connected with many other entities. In the Bible, stars and angels are often described as having very similar functions and natures. They both praise the Lord (Job 38:6-7, Baruch 3:34-35) and serve him, and, like stars, angels were considered to be luminous beings, as described in the Gospel of Luke 24:4 when angels were encountered at Christ’s burial site, where they are described as being clothed “in dazzling apparel.”[[324]](#footnote-324)

This association with heavenly bodies was also referred to in both Dante’s *Divina Commedia* (Paradise, 28.40-78) and *Convivio* (2.4:2), in which he established a link between angelic choirs and celestial spheres, stating that the categories in the angelic hierarchy act as “movers” (*movitori*) of specific planets.[[325]](#footnote-325) This connection was represented in artistic form as well, as can be seen in Piero di Puccio’s *Cosmography*, frescoed around 1390 in the monumental *Camposanto* (cemetery) in Pisa, and in Luigi de’ Pace’s mosaics for the Chigi chapel (1516).[[326]](#footnote-326) This idea was further developed in the fifteenth century by Marsilio Ficino in his *De christiana religione* (On the Christian Religion), in which he mentions that angels belonging to the second category, the “Virtues”, move skies and stars according to God’s will.[[327]](#footnote-327) This connection with the planets had a musical connotation as well, as celestial bodies were believed to produce sounds, known as the “music of the spheres”.[[328]](#footnote-328) The biblical Book of Wisdom provided the basis for the idea that God created the universe in harmony: “you have set all things in right order by proportion: by measure, by number, and by weight,” linking celestial harmony to musical composition.[[329]](#footnote-329) Viewed in this context, angels depicted making music represented the divine harmony.

Since the beginning of the Christian era the evolution of the artistic representation of angels has followed a similar path to that of the classical cupids or *erotes*.[[330]](#footnote-330) During the Roman era, the childish figure of Eros was used as adornment for both pagan and Christian sarcophagi, having lost its original meaning as the God of Love and being used purely in a decorative way as a chubby naked toddler, a *putto*.[[331]](#footnote-331) However, depictions of winged angels as *putti* were not frequently used during the Middle Ages. The earliest example can be found on two occasions in Giotto’s decoration for the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua from 1305 (fig. 2.3). In this, the gable of Saint Anne’s house, depicted in the episodes with the *Annunciation to Saint Anne* and the *Nativity of the Virgin Mary*, is decorated with two winged *putti*-angels who are holding a shellwith the image of Christ, reminiscent of the cupids that carry a *clipeus*, a large shield part of an armour,in early Christian sarcophagi.

From the mid-fifteenth century onwards, representing angels in the shape of *putti* became common, and numerous examples survive both in churches and museums.[[332]](#footnote-332) During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the iconography of angels and *putti* frequently overlapped as they both tended to be depicted as toddlers.[[333]](#footnote-333) Much of this can be explained by the revival of the classics that took place during the Renaissance. However, this can also be linked to the fact that angels were considered to be related to the soul, as noted previously. Bussagli explains how Renaissance artists re-applied the ancient iconography of the soul, which is identical to that of cupids (naked and winged), to depictions of angels.[[334]](#footnote-334)

Although winged *putti* were originally personifications of the God of Love, by the fifteenth-century in Italy they were no longer consistently depicted as such, as Charles Dempsey explains. Donatello is commonly attributed with the revival of this type of figure, which was to become increasingly popular during the Italian Renaissance.[[335]](#footnote-335) These figures of winged children were known in the period by the vernacular term *spiritelli*, sprites or small spirits, the diminutive of *spirito*, which refers to a movement of air, and which was sometimes even used as a synonym of air in vernacular sources.[[336]](#footnote-336) Interestingly, their nomenclature varies significantly in written documents, testifying to this overlapping of meanings. Among his commissions, for example, the contract for the Prato pulpit (1428) calls these winged children *spiritelli*, while the one for the baptismal font in Siena (1429) simply refers to them as *fanciullini ignudi*, young naked boys.[[337]](#footnote-337) On the other hand, the childlike musical figures sculpted by Donatello and his workshop for the high altar in the Basilica del Santo in Padua (1447-50) are referred to as *angeli* in contemporary sources.[[338]](#footnote-338) The association of *putti* and angels is perhaps also linked to the fact that the Italian noun *spirito* comes from the Latin *spiritus*, which is in turn a translation of the Greek *pneuma*, which could also refer to wind, breath, and immaterial creatures such as the Holy Ghost or angels.[[339]](#footnote-339) A quick inspection is sufficient to notice that, despite the varying terms used, these figures are all young children who are making music, singing, dancing and playing instruments (figs. 2.4-2.6).

The ideas developed in the writings of both Pseudo-Dyonisius and John of Damascus enjoyed wide dissemination and several translations, both during the Middle Ages and beyond. The body of works by Pseudo-Dionysius was translated into Latin four times in the Middle Ages. In Italy, new translations were produced by Ambrogio Traversari by 1437, and Marsilio Ficino in 1492,[[340]](#footnote-340) while his treatise *De caelesti hierarchia* was printed in Venice in 1502. John of Damascus’ Expositio fidei (or *De fide orthodoxa*) was translated in the twelfth century by Burgundio of Pisa, and then corrected by Robert Grosseteste in the thirteenth century.[[341]](#footnote-341) In Italy, it became available in printed form in 1532.

During the fifteenth century, due to a rejuvenated interest in classic cultures, it was necessary to attempt to reconcile this Christian conceptualisation of angels with both ancient texts and contemporary Neoplatonist and humanist ideas. This eventually led to the formation ofnew beliefs surrounding angels, which developed alongside the deeply-rooted traditional devotion towards these figures. Humankind was given a special place in the order of the universe, so much so that Giovanni Pico della Mirandola’s writings even present the possibility that human beings might actually be able to surpass angels in their closeness to God, while Marsilio Ficino created a system designed to summon angels to be used by mortals for their own benefit.*[[342]](#footnote-342)*

It is not possible to understand the context in which Renaissance Italians lived without outlining the importance that angels had during this time. As we have seen, they are not simply actors in religious narratives, but, as demonstrated by their pervasive presence in everyday life, they were protagonists in their own right, and important subjects as part of worship practices.

2.2 Angels as Musicians

Musical Angels appear in the Bible on several occasions.[[343]](#footnote-343) During Isaiah’s vision, the Seraphim, who rank highest in the angelic hierarchy, are heard praising God with the words “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”[[344]](#footnote-344) Their song is imitated by the mortal devout in the *Sanctus*, a hymn that was sung at the end of the consecration of bread and wine during Mass on most Sundays and festivals. Similarly, the celestial creatures described in Revelation 4:8 repeat, day and night, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”[[345]](#footnote-345) Again, in Revelation, it is stated that “many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands” sing “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing!”, and seven angels play seven trumpets to anticipate apocalyptic visions.[[346]](#footnote-346) The evangelist Luke describes the praise of the angels in recognition of the Nativity of Christ, saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” – the words of which were imitated by the earthly devout in the hymn *Gloria in excelsis deo*, which was sung during Mass.[[347]](#footnote-347)

The last of the Psalms, number 150, lists which instruments are appropriate to be used in the praise of God:

Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp!

Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!

Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals![[348]](#footnote-348)

Images corresponding to each of these examples are easy to find in Italian art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, spanning several different media including manuscript illustrations, frescoes and paintings for public or private use, and three-dimensional forms, with angels playing musical instruments or singing, accompanied by music notation or pronouncing the words of liturgical hymns.[[349]](#footnote-349) For example, angels play musical instruments beneath a scroll bearing the words “S[an]c[t]us S[an]c[t]us S[an]c[t]us D[omi]n[u]s Deus Sabaoth” on the first page of a presentation manuscript of music theorist Johannes Tinctoris’ writings, created in Naples around 1483 (fig. 2.7), while trumpet-playing angels can be seen in depictions of the Apocalypse and the Last Judgement, such as Fra Angelico’s paintings in the Museo di San Marco in Florence of ca. 1431 (fig. 2.8).[[350]](#footnote-350) Representations of the Nativity were particularly common and could include the words and the notation of the *Gloria* plainchant, as found on a glazed terracotta produced by Luca della Robbia around 1470 now kept at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (fig. 2.9). Here, four angels appear on a cloud above the Nativity scene, one of whom holds a scroll with the words “Gloria in excelsis deo” (Glory to God in the highest) and the corresponding plainchant in neumatic notation. Identical notation appears in numerous surviving artworks, including the *Nativity* in the Museo del Bargello, Florence, also produced by the della Robbias’ workshop around 1470, and two works by Domenico Ghirlandaio, the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Spedale degli Innocenti, Florence, of 1488, and a *predella* panel with the *Nativity* in the Musei Vaticani, of ca. 1492.

Meanwhile, angels playing the musical instruments listed in Psalm 150 appear in the well-known *cantoria* made by Luca della Robbia for the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, Florence, between 1432 and 1438 (fig. 2.10). Each panel of the decoration corresponds exactly to one of the recommendations in the Psalm, and the link is made absolutely explicit in the Latin inscription that runs along the frieze quoting the relevant Latin verses from Psalm 150 in their entirety:

Laudate D[omi]n[u]m in s[an]c[t]is ei[us] Laudate eum in firmamento virtutis ei[us] La[udate] e[um] in virtutibus ei[us] La[udate] eu[m] secundum multitudinem magnitudinis eius/ Laudate eum in sono tubae laudate eum in psalterio et cythara Laudate eum in timpano/ et choro La[udate] eu[m] in cordis et organo La[udate] eu[m] in cimbalis bene sona[n]tibus La[udate] eu[m] in cimbalis iubilationis O[mn]is sp[iritu]s laudet D[omi]n[u]m.

In the frontal panels, a number of wingless angels in the likeness of children and youths dance and play the instruments mentioned in the text, whilst on the side panels they sing from a book and a scroll.[[351]](#footnote-351)

The musical instruments listed in Psalm 150 often appear when an angelic orchestra is depicted—for example, when being represented as glorifying Christ in the court of Heaven by Fra Angelico, on the *predella* for an altarpiece in San Domenico, Fiesole, as Meredith Gill has observed (fig. 2.11).[[352]](#footnote-352) The most commonly depicted musical instruments in altarpieces appear to be the organ and the lute. However, other stringed instruments such as the harp, the viella and the cithara, in addition to wind instruments such as trumpets, are often encountered. The most infrequent instruments seem to be the cymbals. Due to the progressive secularisation that took place during the late medieval and renaissance periods, religious art began to include instruments that were not associated with the liturgy, but which were used in lay expressions of piety.[[353]](#footnote-353)

Although most musical angels in Italian Renaissance art are indebted in some way to the biblical configuration of the celestial soundscape, the setting and narratives in which they appear need not themselves be biblical. Thanks partly to the enormous popularity enjoyed by Jacobus da Voragine’s *Legenda Aurea*, they also found a place in religious and devotional art depicting the Virgin Mary and the events associated with her life, such as her Assumption into Heaven and her Coronation.[[354]](#footnote-354) In these scenes, angel ensembles are usually characterised by their instrumental diversity, including wind instruments such as trumpets and shawms, and string instruments such as lutes and *vielle* – as, for example, in Matteo di Giovanni’s *Assumption of the Virgin* of ca. 1474 (fig. 2.12), and in the *Coronation of the Virgin* by the Master of the Fiesole Epiphany, from 1479-80 (fig. 2.13).[[355]](#footnote-355) In addition to such narrative scenes, it is in depictions of the Virgin and Child, often accompanied by the young Saint John the Baptist, that musical angels are most often depicted, participating in the scene by making music through singing or playing instruments.

The words of sacred hymns could also be added to depictions of the Virgin and Child. The opening words from the Marian antiphon *Ave Regina Celorum* (Hail, Queen of Heaven) run below the figures of the Virgin and Child flanked by Saint Roch and Saint Sebastian, popular protectors against the plague, while trumpeting angels fly above, in a glazed earthenware plaque from the Veneto (fig. 2.14).[[356]](#footnote-356) The singing of the *Ave Regina Celorum* was already long established when Walter Frye composed a new version in 1450. His setting became incredibly popular and its use spread widely across Europe and especially in Italy, principally through chansonniers, anthologies of vernacular music, which also often include a handful of Latin sacred works.[[357]](#footnote-357) The presence of angels in this plaque is particularly appropriate as the first lines of the antiphon read, “Hail, Queen of Heaven, mother of the king of angels” (*Ave regina caelorum, mater regis angelorum*).

By the fifteenth century the tradition of depicting musical angels in religious paintings was well-established, and angels are unquestionably the most ubiquitous musical subject in religious art from Renaissance Italy. In the words of Howard Mayer Brown, between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, “angels are the most numerous, and therefore the most important, class of musicians in Italian art.”[[358]](#footnote-358) The use of these figures was advocated by the Church, for the benefit of the devout. When describing the third effect claimed of music in his *Complexus effectuum musices*, written for Beatrice of Aragon around 1473, Tinctoris observes that “painters, when wishing to depict the joys of the blessed, paint angels playing various musical instruments. The Church would not allow this unless it believed that the joys of the blessed are enhanced by music.”[[359]](#footnote-359)

The widespread popularity that musical angels acquired around this time is also confirmed in the *Compendium Musicale*, compiled by the music theorist Nicolaus de Capua in 1415. In this, the author replaced the classical concept of *musica mundana*, codified by Boethius at the beginning of the sixth century as the music produced by heavenly bodies, with the new *musica angelica*, produced by choirs of angels, re-configuring the harmony of the spheres as the “Angelic music … which is performed unabatedly by angels in the sight of God”.[[360]](#footnote-360) This example confirms the importance given to musical angels not only in visual representation, but also in music theory.

Angelic music, however, presented a problem, as it was considered to be inaudible or un-intelligible by humans.[[361]](#footnote-361) Nevertheless, by the late Middle Ages, it was customary to hear angelic hymns sung by human voices, especially in the case of ecclesiastical or monastic environments, in the liturgy of the Mass and of the Hours.[[362]](#footnote-362) Oliver Huck has described the function of perceptible liturgical music as a “sign”, a manifestation, of the inaudible celestial music.[[363]](#footnote-363) The topic of the relationship between celestial and terrestrial music and the ways in which clergymen emulated musical angels will be explored in the following section.

2.3 Emulating Angels

The recurring presence of angels in artistic creations can be interpreted as the product of the close relationship and identification between human beings and angels. In the Christian tradition, angels fulfil multiple different functions. Both the Old and the New Testament present them in the act of praising the Lord, thus defining this as their primary function.[[364]](#footnote-364) Aside from this, they are described in the Bible as messengers: in the New Testament especially the highest importance is given to the Archangel Gabriel, who bore news of a celestial birth to the Virgin Mary.[[365]](#footnote-365) As messengers, angels carried out a ministry that was similar to that performed by the religious orders.

Monks, priests, bishops and other members of the clergy modelled themselves upon angels, establishing a parallel between the earthly and the celestial hierarchies.[[366]](#footnote-366) For monks, angels represented a model for their vows of obedience and chastity, and it is known that Franciscan monks in particular referred to themselves as angels.[[367]](#footnote-367) The similarity of monks to angels is mentioned by the French abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, while Bonaventure, in his *Sermones de Sanctis Angelis* (Sermons on the Holy Angels),states that the celestial hierarchy is a model for the earthly Church.[[368]](#footnote-368) Saint Francis is presented as an angel in Bonaventure’s *Legenda Maior* (Major Legend), the biography of the Saint. This association also appears in a passage of the *Fioretti di San Francesco* (Little Flowers of Saint Francis), an anonymous text written at the end of the fourteenth century, in which brother Masseo, intervening to divert his companion brother Ruffino from the influence of the devil, exhorts him to go and see Saint Francis: “Oh brother Ruffino, don’t you know that brother Francis is like an angel of God, who has enlightened many souls in the world, and from whom we received the grace of God”.[[369]](#footnote-369) It is probably for this reason that angels were sometimes represented wearing recognisable clerical clothing in fifteenth-century paintings, so that viewers may associate them with the earthly messengers with whom they would have been familiar.[[370]](#footnote-370) Examples can be observed in the works of Fra Angelico, himself a Dominican friar whose epithet carries angelic connotations, such as in his *Resurrection* (fig. 2.15), as well as in the Magi Chapel frescoes by Benozzo Gozzoli (fig. 4.17), in which one of the angels on the east wall wears an ecclesiastical cloak with the diaconal stole across his tunic.[[371]](#footnote-371) The special relationship between clergymen and angels is also visible in Fra Angelico’s *Last Judgement*, in which they join together in dancing and embrace each other in celebration (fig. 2.16).

In addition, since the early Middle Ages, a link had been established between the music of the angels and the music performed in church, making music the common denominator of earthly and celestial devotion, and it is to this metaphysical unity of celestial and human beings that the singing of angelic hymns such as the *Gloria* and the *Sanctus* during liturgy relates.[[372]](#footnote-372) The unity of earthly and celestial music had already been mentioned by the Church Father Saint John Chrysostom (349-407) in one of his homilies, in which he describes how the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant sing the same invocations and become, in this way, a single assembly: “Have you not recognised this voice? Is it ours or the Seraphim’s? Both ours and that of the Seraphim’s, because of Christ, who has destroyed the dividing wall, and has pacified all that is in heaven and on earth.”[[373]](#footnote-373) The author proposed this idea that angelic and earthly choirs sing as one on multiple occasions. In one of his homilies on the Gospel of Matthew, he states that in the church human beings join the angelic choirs and he encourages the former to imitate the latter:

Do thou also therefore, entering as into a palace – not that on the earth, but what is far more awful than it, that which is in heaven – show forth great seemliness. Yea, for thou art joined to the choirs of angels, and art in communion with archangels, and art singing with the seraphim …With these then mingle thyself, when thou art praying, and emulate their mystical order.[[374]](#footnote-374)

Similarly, he equates the earthly singing of hymns to the angelic praise in one of his homilies on Saint Paul’s epistle to the Hebrews:

Are not our Hymns heavenly? Do not we also who are below utter in concert with them the same things which the divine choirs of bodiless powers sing above? Is not the altar also heavenly? How? It hath nothing carnal, all spiritual things become the offerings … How again can the rites which we celebrate be other than heavenly?[[375]](#footnote-375)

Along the same lines, corresponding ideas are expressed in the sixth century by Saint Gregory the Great in his *Dialogorum libri quattuor* (Dialogues in Four Books):

Who among the faithful could doubt that at the very hour of the sacrifice the heavens are opened at the voice of the priest, that in this mystery of Jesus Christ the choirs of angels are present, the highest unites with the lowest, the terrestrial joins the celestial, and the visible and the invisible become one? [[376]](#footnote-376)

The French theologian Johannis Beleth also affirmed similar ideas in his *Summa de ecclesiasticis officiis* (Compendium of the Ecclesiastical Offices, 1160-1164): “we sing the songs of the angels, because we do not doubt that through them those on earth are united with those in heaven,”[[377]](#footnote-377) while Guillaume Durand, in his *Rationale divinorum officiorum* (Rationale for the Divine Offices)of ca. 1280, even states that “the chanters or clerics in their white robes are rejoicing. They are angels, who received with glory and with the highest praises the ascending Christ”.[[378]](#footnote-378) Humans and angels jointly singing God’s praises is also mentioned by Bonaventure in the mid-thirteenth century, in one of his sermons for the feast of Saint Michael.[[379]](#footnote-379) This idea had existed for over a thousand years when Tinctoris succinctly listed it in his treatise on the effects of music, stating that “music makes the Church Militant like the Church Triumphant”.[[380]](#footnote-380) The dissemination of the belief that performing music in church was connected to the celestial music produced by the angels was also likely to have been enhanced by the substantial print transmission that both Durand’s *Rationale* and Gregory the Great’s *Dialogorum* enjoyed in Italy from the 1470s, around the same time that Tinctoris’ treatise was written. A large body of evidence demonstrates the impact that this would have had on the devotional experience. Jacobus de Voragine gives several examples of the interaction between the celestial and the terrestial realms. In the life of Saint Thomas of Canterbury the author reports that, after Saint Thomas died as a martyr:

It is said that at the moment when the clergy were about to intone the *Requiem aeternam*, the mass of the dead, choirs of angels came and interrupted the singers, and began to chant the mass of the martyrs, *Laetabitur Justus in Domino*, with the clergy joining in … a chant of sorrow turning into a canticle of praise, and what had begun as prayers for the dead becoming hymns of praise for him who died as a martyr.[[381]](#footnote-381)

Meanwhile, in the life of Saint Gregory the Great, one can read that:

One Easter Sunday, when Gregory was celebrating the mass in the church of Saint Mary Major and pronounced the *Pax Domini*, an angel responded in a loud voice: *Et cum spiritu tuo!* From then on the popes made that basilica a station, and in testimony to this miracle no response is made when the Pax Domini is sung there.[[382]](#footnote-382)

The nun Illuminata Bembo, in her biography of Caterina Vigri (Saint Catherine of Bologna) entitled *Specchio di Illuminazione* (Mirror of Illumination) from 1468, reports her sorrow in knowing that some of her fellow nuns did not pay the necessary attention to the liturgy, because this was the occasion on which “many angelic spirits descended from heaven and came together with us to praise the divine mercy.”[[383]](#footnote-383) Similarly, the diplomat Giannozzo Manetti, in his *Oratio* … *de* … *pompis in consecratione basilicae Florentinae habitis* comments on a performance of Guillaume Dufay’s motet *Nuper rosarum flores* during the consecration of Florence cathedral in 1436 by noting that,

At the elevation of the consecrated host the temple resounded throughout with the sounds of harmonious symphonies [of voices] as well as the concords of diverse instruments, so that it seemed not without reason that the angels and the sounds and singing of divine paradise had been sent from heaven to us on earth to insinuate in our ears a certain incredible divine sweetness.[[384]](#footnote-384)

Not only did angels descend from heaven to sing with mortals, but music was also a means through which mortals could ascend to lend their voices to the heavenly choir. This idea is stated, for example, by the music theorist Franchinus Gaffurius at the end of the fifteenth century, who affirms that “while they [the church musicians] are singing, they are in mind and soul rushing along ... to the Holy Trinity and the harmony of the angels”.[[385]](#footnote-385)

Similarly, devoted individuals could experience auditory visions and “hear” the music of the angels. Illuminata Bembo recounts that Caterina Vigri had a vision in which her soul was transported to a beautiful place where she saw God, the Virgin Mary and other divine figures. Among these, she was particularly captivated by the music produced by an angel, who was singing and playing a *violeta*. The impression that this experience had on Caterina was so intense that she asked her fellow nuns to find a similar instrument for her to play, establishing a musical link between herself and the heavenly realm. In Illuminata Bembo’s words, “playing on it several times she [Caterina] seemed to melt like wax before the fire, now singing, now sitting in silence with her face towards the sky.”[[386]](#footnote-386)

As well as exceptional human beings (such as saints) being able to interact with angels in visual and auditory “visions”, clerics and laymen alike were frequently compared with angels as a means of recognising extraordinary qualities. In his praise of Fra Angelico’s *Coronation of the Virgin* (now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris), for example, the Florentine biographer Giorgio Vasari claims that “all the colouring of that work seems done by the hand of a saint or an angel … so with good reason he [the painter] has always been called, due to his religiosity, brother Giovanni Angelico.”[[387]](#footnote-387) Similarly, when he comes to discuss Parmigianino’s features as they appear in his *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror* (now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna), Vasari writes that “as Francesco was of very handsome air and had very delicate features and looks, rather of angel than of man, his image in that ball [the mirror] seemed a thing divine.”[[388]](#footnote-388) Beauty and virtue were commonly associated with angels, both for young men and young women. The Florentine merchant Gregorio Dati praises his town for its angelic female citizens: “Florence has girls and women of such refinement and manners, so respectable, virtuous, and marvelously beautiful as to appear angels descended from heaven”.[[389]](#footnote-389)

Human beings become like angels through the pursuit of exceptional virtue, as Saint Gregory the Great notes in his Homily 34: “clearly, there are ways of human life that coincide with single orders of angelic bands. By means of a correspondence in virtue, these people are counted worthy of the heavenly city by sharing in the angelic nature.”[[390]](#footnote-390) This perspective found a fifteenth-century restatement in the works of the philosopher Pico della Mirandola, among others. In works condemned as heretical by the Church, Pico urged mortals to aspire to be like angels in this pursuit of virtue, stating that,

Therefore, by rivalling the life of a cherub upon the earth, by confining the onslaughts of the affections by means of moral science, and by shaking off the mist of reason by means of dialectic, as if washing off the filth of ignorance and vice, let us purge the soul, that the affections may not audaciously run riot, nor an imprudent reason sometime rave.[[391]](#footnote-391)

Furthermore, Pico considered human beings to be able to ascend beyond even angels, declaring that, “all of us, to whom the power is given to become sons of God through the grace whose giver is Christ, can be raised to an honour above that of the angels.”[[392]](#footnote-392)

The imitation of angels could lead to a degree of identification with them, in a process that Steven Chase refers to as “angelisation”.[[393]](#footnote-393) This term is adopted by Amy Gillette to describe monks’ identification with angels through a virtuous life.[[394]](#footnote-394) Gillette suggests that the musical and non-musical angels that appear in the Baroncelli altarpiece attributed to Giotto (ca. 1334, in Santa Croce, Florence) would have appealed both to Franciscan patrons and to laypeople (in particular the members of the Baroncelli family), and their actions were likely intended to be imitated. The light and the music suggested by depictions of angels would have prompted an engagement of a devotee’s bodily senses together with their intellectual faculties in a way that would allow their perception through their inner senses.[[395]](#footnote-395) In fact, in much the same way that clerics could “angelise” themselves by imitating angelic songs of praise in their performance of the earthly liturgy, laymen were also involved in musical practices that mirrored the angelic worship represented in sacred art. Fifteenth-century Italy saw a continuing vogue for vernacular sacred songs, called *laude*, promoted by the mendicant orders to be sung not by clergy but by lay devotees, during evening services in church and processions through the city on feast days.[[396]](#footnote-396) Frequently Marian in focus, some *laude* refer specifically to the adoration of the Virgin by angels, as for example in *O Madre del Signore te laudamo*, where the pious sing “The angels and archangels always adore you”.[[397]](#footnote-397) Another *lauda*, Adam de Antiquis’ *Senza te Sacra Regina*, gives the angels’ adoration an explicitly musical character: “For you [the Virgin Mary] the choir of angels sing: Hail morning star!”[[398]](#footnote-398) Through such songs, *laude* singers established themselves as “earthly angels,” whose aims and practices reflected those of their celestial models.

The link between *lauda* singing and angelisation is particularly clear in contemporary reports of religious processions and mystery plays called *sacre rappresentazioni*. For example, on 2 July 1496 a procession carrying Andrea Mantegna’s *Madonna della Vittoria* (now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris) around the town of Mantua included three young boys dressed up as “little angels” (*anzoletti*) singing *laude* on both sides of the image, together with others representing God, prophets, and apostles.[[399]](#footnote-399) Such lay activities, undertaken in imitation of the angels, clearly mirrored the ubiquitous representation of musical angels in sacred art; but the interaction was likely reciprocal. Several scholars have suggested that the devotional performance of songs and music carried out by *laude* singers could in fact have inspired the depiction of musical angels in frescoes and paintings, both in general and in specific instances. It is certainly significant that the multitude of *laudesi* companies established between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were active as patrons of religious art.[[400]](#footnote-400) Susan Grange has suggested that musical angels appearing at the feet of the throne of the Virgin Mary in altarpieces could be intended to recall the *laudesi* companies’ practice of making music in front of the altar.[[401]](#footnote-401) Similarly, Gillette links depictions of musical angels to lay confraternities, on the grounds that they both manifest their worship of the Virgin through musical practices while kneeling in front of her image.[[402]](#footnote-402)

In some cases, the presence of depictions of musical angels adoring the Virgin Mary in the decorative apparatus of chapels used by *laudesi* companies was specified in documents recording the commission and its execution. The chapel frescoes in Orsanmichele in Florence, for example, designed by the novelist Franco Sacchetti, were to include “angels, making music ... adoring you [the Virgin Mary]” (*angeli, che suonano... che t’adorano*).[[403]](#footnote-403) As in the case of *laude* singers, the musical figures in mystery plays could have also influenced the subjects of altarpieces.[[404]](#footnote-404) It would therefore seem that the relationship between humans and musical angels was bidirectional: earthly musicians such as *laude* singers were used as models by artists when depicting images of musical angels, who, in turn, became examples for human beings to follow.

It is evident that fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian Christians had a highly developed connection with angels. In addition to clergymen identifying themselves with angels through their common ministry on Earth, human beings and angels had a bi-directional relationship: angels appeared on Earth during Mass and devotional practices to sing together with terrestrial devotees, while especially holy individuals would be able to meet with angels in Heaven during their visions. Children would have been able to identify with angels on an even deeper level, dressing up and playing instruments in processions and mystery plays, and singing hymns of divine praise as the angels do in Heaven. This familiarity with angels led to the use of the adjective “angelic” in everyday language, to denote remarkable qualities or physical beauty. Through leading a virtuous life, human beings were able to “angelise” themselves.

2.4 Angels as Guides and Teachers

Visions of angelic companions, as well as the involvement of the lay community in sacred, “angelic” singing and their performance as musical angels during processions and plays, are evidence of a well-established link between human and angelic nature. It would seem that angels were not only acting as role models for members of the clergy to emulate, they were examples for lay people to imitate as well.[[405]](#footnote-405) Considered together, the presence of angels in earthly experience and their exemplary function in promoting the human pursuit of virtue give celestial beings a role similar to that of a teacher or mentor.

This point is clearly acknowledged in the twelfth century by the French abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, among others, who notes that angels are “established by the Father and set before us as guides and teachers. For now we are the children of God ... we are small children under guides and teachers.”[[406]](#footnote-406) In the same century, a similar view was expressed by the theologian Hugh of Saint-Victor in his treatise *On the six wings of the Cherubim*, according to whom angels’ existence is bound to their mission as mentors for humans: “Thus the seraphim themselves rise when they set us upright, they walk when they help us to make progress, and they stand when they transfix us in holy understanding”.[[407]](#footnote-407)

Visionary experiences sometimes incorporated an aspect of angelic pedagogy, as for example when the Savonarolan Fra Domenico da Pescia reports that his companion Fra Silvestro Maruffi was taught the song *Ecce quam bonum* *et quam iocundum habitare fratres in unum* (Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity), from the first verse of Psalm 132, by an angel: “Our angels appeared to Fra Silvestro (I say angels, because I believed them to be so), and with a braid, or actually a chain of gold, they bound us together, singing, if I remember rightly: *Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum habitare fratres in unum*”.[[408]](#footnote-408) The song was thereafter sung by the friars of San Marco during processions, in the second half of the 1490s.[[409]](#footnote-409) In his *Legenda Aurea*, Voragine reports from John of Damascus that, during the litanies, a boy was carried to heaven, where he learned the angelic canticle *Sancte Deus, sancte fortis, sancte et immortalis, miserere nobis*, which he sung to the congregation upon his return.[[410]](#footnote-410) Moreover, the idea that music students were encouraged to relate to musical angels was reinforced by Nicolaus de Capua, who, as seen above, substituted the concept of *musica mundana* with that of *musica angelica* in his didactic work *Compendium musicale*, intended to help young pupils to memorise the rules of singing.[[411]](#footnote-411)

As well as their pedagogic role, it was also widely believed that angels would act as guardians for human beings, protecting them from harm. During the thirteenth century, a prayer to the guardian angel was officially incorporated into the liturgy.[[412]](#footnote-412) Around the same time, Thomas Aquinas stated that “the final and principal effect of guardianship is enlightenment by instruction,” restating the ideas about angels’ pedagogical role that had been expressed a century earlier, but this time linking it to their function as guardians.[[413]](#footnote-413) Angels were therefore considered to be both teachers and protectors. Jacobus da Voragine even assigned two angels per human being: “to every man two angels are given, one good and the other bad, the bad one to test him and the good one to protect him”, which further emphasised the moral implications of human behaviour.[[414]](#footnote-414) Similarly, his contemporary, Saint Umiltà of Faenza, in her *De angelis sanctis* (On the Holy Angels), claimed that two angels named Sapiel and Emmanuel were sent by God to be her guardians, although in this case both were charged with her protection.[[415]](#footnote-415)

The idea that angels protected human beings was very common. Some authors believed that angelic protection started before even the moment of birth.[[416]](#footnote-416) The Franciscan Saint Bonaventure, in his commentary on Peter Lombard’s *Sentences*, asserted that the relationship between human beings and their guardian angels would start from the moment of conception, as the angels would protect the foetus’ soul: “it is understood that an angel is assigned to the custody of a man from his birth; meaning not only the birth *from* the womb, but also the conception *in* the womb. From this moment and not before, angelic custody must be assigned to him who is born” (my Italics).[[417]](#footnote-417) Similarly, around the same time, Thomas Aquinas stated that:

The endowments bestowed by God on man as a rational being are given at the moment of birth … Among the latter kind of endowments is the guardianship of the angels … So, from the very moment of his birth man has an angel appointed to guard him … So long as the child is in mother’s womb it is not altogether separate from its mother … so it can be said with some probability that the angel guarding the mother also guards the child in its mother’s womb.[[418]](#footnote-418)

Either from the moment of conception or birth, guardian angels were believed to remain beside an individual and protect them until the moment of their death, as depicted in a miniature in a Book of Hours created in Naples around 1460 (fig. 2.17). In this, an angel is presenting a kneeling devotee to Christ, with a scroll bearing the words “Ecce Servitor tuus” (Here is your servant).

Thus, angels appear to be associated with both pedagogic and custodial roles. Especially when considered in relation to children, they could be interpreted as personal guides, as is clear in the reception of the story of Tobias and the angel in Italian Renaissance art. The Book of Tobit sees the Archangel Raphael, disguised as a human being, accompanying the young Tobias in his journey from Nineveh to Media to collect his father Tobit’s monetary deposits. The biblical focus of the story is a miracle in which Tobit’s blindness was cured using a fish retrieved by his son from a river during the journey; however, artistic representations of the story are concerned principally with the journey itself, and depict the fish in Tobias’ hands only as an aid to the identification of the subject. Raphael is usually represented as an angel with wings rather than disguised in human form, and Tobias appears much younger than his biblical counterpart. These creative adaptations suggest Raphael’s role as a guide, and in a sense served to establish him as an archetypal Guardian Angel.[[419]](#footnote-419) The childlike Tobias is found in Italian art from the mid-fourteenth century (see, for example, a fresco in San Zeno, Verona, from ca. 1350), and it continues through the fifteenth into the first half of the sixteenth century.[[420]](#footnote-420) Tobias appears as a young child on a pillar in the church of Sant Agostino, San Gimignano, frescoed by Benozzo Gozzoli (fig. 2.18), and in Cima da Conegliano’s panel in Venice (fig. 2.19); whilst in a miniature by Giorgio Giulio Clovio in the Stuart de Rothesay Hours he is not much older than a baby (fig. 2.20). As Konrad Eisenbichler suggests, in this context Raphael’s role can be interpreted as one of providing moral guidance rather than physical companionship.[[421]](#footnote-421) This subject became tremendously popular in Florence from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, and we know that at least nine versions were painted by Neri di Bicci for his clientele.[[422]](#footnote-422) The popularity of this theme was not limited to the visual arts but it also appeared in plays.[[423]](#footnote-423) The *Festa dell’Angiolo Raphaello et di Tobia* was published as part of a collection of *sacre rappresentazioni* in the fifteenth century.[[424]](#footnote-424)

Inspired by Tobias’ story, Florentine parents sought to place their children under the guidance and protection of the Archangel Raphael. In a letter from 1465, for example, the noblewoman Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi advises her son to seek out the archangel’s favour, so that he would protect and guide him back home, as he did the little Tobias.[[425]](#footnote-425) Representations of the Archangel Raphael guiding a childlike Tobias were sometimes commissioned for the birth of a son, such as Bartolomeo Caporali’s fresco in the church of San Francesco, Montone (near Perugia), in which an inscription refers to the birth of Bernardino, the son of Carlo Fortebracci.[[426]](#footnote-426) The donor’s son may even be portrayed as the young Tobias, as appears to be the case in a panel by Francesco Botticini in the sacristy of Santa Maria del Fiore, Florence (fig. 2.21), commissioned by the Doni family.[[427]](#footnote-427) This confirms that parents wanted their children to be associated with and protected by angelic figures, establishing a special connection between children and celestial creatures.

Although most depictions of guardian angels show Raphael as the protector, it is the Archangel Michael who is portrayed in a panel from the 1480s by Bartolomeo della Gatta (Pietro Dei) (fig. 2.22). Here, the archangel stands firmly, protecting a woman and her child behind him. The woman can probably be identified as Teodora, daughter of Lorenza Guiducci, Paolino Visconti’s widow, who commissioned the work according to a scroll on the panel.[[428]](#footnote-428) The presence of the Archangel Michael as a protector, instead of the more common figure of Raphael, can be explained by Michael being the patron saint of the town of Castiglion Fiorentino, where the painting was made.[[429]](#footnote-429) Vasari mentions the panel as an organ shutter in a chapel of the parish church of San Giuliano.[[430]](#footnote-430) From this, it seems that this painting was commissioned by a mother, Lorenza, for the protection of her daughter Teodora and that of her grandchild, and that it would have been installed in a private chapel, as the subject of semi-private devotion.

Images of Raphael and Tobias were also used in spaces dedicated to private devotion, as demonstrated by the inclusion of these figures in a *tondo* attributed to Jacopo del Sellaio (fig. 2.23). In this, the Virgin accompanied by the young Saint John the Baptist is kneeling in adoration before the Child in the foreground, while on the right, in the distance, the Archangel Raphael is leading the young Tobias. As *tondi* were principally domestic pictures, one can imagine that the owners were particularly concerned with the angelic protection of the young members of the household. This is also confirmed by another *tondo* attributed to Gherardo di Giovanni del Fora, in which Raphael and Tobias are an independent subject in their own right (fig. 2.24).

Considering the earlier discussion about how musical angels would interact with humans and, in turn, how humans would attempt to emulate them, it should not be forgotten that the biblical story of Tobias and the Archangel Raphael also presents a musical aspect. Towards the end of his mission, when Raphael reveals his true identity, he exhorts his human companions: “Praise him [God] all your days and sing to him!”[[431]](#footnote-431) Although Raphael cannot strictly be described as a musical angel, this passage nonetheless portrays him as a promoter of musical devotion. As teachers and guardians, angels had a special relationship with children, who would imitate them and their musical activity, as will be discussed in the following section.

2.5 Angels and Children

While the role of Guardian Angels in protecting children has been considered, this is not the only part they could play in the lives of the young. As has been discussed, angels would have been a ubiquitous presence, and children were frequently associated with angelic qualities and behaviour. As has already been noted, people would have been encouraged to emulate angels in different ways, and of course this would have also applied to children, perhaps to an even greater degree.

Florence was home to two confraternities dedicated to the Archangel Raphael: “il Raffa” for adults, and “la Scala” for children.[[432]](#footnote-432) As the Camaldolese monk Ambrogio Traversari states in a letter to Pope Eugenius IV in 1435, youth confraternities were thought crucial to children’s education in Christian virtues, equipping them with the necessary qualities to be examples for their relatives once they returned home, and inspiring them to pursue a good and Christian lifestyle. The boys of the confraternity of the Archangel Raphael were educated in music, singing hymns on Sundays and feast days, and dressed as musical angels for theatrical representations. In Traversari’s words:

The leaders of the city are repeatedly pleased to send their sons to be nourished in this school and to be educated in this school of Christian virtue. In it nothing impious is learned, nothing other than good habits is imbibed … [Through this training] they often remain innocent amidst the obscene raillery of criminals … On Sundays and feast days, when greater licence for lasciviousness is usurped, they gather together, and after salubrious admonitions, they either recite the psalms or sing hymns together.[[433]](#footnote-433)

Boys are extensively documented playing the part of musical angels, both in processions and in *sacre rappresentazioni.* The Russian Bishop of Suzdal, Abraham, left a detailed description of two *feste* (celebrations on feast days) that he witnessed while he was in Florence on the occasion of the Council in 1439: one for the feast of the Annunciation and one for that of the Ascension. In these, young boys could be seen impersonating celestial beings, and engaging with the musical activities that pertain to them.

During the feast of the Annunciation that took place on 25 March, in the church of the Annunziata, the Bishop describes seeing “four little boys, crowned and dressed as angels, with a cymbal, a lute or a tambourine in their hands.”[[434]](#footnote-434) The figure of God the Father was located in the *tribuna*, and the Bishop reports that “little boys in white robes, surrounded him, representing heavenly virtues. Some of them were singing, another played the cymbals, others played the lute and pipes. In every respect it is a wonderfully joyous spectacle that no man can describe.”[[435]](#footnote-435) The Bishop further describes the annunciating angel and his actions at the beginning of the play:

The Angel was played by a beautiful, curly-haired boy: his gown was snow-white and decorated all over with gold as was the Angel’s stole over his shoulders. He had golden wings, and in everything his appearance expressed perfectly the picture of one of God’s angels. He came down on the ropes singing softly and he stood sweetly, just like a [real] angel.[[436]](#footnote-436)

In this description, perfectly exemplifying the close relationship between the embodiment of angels in performance and their representation in visual art, even Gabriel’s salutation to the Virgin becomes a song.

Similarly, in the Ascension play organised by the *Compagnia di Santa Maria delle Laude* on 14 May in the church of Santa Maria del Carmine, “little children”, around God, represented angels “with pipes and lutes and lots of tiny bells;”[[437]](#footnote-437) and later, when the sky opens to reveal God the Father in Heaven, “the little boys, who represent the heavenly Powers, move around him to the sounds of deafening music and sweet singing.”[[438]](#footnote-438) Cyrilla Barr has suggested that the music might have not been directly played by the children using the musical instruments that they were holding, but might have been produced from another source, possibly by hidden musicians.[[439]](#footnote-439)

Children were also at the core of the Palm Sunday procession organised by Gerolamo Savonarola in 1496. As part of his wider strategy to reform the behaviour of children, the preacher dedicated his Sunday sermon especially to them, and invited adults to give up their places in favour of the children: “Let the *fanciulli* all come to the sermon … because it is theirs, and so that there is no scandal, the men will give them use of all these seats that are around here”.[[440]](#footnote-440) He invited the children to join one of the *compagnie* present in the town, so that they could be raised in purity. These children wore white robes during the procession, impersonating angels, but had no need for wings, since their purity had already been established by the preacher, because the day before they were seen “making garlands and singing hymns, and it looked like paradise”.[[441]](#footnote-441) Through Savonarola’s efforts a transformation of the children into angels was made possible. In his sermons, even adults were invited to become like children:

This sermon is for the children and we deliver it for them, but it can also be for those adults who want to become *fanciulli* in purity … Thus, this will be a sermon for those who are children due to their age and those who are children due to their purity.[[442]](#footnote-442)

The practice of having children impersonate angels during processions and sacred plays was commonplace, and by no means restricted to Florence. Evidence survives of this practice in towns in different regions of the Italian peninsula, testifying to its widespread occurrence.[[443]](#footnote-443) For example, in Padua, children dressed up as angels in order to take part in the magnificent processions that the confraternity of Saint Anthony would organise in order to commemorate the death of their saint. These processions included music and singing.[[444]](#footnote-444) In Rome, during a feast to celebrate the transportation of the head of Saint Andrew in 1462, “boys in the form of angels … sang sweetly, others played organs; no instrument of the art of music was lacking”.[[445]](#footnote-445) In the same year, during the feast for *Corpus Domini* in Viterbo, attended by Pope Pius II, children were part of the representation of Heaven: “singers, representing angels, intoned sweet chants … now one could hear lovely melodies sung by human voices, now delightful chords played by musical instruments”.[[446]](#footnote-446) As part of this feast, a Resurrection play was performed in the town’s square, for which the Cardinal of Teano, Niccolò Forteguerri, recruited young boys from Pistoia, “to sing sweetly” (*che dolcemente cantassero*): “eighteenth were the young boys who, in their features, in their voice and in their robes, imitated the nature of angels, and who, with soft song, intoned the required hymns in alternation.”[[447]](#footnote-447) With their golden wings decorated with real feathers and bright vestments, angels in these plays certainly attracted the attention of the audience.[[448]](#footnote-448)

Nerida Newbigin has identified three types of angels that were part of these performances. Aside from the aforementioned angels that were personified by children, who could either be part of the heavenly hosts or fly above the stage attached to ropes, they could also be represented using painted and gilded figures attached to the *stella*, a large star located in the middle of the nave, that could accommodate a large number of celestial figures.[[449]](#footnote-449) The fact that angels could be painted as part of the stage scenography makes the presence of children all the more significant, indicating that the necessity of having them participate in the play was linked to the fact that the painted angels were mute figures, while children would seem to be able to engage with the other actors and with the audience on a different level, thanks to their music-making.[[450]](#footnote-450)

However, singing and playing instruments was not the only musical activity with which these “child angels” could engage. For the the feast of the Annunciation discussed above,Filippo Brunelleschi designed a special device that would rotate in such a way that it could be perceived by the viewers as if the angels were dancing in a ring. In Vasari’s words:

These *putti,* who were twelve in total … were dressed as angels with golden wings and golden skeins of hair. At the right time, they took each other by the hand and by swinging their arms it seemed like as if they were dancing, especially since the dome was continuously turning and moving.[[451]](#footnote-451)

This association between children and angelic dancing appears also in Matteo Palmieri’s *Della vita civile*, circulated in the 1430s. The author observes that “at home, one should deliberate good and honest things, and even women’s tales should be advice for living honestly: with these frighten them [your children] from evil and teach them to love the good things, and say that a hairy ogre with horns in Hell will take the wicked children, while the good children will go to Heaven, *dancing* with the angels” (my italics).[[452]](#footnote-452)

Furthermore, references to angels were used when describing children and their activities. Children’s musical performances were commonly referred to as angelic, even in a secular context. Writing about the management of the household at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Dominican friar Giovanni Dominici compares pious children to “angels, who cannot stop singing to the Saviour ‘Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.’”[[453]](#footnote-453) Among many examples, a letter of 1460 written by the Apostolic Protonotary Teodoro of Montefeltro (or Monteferrato) to the Marchioness of Mantua reports that an organ recital given by the fourteen-year-old Bianca de’ Medici, daughter of Piero di Cosimo and elder sister of Lorenzo il Magnifico, was “angelic” (*sonò un canto angelico cum li organi*), comparing her and her young companions to “angels in paradise” (*como anzeli di paradisso*).[[454]](#footnote-454) Pietro Bembo, in a *ballata* written shortly before 1500, describes his beloved as a “lovely and innocent little angel”, whose singing gives him the impression of having been transported to Heaven (*esser mi parea pur su nel cielo*).[[455]](#footnote-455)

In a similar way, the Florentine apothecary Luca Landucci recounts the impression left upon him by some young singers when he saw them perform on the occasion of Savonarola’s sermon in Santa Maria del Fiore on 15 August 1496. He reports in his diary:

And observe that there was such a feeling of grace in this church, and such sweet consolation in hearing these boys sing, now above, now below, now from the side, all in turn, quite modestly and low, as if to themselves; it seemed impossible that it was done by boys. I write this because I was present, and saw and heard it many times, and felt much spiritual comfort. Truly the church was full of angels.[[456]](#footnote-456)

The association of children with angels was even strong enough that the inverse connection could also be made, such as when Vasari calls the musical angels in a panel by Fra Bartolomeo for the church of Saint Mark in Florence “two children who are playing, one the lute and the other the *lira*”, in which it is evident that the “children” in the description are in fact meant to be musical angels, as can be seen in the surviving altarpiece now kept in the Galleria Palatina, Florence (fig. 2.25).[[457]](#footnote-457) In addition, in a letter to Pier Francesco Riccio, dated 27 January 1551, the Florentine painter Agnolo Bronzino, who painted the portraits of the children of Cosimo I de’ Medici and Eleonora of Toledo in Pisa, describes these children not only as “angelic and sweet” (*angelici et dolcissimi*), but also declares: “When I see them [the children], it seems to me that I am seeing many angels, and when I hear them, [it seems to me that I am] hearing many Spirits from heaven”.[[458]](#footnote-458)

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the use of a winged child to represent an angel was a convention which had developed over the course of the fifteenth century, drawn from the revival of classical imagery, combined with the iconography of the winds and of the souls from the previous centuries. Scholars have long discussed this practice of depicting angels as young children. Estelle M. Hurll, in 1895, dedicated a section of her book *Child-life in art* to the figure of the child-angel, focusing on a selection of works made by the most popular artists from the Italian Renaissance in which angels are depicted as young boys. However, this has not been linked to the common custom of having children fashion themselves as angels, as in *sacre rappresentazioni*.

In this context, a number of statuettes of young boys playing musical instruments, produced by the workshops of Andrea and Giovanni della Robbia, were most likely intended as representations of musical angels. One, a statuette kept in the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (fig. 2.26), shows a boy playing a wind instrument. A second statuette, of a boy playing the bagpipes, was probably originally part of an altarpiece (fig. 2.27), while others show a child-angel playing a lute (fig. 2.28) or a tambourine (fig. 2.29). These statuettes can be compared with those of four musical angels that appear above the lunette which tops the altarpiece made by Giovanni della Robbia for the church of San Lucchese in Poggibonsi, near Siena (fig. 2.30).[[459]](#footnote-459)

Child angels playing these instruments can be found in both ecclesiastical and private settings. The aforementioned statuette of a boy playing a wind instrument can be likened to the musical angels in the *Assumption of the Virgin* by Andrea’s workshop, now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (fig. 2.31). Similar figures are often also included in the decoration of books of hours. A young bagpipe player is part of the border decoration of a book of hours probably from the Veneto of ca. 1425-1450 (fig. 2.32), and a similar one can be seen in another book of hours probably made for Cecilia Gonzaga, around 1470 (fig. 2.33). These small books of prayers were mainly owned by women and were mainly intended for domestic use, although they could be also taken to church and read during the service. At home, they also served another purpose, as they were often used when teaching children to read.[[460]](#footnote-460) Because of this, children of rich families would of course have been directly exposed to the lavish illuminations that often decorated the pages, and would have been able to find figures in which they could recognise themselves.

It seems clear that, for contemporary Italians, the identities of angels and children would have been tightly intertwined, and would have frequently overlapped. This effect was no doubt both encouraged and emphasised, with angels taking on more and more child-like attributes, and children frequently being utilised in the earthly representation of angels. The strength of this association would have allowed these figures to be employed with a didactic purpose, to provide children with positive examples that they were intended to emulate.

2.6 Angels at Home

As is demonstrated by the quantity of surviving artworks, depictions of angels were frequently found in both public spaces, such as churches and town halls, and private locations such as domestic environments. However, establishing which pictures were created for which type of setting, or matching specific works with a specific location, can be a difficult task, especially as documentation explicitly recording this rarely survives. In light of this, the extent to which depictions of angels are recorded in archival documents, and the insight that this together with analysis of surviving depictions can provide, is considered in this section.

A lack of awareness of the original context for which works were produced and how they were viewed can affect considerations about their meaning and purpose. However, as Beth Williamson convincingly argued, the function of a work of art would not be completely different if this were to be displayed in a public or in a private setting, and the subjective perception of the viewer depended on a range of different factors in addition to its location. The boundary between the realms of public and private devotion is not a rigid one, and therefore some flexibility and overlap between the two religious practices can occur. This is particularly evident in the activities carried out by groups of laypeople who were part of confraternities, as they often met and performed their devotional acts inside churches, gathering in semi-private settings such as side chapels.[[461]](#footnote-461) Similarly, processions and sacred plays took place in the town’s streets and squares, being witnessed by regular citizens or by specially invited guests. For this reason, it is not possible to categorise altarpieces in churches only in relation to the liturgy or their eucharistic meanings, as they could also cover more personal devotional needs, and, in the same way, religious art produced for domestic use cannot be confined to private devotional practices only, but could also be used to stimulate associations with the ecclesiastical liturgy.[[462]](#footnote-462)

In some cases, devotional artworks created for private usage were able to acquire miraculous connotations. An interesting example is a print which became known as the Madonna of the Fire, which was moved to the cathedral of Forlì after surviving a fire which devastated the schoolhouse in which it was originally displayed.[[463]](#footnote-463) In this way, it was possible that an image could change its setting, and thus become the recipient of different worship practices (as a private devotional icon initially, and a miraculous object after the fire), which testifies to the fact that images and works of art cannot always be defined by a single context. The distinction between secular and religious spaces in the fifteenth century was frequently blurred: a private house was therefore a ‘quasi-sacred’ space, in which devotional activities blended with secular life, and domestic altars would often be installed in rooms that were also used for receiving guests and eating.[[464]](#footnote-464)

It seems likely that panels situated in side chapels inside churches could have also had a devotional purpose, rather than being only associated with the liturgy that took place in the Church.[[465]](#footnote-465) For example, some scholars have attributed a symbolic eucharistic meaning to altarpieces with the Virgin and Child, with the body of the Virgin Mary being interpreted as a receptacle for the incarnate Christ, while others maintain that in these cases the main subject of devotion is the Virgin, the Child being seen only as her attribute.[[466]](#footnote-466) It may have been that both readings suggested themselves to different kinds of viewers, or to viewers involved in different kinds of engagement with the chapel and its altar. The same people who were attending Mass in Church and participating in public civic events such as processions and sacred plays were also exercising private devotion in their own homes. In addition, recent studies have indicated that the practices carried out by the confraternities both reflected and expanded on domestic devotional practices, so much so that their oratories are recorded “domus” or “caxae” (house) in written sources.[[467]](#footnote-467) The secular and the sacred were blended, and so, for example, it is notable that both ecclesiastical and lay people were involved together in caring for the altar of the aforementioned Madonna of the Fire.[[468]](#footnote-468)

Thanks to surviving documentary evidence, a number of images have been explicitly identified as being produced specifically for private devotional practices, while others suggest this through their form, subject matter, size and provenance.[[469]](#footnote-469) In general, a small size is usually indicative of domestic usage.[[470]](#footnote-470) Even if this was not the case, it is likely that a small image would still be the focus of private devotion regardless of its location, being used to create an intimate relationship with the beholder, although in some cases larger works, sometimes produced in the workshops of the major artists of the period, would also have been acquired and displayed in the houses of particularly affluent members of the society.[[471]](#footnote-471)

Other than analysing extant pieces, to study domestic objects one can seek the help of illustrations of interiors in contemporary works of art, such as depictions of bedrooms in scenes of the Birth of the Virgin or Saint John the Baptist, to observe and identify ‘realistic’, if not ‘real’, depictions, as long as appropriate care is taken in their analysis and interpretation.[[472]](#footnote-472) The aim of this chapter, and of the whole study, is not to reconstruct domestic settings in detail, but rather to investigate the presence of angels and musical angels in the home, and in particular in the bedroom, and as such I will consider illustrations of these spaces to be a suggestion of something that could have been found in real life, although possibly not an exact likeness of the objects depicted.[[473]](#footnote-473)

When archival documents exist, such as the Florentine inventories recorded by the civic *Ufficio del Magistrato dei Pupilli* following the death of a householder, they give a helpful indication of what domestic spaces would have looked like during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These sources are invaluable, not only for the evidence of particular works of art being kept in these locations, but also because of the broad overview they provide, enabling scholars to make informed speculations. As these documents cover domestic spaces belonging to both wealthy families and less affluent citizens, they allow for comparison of the similarities and differences between them. For example, particularly interesting in the context of this thesis is the fact that they show that small panels depicting sacred subjects, such as the tabernacles and the small depictions of the Virgin and Child produced by Neri di Bicci’s workshop, were found in both rich and poor households, testifying to their widespread popularity, which to some degree appeared to transcend traditional social boundaries.[[474]](#footnote-474) Unfortunately, paintingsof different shapes and sizes are often listed in these inventories without a detailed description of the figures depicted.

Despite their ubiquity in images, angels are rarely mentioned explicitly.[[475]](#footnote-475) However, rare exceptions do survive. A *tondo* with the Virgin and Child,angels, Saint John and Saint Zanobi, painted by Cilio, was recorded among the possessions of Zanobi di Giovangualberto Giocondi in 1492,[[476]](#footnote-476) while another with the Virgin and Child, saints and one angel, was recorded in 1508.[[477]](#footnote-477) In addition, the estate book in which Agnolo di Bernardo de’ Bardi’s possession are recorded mentions a *tondo* with the Virgin and Child, Saint John, Mary Magdalene and two angels, which hung in Agnolo’s own bedroom.[[478]](#footnote-478)

Angels are sometimes recorded also as part of the decoration of *colmi*, semi-circular reliefs. For example, the 1492 inventory of Palazzo Medici lists a marble *colmo* above the exit from a small antechamber, with a depiction of “Our Lady with the child on her lap … with four angels, two per side.”[[479]](#footnote-479) Towards the end of the inventory one can also find another “small *colmo* … in which is depicted Our Lady sitting with the Child on her lap, with two little standing angels by the hand of Francesco di Pisello.”[[480]](#footnote-480)

Painted panels and sculpted reliefs were not the only form of art in which angels could be found. They could also be sculpted in the round, or moulded in terracotta, as seems to be suggested by the account of household expenses recorded by Bernardo di Stoldo Rinieri, who, among purchases of other domestic objects, also recorded a payment on 5 August 1458 to “the painter Apollonio di Giovanni, for four little angels that he purchased for me from Francesco Danzello de’ Singori.”[[481]](#footnote-481) The merchant Francesco reappears in another account book, compiled by Lorenzo di Matteo Morelli from 1465, once again for the supply of “three little gesso angels”. However, this time the compiler also recorded an additional expense for having them painted by a painter named Riccardo.[[482]](#footnote-482)

Interestingly, these statuettes are called *spiritelli* in the first instance, and *agnioletti* in the second. This makes the identification of the two figures including twelve *banbini* (sic) carved above a doorway in the hall in Giovanni di Francesco Inghirammi’s house, and an additional *bambino* in terracotta kept in a chamber on the ground floor, somewhat difficult. Lightbown has translated the reference to the figures of twelve *banbini* as “cherubs,” and this identification is indeed likely.[[483]](#footnote-483) However, the record of a figure of a single *bambino* could possibly refer either to a bust of a child or a statuette of an angel.

Equally interesting and puzzling is the record of a bronze *bambino* and a statue of a child holding a fish, found in the aforementioned estate book recording Agnolo di Bernardo de’ Bardi’s possessions. Although the latter reminded John Kent Lydecker of Verrocchio’s statue of a *putto* holding a dolphin, it is possible that this was in fact a figure of a young Tobias, whose association with children has been discussed above.

Surviving inventories from the fifteenth and early sixteenth century have shown that almost every house had a picture of the Virgin and Child hanging on the walls, either painted or in relief, although the documents most often do not specify the presence of angels in these depictions.[[484]](#footnote-484) The lack of documentary evidence of the ownership of depictions of angels is, however, compensated for by the vast quantity of figurative depictions that do survive, across several different types of media and techniques, which suggest a domestic purpose.

Of the depictions of the Virgin and Child that have survived, a very large proportion include one or more angels in close proximity to the main figures. An example of this can be seen in a small tabernacle that includes a painted stucco relief after Donatello, in a wooden painted frame attributed to the Florentine Paolo Schiavo, from the late 1430s (fig. 2.34). The base is inscribed with the words of the angelic salutation “Ave Maria gratia plena” (Hail Mary full of Grace), a phrase which Donal Cooper believes to be meant to recall the recitation of the rosary,[[485]](#footnote-485) although it seems equally likely that these words would have in fact been intended to inspire a musical engagement with the picture, as they were sung during the liturgy. It is not unusual to find musical elements such as this in depictions of the Virgin and Child with angels. As well as incorporating the words of hymns sung during the liturgy, angels are also often shown playing a variety of musical instruments, singing from notation written on scrolls or books of music, and even using devices for teaching music such as *tactus*.[[486]](#footnote-486)

Despite research in this field being complicated by the fact that written records of domestic furnishings and devotional paintings very rarely report the precise scene depicted, and no specific references to angels were encountered during my research, a very large number of works of art depicting the Virgin and Child with angels do survive. However, it is possible to interpret the lack of documentary evidence not so much as a limitation, but more as an indication that angels were so obviously present and ubiquitous that notaries carrying out inventories would not feel that it was necessary to take note of them specifically.[[487]](#footnote-487) As an example, the 1493 inventory of the Minerbetti family’s possessions lists, in Andrea’s matrimonial room: “1 nostra donna dipinta con suo ornamento messo d'oro” (a painting of Our Lady with gilded decoration), and similarly in a different room “1 quadretto con 1 nostra donna” (a painting of Our Lady).[[488]](#footnote-488) Even Andrea himself does not give more details in his *Libro di ricordi*: in 1497, he acquired “1 nostra donna di rilievo grande” (a big relief with Our Lady), in 1499, “1 nostra donna della robia murata” (one Our Lady by Della Robbia), in 1502, “1 nostra donna di marmo” (one marble Our Lady), and, in 1511, “1 tondetto con 1 nostra donna dipinta” (a little tondo painted with Our Lady).[[489]](#footnote-489) Evidently these works did not depict the Virgin Mary alone, but figures such as the Infant Christ, the young Saint John the Baptist and any possible surrounding angels were deemed too obvious to deserve a specific mention. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that describing the subjects was not the main purpose of the inventory, and far more attention would have been paid to the material and size of the objects listed, as these would have been the factors which would have been most significant when determining the distribution of inherited goods.[[490]](#footnote-490)

The clear implication of these deductions is that angels must have inhabited many Renaissance homes, most often in company with the Virgin and Child. This conclusion is supported by contemporary representations of realistic domestic interior. For example, an illustration showing a depiction of the Virgin and Child flanked with angels in a domestic setting appears in Girolamo Savonarola’s *Predica dell’arte del bene morire* (Sermon on the Art of Dying Well) from 1496.

As has been discussed, depictions of angels may have been more or less human in their appearance, but it is worth noting that distinctively humanised representations of angels are particularly common in domestic devotional images, as Ronald Kecks has pointed out.[[491]](#footnote-491) Angels could be represented without wings or halo, as, for example, in a *Nativity* of 1470-1475 by Piero della Francesca (fig. 4.1), which was created for a domestic environment.[[492]](#footnote-492)

In recent decades, domestic settings have become the focus of several publications on Renaissance Italy. Thanks to studies such as the V&A exhibition and accompanying catalogue *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (2006-2007), the University of Cambridge research project “Domestic Devotion: the place of piety in the Italian Renaissance home” (2013-2016) and its associated publications, and the collection of essays *The Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior, 1400-1700. Objects, Spaces, Domesticities*(2013) and*Pregare in casa. Oggetti e documenti della pratica religiosa tra Medioevo e Rinascimento* (2018), we are now better acquainted than ever with the daily life of Renaissance individuals and families, especially concerning their personal and private piety.[[493]](#footnote-493) These studies have advanced our understanding of the twofold function performed by some domestic objects, since often objects that had a practical use in the home would also have played a part in domestic devotional activities. Devotional scenes and other non-religious edifying scenes that adorned a variety of domestic objects of daily use, small caskets (*cofanetti*) and dowry chests (*cassoni*), testify to this dual purpose. An example of this is provided by a maiolica inkstand decorated with the scene of the *Nativity* in the round, attributed to Giovanni di Nicola di Manzoni dal Colle, from around 1510 (fig. 2.35). As suggested by Katherine Tycz, the individuals using this inkstand would have been reminded of the Holy Family and the birth of Christ every time they reached out to it with their pen.[[494]](#footnote-494)

An object could have several intents and functions, depending on the necessity of the moment, and its meanings in the home were not limited to its practical use, or even devotion towards the figures depicted. Often, the characters depicted on these objects could also serve as examples to follow for their viewers, playing a role in the education of members of the household, and it is this practice in particular which is under scrutiny in the present study. In this context, piety and moral education go hand in hand. Surprisingly, depictions of musical angels have never been analysed in this light. Even though these figures combine both the well-known power of images to influence the beholder and the equally celebrated role of music in influencing viewers towards certain behaviours, discussed in the previous chapter, no effort has been made to single them out from more generic “religious” or “devotional” interpretations. This is even more striking considering that some musical angels are depicted in such a way that they seem specially designed to reach out and communicate with the viewer, as can be found in several *tondi* produced by Sandro Botticelli and his workshop, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

Whilst the presence of angels in the home is easy enough to establish as a general principle, placing specific images, or even specific types of image, in the home is a more difficult matter. Unambiguous documentation revealing the settings for which artworks were first made and in which they were first encountered rarely survives. The presence of angels, and specifically musical angels, in the domestic environment will be the subject of further, more detailed discussion in Chapters 3 and 4 of the present thesis.

Renaissance Italians were surrounded by musical angels: in church, where the music of angels was depicted in altarpieces and imitated by the clergy or choir; at home, where musical angels would have been companions to the Virgin and Child, and as part of the decoration of bedrooms; and, finally, in the streets, where groups of children impersonating angels in white robes would sing and play instruments as part of theatrical performances. At the same time, angels were commonly understood to offer protection and guidance to individual humans from the first moment of their existence, and, in particular, they were often invoked as mentors and models for children. As such, it seems apparent that as well as the accepted devotional function of praising God or the Virgin through music, depictions of musical angels were likely intended to provide role-models to their audience, in both sacred and secular settings. Children specifically, in mystery plays, in musical performances, and in general, were encouraged to emulate the attitude of the angels, in a sort of juvenile *imitatio angelorum*. The musical angels that children would have been most familiar with were likely to be those that accompany the Virgin and Child, in images that could be found – either painted or carved – in the vast majority of households, especially in the bedroom, providing the focal point of the private devotional practices for the household.[[495]](#footnote-495)

# 3. Tondi and Musical Angels

Musical angels played a hugely important role in the life of Italian Christians during the Renaissance, and their depiction can be seen as a vital component in the moral education of young people at that time, serving as guides, teachers, and examples to which to aspire. Chapters 1 and 2 have discussed the many ways in which these depictions, along with their underlying messages, spanned both public and private devotion, across sacred and domestic spaces. These ubiquitous figures were used not only to reinforce what were considered to be positive attitudes and practices, but also helped bring religion into the home, and therefore into everyday life. In this way, devotion was not only something which was practiced in church, but was also something which would permeate daily life.

Domestic images were devised in a number of different forms, designed in ways which would fit harmoniously within the contemporary home. One of these specifically, the Florentine *tondo*,provides an especially rich opportunity to further analyse the role of religious imagery, and in particular depictions of exemplary musical angels, in the Renaissance home. Using these examples, this chapter will explore the ways in which these images were used as part of moral teaching in greater detail, and come to a better understanding of their purposes and functions, as well as discovering more about their intended pedagogical impact.

3.1. Tondi and their Circular Counterparts in the Home

Among the wide variety of works of art that were produced in Italy between the early fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth century, it can be asserted with relative confidence that *tondi* were created specifically to be displayed in a domestic context.[[496]](#footnote-496) *Tondi*, paintings or sculptures in a circular shape (from the Italian word for ‘round’ or ‘circular’), were usually decorated with religious depictions. The rounded shape had already been in use in religious art for at least a century, as can be seen, for example, in Pietro Cavallini’s mosaic from the 1290s in the church of Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome, in which a roundel with the Virgin and Child flanked by saints is inserted in a larger squared frame. However, it is in Florence and the surrounding areas that autonomous *tondi*, not being part of a larger composition, were first developed, and these enjoyed tremendous popularity over the course of the fifteenth century, continuing up until the early decades of the sixteenth century.[[497]](#footnote-497) The popularity of *tondi* was probably due more to their devotional purpose rather than the authorship of a famous master, something which is indicated by the many replicas and copies of particular designs which were made by Botticelli’s workshop, and were produced on a large scale often with minimal variation.[[498]](#footnote-498)

The close connection between *tondi* and domestic environments is demonstrated not only by the inventories that list them as being inside the house, and in the bedchamber specifically, but also by the fact that their production was in the hands of artists who made ‘domestic art’ their primary focus. Roberta Olson reports that the earliest mention of a *tondo* can be found in the records of the workshop run by Apollonio di Giovanni and Marco del Buono. These artists ran an extremely prolific business, and their workshop produced an inestimable number of works for Florentine homes, including decorated furniture such as *forzieri* (dowry chests) and *spalliere* (wainscot panelling), together with *deschi da parto* (birth trays)and, of course, *tondi*. The first *tondo* referenced in their accounts is not actually painted on a panel, but was frescoed on the *cielo* (ceiling) of the loggia in Giovanni di Paolo Rucellai’s palace, in 1452.[[499]](#footnote-499) Unfortunately, the scene depicted is not given, nor is it possible to be absolutely certain that this refers to an autonomous composition, rather than a part of a larger configuration.[[500]](#footnote-500) The same document contains a record of a *tondo da parto* (a birth *tondo*) painted in 1453, showing King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, and is actually referring to a *desco da parto*, which in this case is circular rather than multi-sided as is usual.[[501]](#footnote-501) Additionally, in 1455, the artists recorded the receipt of a lucrative commission for a “Nostra Donna in uno tondo”, a *tondo* with the Virgin Mary, requested by a citizen called Pierfrancesco di Lorenzo de' Medici, along with two *forzieri*.[[502]](#footnote-502)

Household inventories from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries often report *tondi* as part of the decorations of a bedroom. The presence of devotional images in this particular room, circular or otherwise, seems to have been primarily due to the lack of another dedicated sacred space within the house, such as a domestic chapel, which would have been rarely found even in large palaces belonging to prominent families.[[503]](#footnote-503) Through the analysis of Florentine inventories of domestic dwellings, compiled by the *Ufficio del Magistrato dei Pupilli*, it is apparent that in the vast majority of cases *tondi* were kept inside private rooms (*camere*) or adjacent antechambers (*anticamere*).[[504]](#footnote-504) John Kent Lydecker has analysed a selection of references to *tondi* from such inventories, and through this examination the author has reached the conclusion that *tondi* painted with religious subjects were usually found in bedrooms, while those that were recorded as being in different rooms would usually have had other subjects.[[505]](#footnote-505) However, as Olson highlights in her study of Florentine *tondi*, since documents do not always mention precisely which room contained the objects that were being inventoried nor the subject depicted upon them, it can be difficult to assign particular subjects to specific locations within the house with absolute certainty.[[506]](#footnote-506)

Despite this, in some cases the notary carrying out the inventory did note the precise location of the works being inventoried, which tells us that, for example, a *tondo* with a large gilded frame, with the Virgin and the Magi who give their offerings to Christ, hung in a “beautiful” chamber belonging to Lorenzo Tornabuoni, a cousin of Lorenzo il Magnifico.[[507]](#footnote-507) This is likely to be the *Adoration of the Magi* painted by Ghirlandaio, which was mentioned by Giorgio Vasari, who saw it in its original location.[[508]](#footnote-508) Near Lorenzo’s room, in the *chamera del palco d’oro* (chamber of the golden beams), there was another *tondo* with a gilded garland, this time described as being painted with the Virgin Mary and Saint John (most likely a Virgin and Child, with the young Saint John the Baptist).[[509]](#footnote-509) In addition to these descriptions, a rare depiction of a *tondo* hanging in a bedchamber can be seen in a woodcut illustration in the 1496 edition of Savonarola’s text *Predica dell’arte del ben morire* (fig. 3.1). Here, a *tondo* depicting the Virgin and Child flanked by two angels,with an elaborate frame, seems to be hanging or placed on a shelf on the wall next to the bed. This illustration can be compared to another similar image that also appears in the same text (fig. 3.2), in which an apparition of the Virgin and Child, again flanked by two angels and circled by rays of light, takes place inside the bedchamber.[[510]](#footnote-510) In fact, as celestial visions are often both described and depicted as having a circular outline to signify perfection, *tondi* could have been likened to apparitions, contained within a physical and tangible circular frame.[[511]](#footnote-511)

Both extant *tondi* and those described in contemporary sources reveal that the Holy Family and its members are the most commonly depicted figures, shown in a variety of poses and settings, and with various companions. Although the scenes depicted clearly reveal a devotional function, with multiple layers of meaning that different audiences could comprehend and connect with during their contemplative practices, the function of *tondi* was not only limited to aiding private piety.[[512]](#footnote-512) As seen in Chapter 1, pictures were frequently used to provide models of behaviour for their viewers to emulate. In this way, these pictures would have become mirrors of perfection to which members of a household could aspire, and it follows that this would also have been true for *tondi*.

### 3.1.1. Tondi and Mirrors

As has been suggested by Roberta Olson, it is likely that *tondi* were intended to act as “mirrors” for their viewers.[[513]](#footnote-513) The connection between these two objects would have seemed quite obvious in the fifteenth century, for both would have hung on the wall in domestic spaces, and both would have been circular in shape. While physical mirrors reflected the material world, *tondi* were mirrors of divine models that the viewer was expected to emulate.[[514]](#footnote-514) It is worth noting that, up until the beginning of the sixteenth century, mirrors would have been made of materials such as brass and dark glass that would not have provided a clear reflection of one’s image.[[515]](#footnote-515) As such, it can be assumed that the viewers’ clouded and vaguely-defined reflection would already have been reminiscent of something otherworldly, rather than a simplistic reflection of reality. In this context, the celestial “mirrors” of the *tondi* would have possessed a particularly compelling resonance.

In addition to physical mirrors, the Renaissance lexicon also makes broad use of the term “mirror” (Latin *speculum*, Italian *spec(c)hio*) not only to describe physical objects, but also, metaphorically, in association with the imitation of positive *exempla* and the construction of identity.[[516]](#footnote-516) In an inscription in the vernacular from the early fifteenth century, dedicated to the rulers of Siena in the antechapel of the Palazzo Pubblico, one can read: “*Mirror yourselves* in these [figures], you who govern, if you want to rule for thousands and thousands of years” (my Italics).[[517]](#footnote-517) This inscription forms part of the fresco decoration designed by Taddeo di Bartolo between 1413 and 1414, in which the princely virtues are represented by images of illustrious men, taken mainly from Roman history.[[518]](#footnote-518) It goes without saying that the literary genre of *Specula principum* (Mirrors of princes), discussed in Chapter 1, is also linked to this practice.

This idea was further extended by Pier Paolo Vergerio the Elder, in his *De ingenuis moribus et liberalibus studiis adulescentiae*, where the author suggests that “[young men] will have greater success [in becoming virtuous] if they will contemplate not their own image, but the behaviour of someone else of high character, a *living mirror*” (my Italics).[[519]](#footnote-519) Along the same lines, the Florentine merchant Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, in his *Ricordi*,recommended to his son:

Exert yourself to associate and be domestic with one (or with more) excellent man [who is] sage and old and without vice … Take the lead, imitate him, and thus follow him and try to make yourself like him. Keep him always present in your mind, and when you do something, *mirror yourself in him* (my Italics).[[520]](#footnote-520)

As well as providing guidance on how to become virtuous, these examples also suggest the importance that was given to maintaining the reputation of one’s lineage, which was not always a simple task for children from a privileged background. Francesco Barbaro, in the early fifteenth century, stated in his *De re uxoria*: “the light of paternal glory does not permit the well-born to be mediocre; they understand that the image of their parents is more of a burden than an honour unless they prove themselves by their own virtue worthy of the dignity and greatness of their ancestors.”[[521]](#footnote-521)

This same mirror metaphor is used by Giovanni Dominici, also noted in Chapter 1, when he recommends his reader “let [her] children *mirror themselves* in the first mirror, as soon as they open their eyes” (my Italics). This “first” mirror corresponds to images of the angels and saints, used to shape the mind of a new born.[[522]](#footnote-522) Saint John Chrysostom in the fourth century had already codified the distinction between physical and spiritual mirrors in one of his sermons, the latter being “the memory of good men, and the history of their blessed life, the reading of the Scriptures, the laws given by God”. The author continues: “If thou be willing once only to look upon the portraiture of those holy men, thou wilt both see the foulness of thine own mind, and having seen this, wilt need nothing else to be set free from that deformity. Because the mirror is useful for this purpose also, and makes the change easy.”[[523]](#footnote-523) This testifies to the belief that, through painted *exempla*, one could observe their own defects and act to correct them. An example of the way in which devotional images were used in practice is given by Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, in his *Ricordi*. After the death of his son Alberto, Giovanni prayed for the child’s soul aided by an image of the Crucifixion with the Virgin and Saint John the Evangelist, which his son himself had previously used during his prayers. In looking at the crucified Christ, Giovanni stated that he was “looking into myself at my sins, in which I saw that I had harshly offended the son of God,” therefore introspectively meditating upon his faults, while blaming himself for Christ’s suffering.[[524]](#footnote-524) This use seems to be subtly also suggested by Giambattista Gelli, in a Carnival song that he dedicated to the mirror-makers guild of Florence, in which he states that “perceiving his fault when looking in the mirror (faults which are not so easy to perceive in oneself as in others), a man can then take stock of himself and say ‘I will be a better man than I was.’”[[525]](#footnote-525)

Contemporary sources testify to the increasing popularity of mirrors in domestic environments towards the end of the fifteenth century.[[526]](#footnote-526) Mirrors, occasionally also called *sfere* or *spere* (spheres) due to their convex shape, are frequently recorded in inventories of bedchambers. For example, a mirror is listed alongside a religious image in almost every instance in the inventory of the different rooms of the Venetian patrician Domenico Cappello’s house, following his death in 1532.[[527]](#footnote-527) As well as listings in inventories, mirrors were also mentioned in other documents, as in the case of Isabella d’Este, who between the 1490s and 1530s sought out both steel and crystal mirrors of varying sizes, sometimes referred to as “spechio da camera” in her correspondence with Lorenzo da Pavia.[[528]](#footnote-528) Deborah Howard has suggested the possibility that mirrors in the bedroom could be used not only for inspecting one’s appearance, but also as an aid to personal devotion.[[529]](#footnote-529) This seems to be echoed in the meditative practice followed by Vittoria Colonna (1492-1547), who, upon receipt of a drawing of the Crucifixion from her friend Michelangelo, responded to him that she had “observed it closely, with the aid of a lamp, a glass and a mirror, ” although the precise nature of this procedure was not recorded.[[530]](#footnote-530)

Intriguingly, on some occasions the surviving records specifically list both figurative *tondi* and circular mirrors as part of the decoration of the same room. For example, in the chamber of Lorenzo Tornabuoni referenced previously, just after the *tondo* with the *Adoration of the Magi* the notaries who compiled the inventory also recorded “one mirror in a gilded *tondo*.”[[531]](#footnote-531) The presence of both objects in a single space prompts questions about the nature of the interaction that the beholders would have with them. It is likely that the occupant would have engaged with both of the images visible to them, one painted, one reflected, establishing comparisons between them and possibly adjusting their self-fashioning to match the holy figures depicted in the painting.

The perception of depicted and reflected images was also likely to have been influenced by the height at which *tondi* and mirrors hung on the wall. Thanks to contemporary written and visual sources, the location of the *tondi* can generally be assumed to have been higher than eye level, as is demonstrated in an inventory record of a *tondo* with the Virgin and Child located “high up” or “above” (*di sopra*), and in the woodcut illustration in Savonarola’s *Predica dell’arte del ben morire* mentioned previously (fig. 3.1).[[532]](#footnote-532) It seems likely that a higher setting on the wall was intended to allude to the elevated status of the figure depicted, as seems to be confirmed by the elongated shape of some images of the Virgin and Child.[[533]](#footnote-533) In order to have been usable, mirrors would have needed to be located much lower down, and so it is possible to imagine how individuals would have been prompted to look upwards to the divine figures depicted on *tondi* and then lower their gaze to the reflection on the mirror, and vice-versa. This upwards-downwards movement would have likely induced the viewer to establish a comparison between the Heavenly realm represented higher up in the room and the Earthly world represented by their own image reflected within the mirror.

Thanks in part to their physical similarity, circular devotional works of art such as *tondi* could readily be equated with mirrors. In this light, one can read the *tondo* painted with an image of Christ bearing the cross, kept at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore (MA), as a figurative *imitatio Christi* (fig. 3.3). Similarly, a series of medals with Roman emperors by the Florentine artist Antonio Averlino, known as Filarete (ca. 1400-ca. 1469), have been identified by Stefano Casu as *exempla virtutis*, examples of virtue to be presented to a ruler. Perhaps even more strikingly, Filarete’s workshop, with the direct participation of the master himself, later transformed one of the medals with Julius Caesar into a rectangular plaquette in so-called *speculum* metal, a fragile alloy whose choice is only justifiable if the rear of the object was intended to be used as a mirror, making this object in effect a physical “mirror for princes”, a *speculum principum* (fig. 3.4).[[534]](#footnote-534) It is not clear why this medal was transformed from its original circular shape, although this may be due to the malleability of the metal alloy, which would likely have been more difficult to work in smaller sizes.

Another medal, although this time not made from *speculum* metal, but rather in bronze, is highly likely to have functioned as a mirror. Probably produced by Lysippus the Younger, some time between 1471 and 1484, this medal shows a portrait of a young man in profile on one side, while the other side is completely plain (fig. 3.5). An inscription surrounding the portrait on the obverse makes the purpose of the object clear: “di la il bel viso e qvi il tuo servo mira” (look on the other side at your beautiful face, and on this at your servant).[[535]](#footnote-535)

A similar effect, which is particularly interesting for the purposes of this thesis, is given by a round medallion most likely produced by the workshop of Luca della Robbia between 1425 and 1450, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 3.6). The connection between *tondi* and mirrors is particularly evident in this object, as it is cast from *speculum* metal, and has one side decorated with a gilded relief depicting the Virgin and Child accompanied by two non-musical and two musical angels, with its reverse polished to be used as a mirror.[[536]](#footnote-536) The users of this object would have been able to direct their devotion and prayers to the religious image and then insightfully inspect their own reflection in the mirror, assessing their lives and attitudes compared to the virtuous figures on the other side.

However, the reflected image was not the only encouragement that Christians would have had to spur them onwards in their pursuit of virtuous development. In the same way as the reflected image in the mirror seems to be looking out at the beholder, it was believed that paintings – especially devotional images – were able to see the behaviour of the inhabitants of a house. For this reason, Saint Bernardino criticised women about not being careful of their actions and their appearance in front of the devotional images that were hanging on the walls of their homes.[[537]](#footnote-537)

Much like paintings, mirrors had elaborate frames, sometimes including female portraits, coats of arms, *putti* or even text, which could conceal messages for their users and stir their behaviour towards morality through allegorical figures. A Ferrarese example from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century is inscribed at its base with the letter Y, indicating two different pathways to choose from, one sinful and one virtuous (fig. 3.7).[[538]](#footnote-538) These paths are indicated by the letters composing the words “bonum” and “malum” on either side, accompanied by symbolic animals and other figures.[[539]](#footnote-539) The meaning of the Y symbol was well-known in the fifteenth century, both via ancient sources, such as Servius’ *Commentarii in Vergilii* and Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*, and from contemporary texts.[[540]](#footnote-540)As Matteo Palmieri states,

In youth, when one already knows good and evil … the two paths of the Y begin, that is to say of our life, in which time either men follow the straighter path, that is the one of virtue, or truly they go towards the flat and lower path of vice.[[541]](#footnote-541)

Mirror frames could also indirectly reference virtue, and virtuous behaviours. As beauty was thought to be connected to virtue, mirror frames that included a beautiful female portrait became quite popular, providing an ideal model for female viewers to imitate (fig. 3.8).[[542]](#footnote-542) In Marsilio Ficino’s words,

It is an internal perfection which produces the external. The former we call goodness, the latter beauty. For just this reason, we say that beauty is the blossom, so to speak, of goodness. By the allurements of this blossom, as though by a kind of bait, the latent interior goodness attracts all who see it. But since the cognition of our minds has its origin in the senses, we would never know the goodness hidden away in the inner nature of things, nor desire it, unless we were led to it by its manifestations in exterior appearance. In this fact is apparent the wonderful usefulness of this beauty and of [love, which is] its associate.[[543]](#footnote-543)

Beautiful women were not the only characters that could be present on the frames of mirrors, as they could also be decorated with various childlike figures. Flying spirits decorate the rim of a number of ivory mirrors from the beginning of the fifteenth century produced by the workshop of Baldassarre degli Embriachi, one of which is now at the Walters Art Museum (fig. 3.9). In another example, two *putti* holding an unidentified shield can be seen at the base of a stucco mirror frame from Palazzo Davanzati in Florence, which may have been produced by the workshop of Benedetto da Maiano, around 1480, now kept in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (fig. 3.10).[[544]](#footnote-544) These figures, which would have reminded viewers of angels in much the same way as described in Chapter 2.1, could be considered to hold similar moralistic functions, reminding the viewer to reflect upon their own virtuousness while their own image was reflected back to them in the mirror itself.

In addition to the many similarities between *tondi* and mirrors already discussed, the subjects most frequently painted upon these circular paintings were also regularly associated with mirrors. For example, the Virgin Mary herself was traditionally described as *speculum immacolatum* and *speculum sine macula* (a mirror without sin), with reference to her purity and perfection.[[545]](#footnote-545) Being considered the personification of wisdom, she was attributed the words with which the apocryphal Book of Wisdom describes wisdom itself: “She’s the brightness that shines forth from eternal light. She’s a mirror that flawlessly reflects God’s activity. She’s the perfect image of God’s goodness.”[[546]](#footnote-546) Jacobus de Voragine, in his *Mariale* (written after 1255) even affirms:

For as all things are reflected from a mirror, so in the blessed Virgin, as the mirror of God, ought all to see their impurities and spots, and purify and correct them, for the proud, beholding her humility see their blemishes, the avaricious see theirs in her poverty, the lovers of pleasure theirs in her virginity.[[547]](#footnote-547)

In this way, by looking at depictions of the Virgin Mary, one would have been able to adjust their behaviour, and model it according to her perfection. As well as the Virgin Mary, angels, usually depicted alongside her, could be described as mirrors. Jacobus de Voragine, in his *Golden Legend*, while quoting Pseudo-Dionysus’ book *De divinis nominibus* (On the Divine Names), states that “the angel is a manifestation of the hidden light, a mirror pure, brilliant, uncontaminated, undefiled, unspotted, receiving, if it be allowable so to speak, the beauty of the ‘boniform deiformity’ of God,” thus defining angels as the mirror of God’s beauty.[[548]](#footnote-548)

Through the examples presented, it is clear that *tondi* and mirrors share many similarities, and indeed would have often been in close proximity within the same domestic spaces. They would have acted in tandem to influence their viewers, who would have been encouraged to reflect upon themselves in both – literally, in the real mirror, and moralistically when viewing *tondi*. Their presence within the home was also highly significant, as personal piety would have offered the greatest opportunity for this type of self-reflection.

Roberta Olson has argued compellingly that the subjects depicted on a *tondo* acted as role models for the conduct of the viewers, and among these she includes examples of *tondi* depicting the Virgin Mary holding a devotional book.[[549]](#footnote-549) These depictions were likely intended to stimulate the reading of sacred texts as part of one’s personal piety. As angels are the second most common subject in *tondi*, after the Virgin and Child, they too would have provided a source of inspiration for viewers, who were encouraged to emulate their devotional activity.

### 3.1.2. Deschi da Parto, Maiolica Dishes and Metal Roundels

*Tondi* were not the only circular object in a house that would have had a moralistic function. In this section we will see how *deschi da parto*, maiolica dishes and metal roundels could have performed a similar role to that discussed in relation to *tondi* in the previous section, and, in particular, how the figures depicted on them could have been used as moralising examples which viewers would have been expected to imitate, in much the same way as discussed in Chapter 1.4.

*Deschi da parto* (birth trays) are described by Vasari as a “round on which people bring the women in labour something to eat.”[[550]](#footnote-550) Both sides of these trays were painted, and the depictions upon them are often considered to be a message for married couples, especially for female viewers, encouraging procreation and childbearing.[[551]](#footnote-551) These childbirth objects, which served both functional and decorative purposes, were popular among most social classes and could also be purchased at second-hand markets. A likely example of this is the *desco* with the *Triumph of Love* kept at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the coats of arms on the reverse of which have been repainted, probably to replace them with those of the later owner.[[552]](#footnote-552) Although most trays were workshop production, made for sale on the open market, in some cases they could be commissioned for a specific birth, such as the tray with the *Triumph of Fame* commissioned for the birth of Lorenzo il Magnifico, which shows some traces of a broken hook at the top of the reverse moulding frame and which was reported as hanging in Lorenzo’s room in the inventory carried out at his death in 1492.[[553]](#footnote-553)

*Deschi da parto* can be seen as a predecessor of the *tondo*, as they both share a similar shape (although *deschi* were mostly multisided rather than circular), were both present in domestic settings, and enjoyed a similar didactic purpose.[[554]](#footnote-554) In addition to this, even the terminology used to describe these two objects was sometimes combined in inventory records, such as in an inventory compiled in 1472 which reports “1o tondo d[i]pinto da donna d[a]parto” (one painted *tondo* for women who gave birth).[[555]](#footnote-555)

Although the scenes depicted in *deschi* and *tondi* might at first sight appear to be very different (often secular in the former, devotional in the latter), one can see that the figures painted on *tondi* may in fact be a development of the ones in *deschi*. The encouragement to procreate found in secular scenes of nativity on *deschi* is replaced by the intimate relationship between the Virgin and Child as mother and son in *tondi*. The confinement scenes often painted on birth trays also present an additional layer of meaning, as they were very similar to the depictions of sacred births that could be seen in churches. Clear examples of this can be seen in the *Birth of the Virgin* and the *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* by Domenico Ghirlandaio in the Tornabuoni chapel, in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, in which the scenes are presented as if they were taking place in a contemporary setting, including carefully represented Renaissance clothing.[[556]](#footnote-556) Updating this scene so that it took place in a recognisable setting would doubtless have been designed to make the scene more familiar to its intended audience, which would have made it easier for them to relate to the images depicted.

In addition, Roberta Olson has noted that the *putti* on the reverse of *deschi* recall images of the Infant Christ in *tondi*, something that is undoubtedly also true of depictions of the young Saint John the Baptist.[[557]](#footnote-557) As seen in Chapter 2, *putti* can also be associated with angels, another type of figure often found in *tondi*, with both having descended from classical figures of *erotes* or *amorini*. As such, a parallel can be established between the *putti* on the reverse of *deschi* and the angels in *tondi*. However, while the former were usually relegated to the reverse of the panel, angels gained a place on the obverse in *tondi* (with this, of course, being the only painted side).

*Tondi* and *deschi da parto* therefore have the presence of childlike figures in common. Moreover, in both, musical attributes are often added to these figures. A *desco* attributed to Domenico di Bartolo or to Carlo di Giovanni (ca. 1450) has a scene of nativity on the obverse, while, on the reverse, two *putti* engage with musical activity: one is singing and the other is playing the tambourine (fig. 3.11).[[558]](#footnote-558) These *putti* are wingless, and as such they closely resemble ordinary children. They seem to be the continuation of the scene on the front: there, a child is born, while here he is some years older, making music.

Another wingless *putto*, who, unrealistically, is playing a tambourine with his right hand and a recorder with his left, decorates the reverse of a *desco* attributed to Lippo d’Andrea (1420-1430s), while its obverse shows a scene depicting “Trajan’s justice”, an episode from Roman history with highly moralising connotations (fig. 3.12).[[559]](#footnote-559) In the story, the Roman Emperor Trajan, having been stopped by a woman demanding justice for her murdered son, delayed his departure to war in order to carry out his duties and provide justice. As discussed in Chapter 2.1, *putti* would have reminded the viewers of angels, and the presence of this theme makes the moralising significance of the musical *putto* on the obverse even more plausible, as the different audiences of these pictures will have likely approached the images on the two sides of the *desco* with the same mental disposition.

Comparably, in a number of *tondi*, childlike angels play a variety of musical instruments and sing from books and scrolls, sometimes even engaging with musical techniques that were common to contemporary practice. This is a topic which will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

Despite their frequent use in the fifteenth century, by the beginning of the new century *deschi da parto* started to be superseded by a new custom, based upon tin-glazed earthenware (*maiolica*) items.[[560]](#footnote-560) Already during the late fifteenth century, circular maiolica dishes were hung on the walls, as is demonstrated by the presence on some examples of holes for the supports. These dishes would have acted in much the same way as *tondi* would have done, as demonstrated by the tradition of depicting idealised female portraits upon them, along with textual references to real women (fig. 3.13). For example, the women portrayed in maiolica *belle donne* dishes between 1520 and 1550 have highly generalised features, indicating that they were not actual portraits of contemporary women, but were rather aimed at providing a model of virtuous behaviour to follow. As such, they became the maiolica equivalent of the literary collections of lives of illustrious women, such as Boccaccio’s *De mulieribus claris* (1374) and Sabadino degli Arienti’s *Gynevera de le clare donne* (1483).[[561]](#footnote-561)

In addition, the same moralistic function would have been performed by small moulded roundels with the Virgin and Child, which were produced cheaply to be used for domestic devotional purposes. The bronze roundel known as the *Chellini Madonna*, donated by Donatello to his physician Giovanni Chellini Samminiati in 1456, and now kept in the Victoria and Albert Museum, could also be used as a mould for producing glass roundels from its reverse (fig. 3.14).[[562]](#footnote-562) This roundel demonstrates a further connection to mirrors in that the balustrade depicted in front of the figures of the Virgin and Child is distorted, as if it was seen through its reflection on a convex mirror from a lower point of observation, as William S. A. Dale’s experiments have amply demonstrated.[[563]](#footnote-563)

Much like *tondi*, metal roundels could also include musical angels accompanying the figure of the Virgin and Child, as can be seen in an example produced from a model attributed to Bertoldo di Giovanni, now in the Louvre (fig. 3.15). Other, less direct, musical references also appeared in these roundels, as is shown by an example now at the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (fig. 3.16). The rim of this roundel is inscribed with the Latin words “Puer natus est nobis” (Unto us a child is born), which is the incipit of a chant that was sung as part of the liturgy during Mass on Christmas day. Another chant similarly entitled “Puer qui natus est nobis” was sung at Vespers on the day of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, on 24 June. Viewers engaging with this roundel during their devotional practices would have likely recognised the reference to these chants. This roundel was certainly designed to be hung on a wall, as the ring at the top of the frame demonstrates.

It is evident that *tondi* were not the only objects that could have been reminiscent of mirrors for the inhabitants of domestic spaces, and again it seems that moralistic *exempla* would have been included in these in a way that would encourage views to reflect on their own virtue, as models of morality. *Deschi da parto*, maiolica dishes and metal roundels, all having a similar circular shape, could also be found in a domestic setting, decorated with figures in which the various viewers would have been immediately been able to recognise themselves. Underlying this, the distinctive circular shape would have helped to create a visual association between these circular objects and mirrors in the minds of their beholders, and served to continually remind the household about the importance of both self-reflection and maintaining a moralistic mindset throughout their daily lives.

### 3.1.3. Children as an Intended Audience

All the works of art described could be expected to stimulate the curiosity of children, especially where they would have been able to recognise figures similar to themselves. For example, wingless *putti* in *deschi da parto* and in mirror frames closely resemble the children who were likely to look at them. Each of the two *putti* holding a shield at the base of the mirror frame from Palazzo Davanzati mentioned above (fig. 3.10) wear a coral necklace and bracelet, which were ornaments often worn by children as talismans for their protection and good luck. These can also be observed being worn by both the Christ child, as seen in several paintings with the Virgin and Child, and in various childlike figures depicted on the reverse of *deschi*, such as that executed either by Domenico di Bartolo or Carlo di Giovanni, kept in the Ca’ d’Oro in Venice (fig. 3.11) previously noted.[[564]](#footnote-564) These elements would have certainly assisted children in identifying themselves with the figures in these artistic representations.

Sometimes, particular messages directed towards children were concealed in the decoration of these objects. Following Tim Shephard’s reading of the mirror frame from Ferrara discussed above (fig. 3.7), it appears that this object was intended for a young Alfonso I d’Este (1476-1534). It not only presents him with a choice between vice and virtue, characterized by the symbol Y, but it also establishes a link with Alfonso’s illustrious ancestors by showing symbols of the qualities they were renowned for in the “bonum” section of the decoration, therefore elevating his ancestors as *exempla* for him to follow.[[565]](#footnote-565) As discussed in Chapter 1, utilising *exempla* from the past was a common didactic tool, which was often employed as part of the education of children.

While mirrors offered an introspective opportunity to their users, and could be directed towards young people with the intention of shaping their behaviour, *tondi* would present them with the chance to establish a comparison between themselves and the divine figures shown. As previously discussed, Giovanni Dominici urged parents to allow and encourage new-borns and young children to mirror themselves in images of angels and saints.[[566]](#footnote-566) It seems likely that pictures of musical angels were intended to elevate children’s moral behaviour, acting as their mentors. Although the individual perception of images is difficult to explore definitively, it is possible to assert with some confidence that the intention (as exercised either by the patron of an image, by the artist or by the picture’s owner) was at least in part to induce a moral response in young viewers in the household. The wealth of contextual evidence – or, as William Hood has labelled it, the “frame of proper reference” – supports this interpretation.[[567]](#footnote-567)

It seems likely that angels and musical angels were the most obvious subject to attract the attention of children, as they were omnipresent in their life, both in depicted form and, as we have seen, in performances as part of public manifestations of devotion such as sacred plays and processions, and this would have been particularly true in the home. This is also demonstrated by several maiolica dishes from Deruta, all produced in the same workshop around 1500-1530. These are particularly interesting examples as, on each of them, an angel is depicted as an independent subject in its own right. The angel in these is likely inspired by one of the angels in Pietro Perugino’s fresco of God the Father in the Sala dell’Udienza, Collegio del Cambio, Perugia.[[568]](#footnote-568) The fact that the single angel depicted in these dishes is replicated in several versions with minimal variation suggests the significant popularity of this subject. One of these dishes in the British Museum (fig. 3.17) presents a figure of an angel facing towards the right, and, as such, this could be equated with the angel of the Annunciation, as such angels are usually depicted facing right. However, in most of the other dishes, the angel faces left, making this identification unlikely.[[569]](#footnote-569) A version facing left, now in the Metropolitan Museum, has been given the new attribute of a book by its maker, which Timothy Wilson describes as a sacred text or a music book (fig. 3.18).[[570]](#footnote-570) The Metropolitan Museum’s online catalogue stresses the fact that the image of an angel reading a sacred book might have been seen as a model to imitate for the viewer.[[571]](#footnote-571) In my view it is more likely that this angel is accompanied by a music book, as the signs on the book seem to resemble notation much more closely than letters, and the distance between each sign is more similar to the way in which musical notation is spaced, even though no musical staff appears here. Additionally, whereas the infant Christ was often depicted learning how to read on his mother’s lap, angels are far more frequently associated with musical texts and notation than with the act of reading from sacred texts. In much the same way as *tondi* and *deschi da parto*, this circular dish could be hung on the wall of a Renaissance house, and the angel depicted in its surface would perform exactly the same function, allowing children to identify themselves with this figure and inspiring them to emulate it.

In a domestic environment, children would have been an important audience for the works of art displayed, and it is to be expected that this would have been kept in mind by both the artists and by the adults who decided upon their acquisition and display. Although the original location of most of the works discussed is not known, and in other cases is uncertain, this should not be seen as affecting the argument to an overly significant degree. While my research is focused specifically on works of art that were likely to have been displayed in a domestic setting, similar principles can be applied to other environments as well, if to a lesser degree. It is worth noting that the Domenican preacher Giovanni Dominici did encourage his reader Bartolomea degli Obizzi to display images in the house, and, if this was not possible, he also advised her to bring her children to church where they could see pictures of divine subjects: “if you don’t want to make your house into a temple, or if you are not able to … ensure that they [your children] are often taken to church”.[[572]](#footnote-572)

Having discussed how works of art of circular shape would carry appropriate messages of virtue and morality to encourage viewers to reflect upon themselves in these divine mirrors, and in particular the impact on the children in the household, we will now consider the effect that the musical angels depicted in specific *tondi* would have had on these young viewers.

3.2. Tondi with Singing Angels

As discussed in Chapter 3.1.1, *tondi* would resonate with domestic viewers in a number of different ways. The subjects depicted upon them would often include a number of characters to whom the viewers would be able to relate, and which therefore would provide powerful *exempla* of virtuous behaviours or characteristics for them to imitate. The frequent inclusion of musical angels would have served to communicate moralistic teachings to children in particular, as discussed in Chapter 2.6. In addition, thanks to their similarity to mirrors, and indeed sometimes being viewed in conjunction with actual mirrors, *tondi* reflected moralistic teachings back to their viewers in a particularly compelling way. Considering this, *tondi* provide a particularly useful opportunity to illustrate the ways in which depictions of musical angels in domestic settings were intended to provide moral teaching and guidance to children. The following section will consider some specific examples of *tondi*, and build upon the conclusions drawn in the previous chapters to provide greater insight into the pedagogical role of the musical angels that were included in these compositions.

### 3.2.1. Botticelli’s Musical Tondi

Sandro Botticelli included music making in several of his paintings throughout his career. In his works, angels play musical instruments (*Saint Francis of Assisi with Angels*) and dance (*Mystic Nativity* and San Marco altarpiece with the *Coronation of the Virgin*), among other activities. However, the most common musical activity that they perform is singing from choir books and beating musical time while they do so, as can be observed in several *tondi* that he and his workshop produced, which will be discussed in this section.

A small number of contemporary references to Botticelli’s *tondi* survive, including three records of payments, one of which was made in 1477-1478 for Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga, another in 1487 for the audience hall of the Massai della Camera, and the last one in 1489 for a citizen called Luigi d’Ugolino Martelli.[[573]](#footnote-573) While these references to Botticelli’s *tondi* provide information about their commission and patron, they rarely provide a detailed description of the images depicted.[[574]](#footnote-574)

Although one of these commissions is for a public institution, in most cases a domestic purpose can be considered, as implied by a statement made by Vasari: “throughout the town in numerous *houses* [Sandro Botticelli] made *tondi* with his own hand” (my Italics).[[575]](#footnote-575) It seems likely that, the aforementioned commission by Luigi d’Ugolino Martelli was intended for a similar domestic purpose. According to the surviving record, Luigi purchased an expensive *tondo* by Botticelli painted with the figure of the Virgin, which is now either lost or missing a correct identification.[[576]](#footnote-576) The idea that *tondi* were intended for a domestic setting is further supported by the *tondo* with the Virgin and Child and angels carrying the instruments of the Passion now held in the Galleria Corsini in Florence, which was once part of the collections kept in the Villa Medici in Careggi.[[577]](#footnote-577) Fortunately, a number of *tondi* from Botticelli’s workshop have survived, providing further opportunities to better understand the role that these objects would have played in domestic environments and the messages they would have communicated to their viewers. This section will focus in particular on a number of Botticelli’s *tondi* which feature musical angels, a subject that can often be linked to a young audience.

In the so-called *Raczynski Tondo* (fig. 3.19), kept in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, eight young angels gather around the Virgin and Child, carrying lilies, a symbol of Mary’s purity, while a crown is held by heavenly hands above the Virgin’s head. This *tondo* can possibly be identified as that mentioned by Vasari as being in the church of San Francesco (now San Salvatore al Monte) in Florence: “It is by Sandro’s hand, in San Francesco outside the Porta San Miniato, a *tondo* with a Madonna and a number of life-size angels,which was considered to be a very beautiful thing”.[[578]](#footnote-578) However, Ronald Lightbown believes it unlikely that this *tondo* was produced for the ecclesiastical setting in which it was seen by Vasari.[[579]](#footnote-579) Frank Zöllner has put forward the hypothesis that the location of this painting could have been a funerary setting, which would be supported by the fact that the eight lilies in this *tondo* might have been intended as a symbol of resurrection.[[580]](#footnote-580)

The figure of the Virgin dominates the composition. She wears a golden star on her robe, which is a reference to her epithet of “Star of the Sea.”[[581]](#footnote-581) The four angels on the right-hand side of the panel are poised to sing from a book of music held by one member of the group, who seems to be following the text or the musical notes using a lily stem. The remaining angels on the other side appear silent, perhaps listening or waiting for their turn to sing, seemingly paying little attention to the book that one of them holds. It is possible that the two groups of angels are performing antiphonal singing, although the representation of the choir books and the distribution of voices is perhaps more likely to be a product of the artist’s creativity rather than an accurate depiction of realistic practices, as the size of the depicted choir books does not correspond to contemporary use.[[582]](#footnote-582) It appears that there is no direct indication in the painting as to the song the angels may be singing. The only pictorial suggestion is the Virgin’s epithet of “Star of the Sea”, which also existed in a musical form, namely, in a hymn entitled *Ave Maris Stella*. This hymn is included in a three-voice setting in the manuscript Mod B (Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS α.X.1.11), which was likely used by singers in the Florentine Cathedral. James Haar and John Nádas believe that this manuscript was compiled by the French singer Benoît (often called Benotto in the documents), who sung at the Florence Baptistery and, from December 1438, at the Cathedral.[[583]](#footnote-583)

The singing of the *Ave Maris Stella* was also advocated by Girolamo Savonarola as part of his promotion of *laude* and chant singing in contrast to ornate polyphony, as can be read in one his sermons directed to young people:

Let us now talk to you, young children. Listen to me: you sing *laude* here in the morning and this is a good thing; but sometimes I would like you to sing the songs of the Church as well, such as *Ave Maris Stella* … and when I am in the pulpit, if I was to find you singing the *Ave Maris Stella* perhaps I would sing myself as well.[[584]](#footnote-584)

In light of this, it seems likely that the child-like angels in Botticelli’s *tondo* were based on actual contemporary practices, in which groups of children would sing this hymn.

However, *Ave Maris Stella* is not the only reference to a hymn that can be found in the painting. The lilies that the singing angels are holding are connected to another of the Virgin’s epithets, *lilium convallis* (the Lily of the Valley) or *lilium inter spinas* (the Lily Among Thorns), which was derived from the biblical Song of Songs 2:1-2. Not only was this passage sung at Matins or Vespers on the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin and other Marian festivities, but the lily was also a symbol of the town of Florence itself.[[585]](#footnote-585) Therefore, the use of a lily stem as a pointer by a musical angel can be read as an indication that the angels are actually praising the Virgin’s purity, while at the same time creating a connection between the town of Florence and the Virgin.

One of the angels seems to be looking outside the frame, directing his gaze towards the viewer, as if trying to engage the beholders in the musical performance, inviting them to sing praises to God together with the angels. In general, the depiction of an outward-looking figure, referred to by Michael Baxandall as a *festaiuolo*,aims to involve viewers with the events portrayed. The use of figures such as these in paintings was recommended by Leon Battista Alberti in his *De Pictura* (1435-1436), based on the original *festaiuoli*, who were angelic figures who introduced theatrical plays and who remained on stage to facilitate the engagement of the viewer with the scene.[[586]](#footnote-586) The addition of the figure of the *festaiuolo* in *tondi* such as this seems to have been carefully calculated to prompt youthful viewers to identify with the equally youthful angels, accepting their guidance and their example, exactly as they were encouraged to do in other areas of their devotional practice. Without their wings and halos, these distinctly human angels adopt precisely the identity of the domestic viewers whose minds were most ready to accept their lesson.

A half-size copy of the *Raczynski* *Tondo* exists in the Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg, which unfortunately is now lacking its bottom third. This might be the copy produced by Botticelli’s pupil Biagio, mentioned by Vasari, which the master sold to a citizen on Biagio’s behalf. The existence of this copy testifies to the fact that Botticelli’s workshop would regularly produce replicas of the master’s works, even in different sizes from the original, that were then sold on the open market.[[587]](#footnote-587)

Another of Botticelli’s *tondi,* the *Madonna of the Pomegranate* (fig. 3.20), presents a similar composition to the *Raczynski Tondo*. Here, six singing angels are depicted divided into two choirs of three members each on either side of the Virgin and Child, preparing to sing from a pair of books. In this *tondo*, the Virgin is again portrayed in three-quarter length. The infant Christ holds an open pomegranate, a symbol of his sufferings, while the angels carry pink and red roses and lilies, emblems of the Virgin.[[588]](#footnote-588)

It has been suggested that this work should be identified with the *tondo* commissioned by the magistrate of the Massai di Camera in 1487 for an audience hall (*Sala dell’Udienza*), presumably the one in Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. However, this identification is rather problematic, as it is rooted in Gaetano Milanesi’s reference to a *tondo* commissioned for an audience hall, in his comments on Vasari’s *Lives*, and he does not record the source from which this information was taken. Herbert Percy Horne linked the *tondo* described by Milanesi to the *Madonna of the Pomegranate* as he believed that the *fleur-de-lis* carved on its frame, a symbol of the town of Florence, was an indication of a commission for a public institution.[[589]](#footnote-589) Roberta Olson has located the document that refers to the commission mentioned by Milanesi, but unfortunately this does not provide any further information which would assist with the identification of the *tondo*.[[590]](#footnote-590) If this location is accurate, it would place the painting in a semi-public space accessed by numerous potential viewers. In any case, even if this was the location where Vasari saw the painting, there is no guarantee that this was its original intended setting.[[591]](#footnote-591)

The words “Ave grazia plena” can be read on the straps crossing the chest of the first angel on the left, who, much like the angel in the *Raczynski Tondo*, acts as a *festaiuolo* looking out intently toward the viewer, engaging them in this reverential moment and inviting them to sing along. Lightbown has suggested that viewers would have uttered these words out loud before the picture, although it would seem equally possible that these were intended to be the words that the angels are singing, and these words were indeed sung as part of the ecclesiastical liturgy.[[592]](#footnote-592) The roses that this angel carries refer to the Virgin, who, in the Middle Ages, was called the “rose without thorns” and “mystical rose.”[[593]](#footnote-593) They can, however, also be interpreted as an element with musical resonances, as the connection between the Virgin and roses is celebrated in the antiphon *O florens rosa, mater Domini speciosa* (Oh blooming rose, beautiful mother of God), which circulated both as a chant and in polyphonic settings. In addition, the presence of lilies in this work would have had much the same connotations as has been discussed previously in relation to the *Raczynski Tondo*. The appearance of a second celestial *festaiuolo* on the other side further reinforces the involvement of the viewer in the activity depicted. The painter has again taken the opportunity to show a varied range of poses and attitudes performed by the angels, and while two of them are reading from the book, only one is actually shown as singing.

Six angels singing from two books of music also appear in another *tondo* produced by Botticelli’s workshop between 1488 and 1490, now kept in the Galleria Borghese, Rome(fig. 3.21). Unlike the *Raczynski tondo* and the *Madonna of the Pomegranate*, in which the figures are set against a blue sky, the scene here takes place in a well-defined architectural space, while a small Saint John the Baptist takes part in the scene, kneeling in front of the Virgin and Child. This is possibly the largest of the extant *tondi* from this workshop, and it is likely based on a drawing by the master.[[594]](#footnote-594) While the three angels on the right are caught in the moment of turning a page of the music book, attentively following the music and singing, the angels on the left send their gaze in different directions, and once more a *festaiuolo* engages the gaze of the viewer, in the same way as in the *tondi* discussed previously. Once again, the presence of roses and lilies have connotations which suggest a musical atmosphere.

These three *tondi* have several elements in common. Aside from the compositional setting of two groups of angels singing from books on either side of the main figures, they all include another musical device, in that some of the angels are depicted in the act of tapping the musical time on the shoulders of their fellow singers.

This practice is called *tactus*, or to be more precise “performance *tactus*,” as Ruth DeFord has classified itin her book on this topic, although it was sometimes also known as *mensura* in the fifteenth century.[[595]](#footnote-595) It consists of a repeated physical tapping of the hand or the foot upon another performer or upon a surface, and was used for teaching music to young students. [[596]](#footnote-596) The theorist Giorgio Anselmi from Parma, writing in his *De musica* of 1434, describes *tactus* as a practical means of teaching musical time-keeping: “the singer, neither speeding up the song too much nor drawing the notes out too long, taps the front of his foot, keeping the heel still, or touches his hand to the hand or the back of the student, as equally as possible.”[[597]](#footnote-597) In this way, musical time was communicated among the singers in a non-visual way, consisting of a single, repeated beat.[[598]](#footnote-598)

A similar definition can also be found in an anonymous manuscript from around 1450-75 entitled *Compendium breve artis musicae*, in which the author describes the number of taps to be performed as “fingers”:

Tempus is of two types, namely, perfect and imperfect. Perfect is that which contains the number three in semibreves, and it must be touched with three fingers, that is *tactus*. But imperfect tempus is that which contains the number two in semibreves, and it must be touched with two fingers (my Italics).[[599]](#footnote-599)

Bartolomé Ramos de Pareja, in his *Musica Practica* published in Bologna in 1482, explains that “when the singer wishes to sing correctly and with good measure, he should move his foot or hand or finger, touching in some place, like his pulse.”[[600]](#footnote-600) Ramos de Pareja also related the musical beat to the human pulse, stating that the *mensura* occurs between the two parts of the heartbeat, the diastole and the systole.[[601]](#footnote-601)

This gesture was a common motif in both sacred and secular art, with fingers beating time in the air or on other singers’ shoulders and arms.[[602]](#footnote-602) It is in exactly this way that a music master is depicted in a woodcut decoration from the opening page of Franchino Gaffurius’ treatise *Practica Musicae*, published in 1496 in Milan (fig. 3.22). The teacher touches the shoulder of the two students in front of him, beating time.[[603]](#footnote-603) This is also clearly represented in both religious and secular works of art that are inspired by real practice.

Luca della Robbia made his sculpted figures engage in *tactus* in two different singing scenes in the *Cantoria* for Florence Cathedral between 1432 and 1438 (fig. 3.23).[[604]](#footnote-604) The graceful adolescents and children portrayed here sing, dance, and play musical instruments, illustrating the text of Psalm 150, which is inscribed in the horizontal friezes. In fashioning his singers, the artist was probably inspired by the children who were members of the popular *laudesi* companies, who were regularly involved in the practice of singing Christian hymns and psalms.[[605]](#footnote-605) Describing the side panels in which young boys singing are sculpted, Vasari said that Luca della Robbia’s work was so outstandingly executed that, even when looking up at it from below, he could see “the singers’ throats swelling, the hands of the person directing the music beating on the younger singers’ shoulders, and, in short, various ways of [making] sounds, songs, dances and other delightful acts that the pleasure of music offers.”[[606]](#footnote-606)

The relief with *Boys singing from a Book* shows two different occurrences of *tactus*. The smallest singer taps his foot, in the same way described by Anselmi as “keeping his heel to the ground” (see above), while the second singer from the left places one hand on the shoulder of the companion who stands in front of him, and, a little less visibly, the younger singer in the foreground taps musical time either on his fellow singer’s shoulder or on the choir book. Similarly, in the second relief with *Boys singing from a Scroll*, the three central singers place their hands on each other’s shoulders beating time, in a sort of musical embrace. Even though in this case there are elements of the scene that do not portray actual contemporary practice, such as the fact that the singers are wearing Roman-style clothing and are singing from a scroll rather than a book (which is also presented upside down), the depiction of tactus is still in keeping with fifteenth-century performance practices.[[607]](#footnote-607) Based on this, it seems reasonable to assume that, for contemporary viewers, this was designed to be a recognisable visual signifier that music practice was taking place.

A similarly accurate depiction of Florentine singers can be seen in the frescoes painted by Benozzo Gozzoli in the 1460s, on the left wall of the apse of the *Cappella dei Magi* in the Medici Palace in Florence (today known as Palazzo Medici-Riccardi) (fig. 4.16).[[608]](#footnote-608) Once again, it is possible to identify the *tactus* gesture performed by the hands of several of the musical angels. The singing angels are shown beating musical time either on their companion’s shoulders, or by tapping on their own hands. Furthermore, the artist also provides a clear indication of what these angels might be singing, as their halos are inscribed with the words “Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus”.[[609]](#footnote-609)

*Tactus* is also depicted in an early drawing by Giovannino de Grassi, from the Bergamo sketchbook from the end of the fourteenth century. This portrays a realistic performance with five singers performing from a scroll of music, two of which put their right hands on the right shoulder of the companion next to them (fig. 3.24).[[610]](#footnote-610) The same gesture appears in Fra Filippo Lippi’s *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Uffizi gallery, Florence (1441-47), which shows a crowd of angels sitting to either side of the main scene, among which are some musical angels singing from a book on the right side (fig. 3.25).

Examples of beating musical time can also be found in secular paintings, such as Giorgione’s *The* *Three Ages of Man* (fig. 3.26). The subject of Giorgione’s painting has been debated by critics, and its title has varied from *The* *Three Ages of Man*, to *The* *Three Philosophers*, *The Singing Lesson* and *The Education of the Young Marcus Aurelius*. In this painting a child is portrayed in the centre of the composition, holding a sheet upon which musical notation can be seen, with a young man on his left and an older man on his right. In this painting, the child attentively follows the music, while the young man beside him beats the musical time either on his arm or in mid-air, perhaps uttering the notes for the child’s benefit. The elderly man here acts as a *festaiuolo*, the same popular device used in Botticelli’s religious paintings noted above. Jaynie Anderson convincingly supports the identification of the subject-matter with the musical education of the thirteen-year-old Marcus Aurelius, whose outstanding knowledge of ceremonial songs is described in ancient sources. [[611]](#footnote-611) It is interesting to note that it is possible that the subject depicted may include a moral message directed to a specific audience. Anderson has linked this to the advice that Gabriele Vendramin recorded in his will in 1548 regarding the moral education of his beloved nephews, who would inherit his estate, despite the fact that the painting was commissioned some decades earlier.[[612]](#footnote-612) It would seem that this painting bears the same moralistic purpose, inviting Vendramin’s nephews to undertake a similar virtuous path to that of the future emperor Marcus Aurelius, thus shaping this work as a *speculum principum*.[[613]](#footnote-613) If this is the case, the depiction of *tactus* would be only one part of a bigger scheme promoting musical education for children, in which music is a metaphor for universal harmony.[[614]](#footnote-614) However, it is possible that that this painting is instead a “family portrait” showing a father instructing his son in some elements of music, in the presence and under the supervision of the child’s grandfather, or a music teacher imparting lessons to a child in the presence of his father.

A similar *tactus* gesture is found in *The* *Music Lesson* or *The* *Concert* from around 1535,kept at the National Gallery, London (fig. 3.27). In this, five figures gather in a loosely defined interior space to make music. Although this painting has often been attributed to Titian or Titian’s workshop, the attribution of this painting is still debated, and Nicholas Penny believes this association to be unlikely.[[615]](#footnote-615) In this painting a child holds open a music book and sings accompanied by the music of a *viola da gamba* and a recorder, played by two young men, while a third man stands behind him and beats musical time on the same music book. A woman on the far left of the composition looks out towards the viewer, effectively acting as a *festaiuolo*, engaging the beholders’ gaze and allowing them to be part of this moment. Here, again, a child is being instructed in music through the use of *tactus*.

In both these paintings a man is teaching music to a child by beating musical time with one of his fingers, demonstrating the wide use of *tactus* in music education, as advised by Anselmi and Ramos de Pareja.

All the works of art discussed above provide a sample of what can be found among Renaissance paintings. However, this is certainly not an exhaustive list of all the occurrences of singers (angels or otherwise) beating musical time. In fact, the *tactus* gesture on the shoulder or arm of a fellow singer is such a common device and so easy to find depicted that it almost hides in plain sight. Nevertheless, if viewers are looking to find more examples, they will be surprised to notice its presence in the vast majority of paintings with groups of angels or human beings singing in close proximity. By borrowing methods familiar to elite children from their music lessons, Botticelli’s angels engage once more with these young viewers through their established role as guides and teachers.

Botticelli depicted *tactus* several times when representing musical angels. The same is found, for example, also in a drawing of *Three Angels* (fig. 3.28), in which fingers are beating musical time not only on shoulders, but also directly on the music book.

In light of this, it might be possible to recognise *tactus* in another painting with the *Virgin and Child with two Angels*, that Botticelli produced around 1490, now kept in Vienna (fig. 3.29). This *tondo* was formerly believed to be a product of the workshop. However, Ruben Rebmann believes it to be painted by the master himself, based on a lost original.[[616]](#footnote-616) Scholars have focused mainly on its attribution without attempting to interpret the scene depicted. In this *tondo*, the Virgin and Child are sitting inside a room in front of a window, and are flanked by two angels, one of which is carrying roses, while the other places his right hand on his companion’s shoulder, and raises the index finger of his left hand in a gesture that is not easily explicable, but which I will attempt to decrypt.

At first glance, Botticelli’s angels in this *tondo* do not seem to have any musical characteristics. However, if considered more attentively, one can notice that the angel’s act of placing his right hand on the right shoulder of his companion is remarkably similar to the *tactus* gesture made by musical angels in the examples discussed previously. Interestingly, the angel on the left is very similar to the angel in the same position in the drawing with *Three Angels*, as they both have a hand beating *tactus* on their right shoulder, and are stretching out an arm to hold something. The angel in the drawing, however, is flying with two companions and reaches for a music book that they all hold, which makes them evidently *musical* angels. Although the angel in the Vienna painting is holding pink roses, instead of a book, there is also another similarity between these two artworks that is worth noting. On closer inspection, it is possible to see that the mouths of both the angels in the Vienna painting are in fact slightly open, wide enough for producing sound and singing, in the same way as the angels’ mouths in the drawing. The roses, again, could have contributed to create a musical atmosphere as discussed with regards to the *Raczynski Tondo*.

If the *tactus* gesture and the open lips seem to indicate that we are actually in the presence of musical angels, the gesture that the angel on the right is performing with his left hand is rather unusual. Generally speaking, angels in Florentine art of the fifteenth century usually engage with specific activities that keep their hands occupied. Among these, they can be seen carrying flowers (such as roses, lilies and daisies), holding the Virgin’s mantle or the curtains that frame the scene, or they can even be seen actively participating in the scene by helping the Virgin Mary to carry the young Christ. When they are not engaging in these activities, angels are usually shown in prayer, with joined hands, or with their hands crossed upon their chests. To explain the gesture performed by the angel in the Vienna painting, it is important to remember that *tactus* in the fifteenth century was mainly communicated through touch, in a non-visual way. According to musical treatises, “visual” *tactus*, beating musical time with a visible motion of the hand in the air, downwards and upwards, developed in the sixteenth century, or at least not before the very end of the fifteenth century.[[617]](#footnote-617) Alexander Blachly argues that at the centre of this change was the description of a two-motion *tactus* by Franchinus Gaffurius in his *Practica musicae* of 1496. This treatise was widely influential during the sixteenth century,[[618]](#footnote-618) and was likely based on an ancient visual motion of the hand first described by Saint Augustine in the fifth century that was not in use in the century preceding the publication of Gaffurius’ book.[[619]](#footnote-619) Considering this, it is difficult to link the raised index finger of Botticelli’s angel with the practise of visual *tactus*. Although it is impossible to define whether this finger is showing an upwards or downwards movement, or whether it indicates something entirely different, this can still be compared to a similar gesture performed by one of the musical angels in Filippino Lippi’s *Tondo Corsini* discussed below, painted by Botticelli’s pupil in the preceding decade. Despite the fact that in the latter the indication of *tactus* is much clearer, the two paintings can be associated as they both show performance *tactus*, tapping musical time on the shoulder.

This analysis still leaves some unanswered questions, which are difficult to conclusively resolve. It may be possible that the finger in the air in Botticelli’s *tondo* is an early representation of the visual *tactus* that was codified by Gaffurius a few years later; or that Botticelli, possibly not being very familiar with musical practices, wanted to suggest that the hand with the raised index finger was going to tap on something. This case is not isolated, and in fact the hand of the man engaging with tactus in Giorgione’s *Education of the Young Marcus Aurelius* is also hovering in mid-air (fig. 3.26), as is the hand of one of the angels depicted in Francesco d’Antonio’s organ shutters from Orsanmichele (1429; fig. 3.30).

It is not known who the owner of Botticelli’s painting was. However, a speculative suggestion can be made in that *tondi* were usually owned by members of the upper class, who were likely to have received some musical training as part of their education. As *tactus* was a practice used to teach music to students, it might be possible that a raised index finger could suggest a musical reference as much as a hand on a shoulder to a mind accustomed to this specific musical gesture.

Although it is not possible to argue that the angel’s finger in Botticelli’s painting is connected to visual *tactus*, we can recognise the hand beating time on the shoulder of his companion (tapped *tactus*) and the suggestion of singing given by the open mouths. This leads to the interpretation of the angels not simply as angels adoring the Infant Christ, but as angels whose adoration takes a specifically musical form.[[620]](#footnote-620)

A replica of this *tondo* can be seen in the Wawel Museum, Kraków (fig. 3.31).[[621]](#footnote-621) Here, while the angel’s hand no longer has a raised index finger, his mouth is more clearly open, and his other hand is more obviously beating *tactus* on his companion’s shoulder. Another version produced by Botticelli’s workshop in around 1500 is now in the Musée du Petit-Palais, Avignon (fig. 3.32), although this is a very different copy, as only one angel appears, with no reference to *tactus*.[[622]](#footnote-622)

Singing angels, tactus, music books and Marian symbols are not the only musical elements that one can find in *tondi* produced by Botticelli and his workshop. In fact, the words of one particular song often appear. The *Magnificat Tondo* (ca. 1480-81) in the Uffizi depicts the Virgin Mary as the Queen of Heaven, being crowned by two angels while holding her son. The Virgin is shown writing the words of the *Magnificat*, which she said during her Visitation to her cousin Elizabeth, as recounted in Luke 1:46–55 (fig. 3.33). Three angels hold a book open while the Virgin grasps a quill with her right hand and appears to be about to continue writing. The infant Christ is looking upwards towards his mother and, with one of his hands, seems to be encouraging her to write, while in the other he holds a pomegranate. The large-scale figures are grouped under what seems to be the arch of a window that opens on to a green landscape with a winding path and some hills in the distance, which harmoniously follow the shape of the *tondo*.[[623]](#footnote-623)

Ronald Lightbown has suggested that, as the size of the infant Christ is disproportionately increased to signify his divinity, Botticelli painted the wingless angels as young boys rather than babies, in order to maintain a sense of scale.[[624]](#footnote-624) However, as seen in the *tondi* discussed above, most of the angels painted by Botticelli in his devotional paintings with the Virgin and Child are of the same age as these. In addition, Lightbown has suggested as a possible provenance of this *tondo* a Florentine monastery. He bases his argument on the fact that at the time when the *tondo* was acquired by the then Director of the Uffizi Gallery, Bencivenni-Pelli, from the dealer Ottavio Magherini, a number of works of art from suppressed monasteries were available on the market.[[625]](#footnote-625)

With regards to the figure of the Virgin, Susan Schibanoff has argued that Botticelli painted an “impossible” figure in the act of writing the *Magnificat*, as female writers were at the time rare, with the writing skills of a woman being described as miraculous by some contemporary authors.[[626]](#footnote-626) The Virgin indeed seems to be aided by the Christ child, who touches and guides her wrist. However, the emphasis in this painting is placed more on what is written rather than on the act of writing. Viewers (at least those who could read) would have recognised the words of the *Magnificat* on the right-hand page of the book that the Virgin is writing, while the words of the *Benedictus* are written on the left-hand page. While the *Benedictus* could be seen as an indication that the patron of this *tondo* would be a Florentine, as it was sung by Zacharias in celebration of the birth of his son Saint John the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence, the presence of the *Magnificat* reinforces the description of this painting as a “musical *tondo*”.[[627]](#footnote-627)

In the Gospel of Luke, the Virgin enunciates the words of a hymn on a visit to her cousin Elizabeth, which became known as the *Magnificat* from its incipit, “Magnificat anima mea Dominum”:

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.[[628]](#footnote-628)

During the fifteenth century, the *Magnificat* was understood as a song and sung daily in church at the end of the Vespers service. The *Magnificat* canticle was clearly well-known in Italy throughout the fifteenth-century, as demonstrated by the exceptionally large number of both plainchant and polyphonic settings that have survived in manuscripts throughout Italy – either in its entirety or in sections.[[629]](#footnote-629) Of particular interest with regards to Florence are nine polyphonic settings that are recorded in the manuscript known as Mod B. As previously discussed, this manuscript was presumably compiled by Benoît when he was a singer in the Cathedral; although the last two *Magnificat* appear to have been added to the manuscript after Benoît had finished his work on it.[[630]](#footnote-630) Around the same time that Botticelli’s *Magnificat Tondo* was painted, Tinctoris, in his *De Inventione et Usu Musice*, asserted that, among other hymns, the composition of the *Magnificat* was guided by divine inspiration, and stresses its musical character:

Before he [Christ] was born she most delightfully sang that outstanding canticle *Magnificat*, composed by her … in newness of spirit. For Augustine says this in his sermon on Christmas, ‘Hear how our woman timbrel player will have sung; indeed she says, “My soul doth magnify the Lord.”’[[631]](#footnote-631)

The Virgin, here portrayed in three-quarter length, has her mouth slightly open, as if she is softly singing her song of thanksgiving. Besides attributing musical competency to the Virgin Mary, Tinctoris not only suggests that the Virgin uses this to calm her son, but also that Christ learned music as soon as he was conceived:

Nor must it be passed over in silence that the dear, undefiled Virgin Mary herself … among other gifts of grace, had music imparted to her by divine providence; she undoubtedly both restrained her humanly crying dearest baby Jesus from his wailing and stirred him up to joy with mellifluous songs. To whom indeed, Jesus our sole saviour, upon whom … rested the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, and of knowledge, music (just as also the other kinds of knowledge) was imparted from the instant of his conception.[[632]](#footnote-632)

The tremendous popularity of the *Magnificat* canticle can be linked to the incredible fame that Botticelli’s *tondo* enjoyed at the time of its creation, as is demonstrated by the replicas of it that still survive, all with minimal variation in the number of angels present in the scene or in the colour of their robes.[[633]](#footnote-633)

Roberta Olson has also noted a further musical element in Botticelli’s *Magnificat Tondo*, asthe crown made of stars above the Virgin’s head may refer to her epithet as *Regina caeli* (Queen of Heaven), and therefore be reminiscent of the Marian antiphon with the same title, which was sung between Easter and the Friday after the end of Lent.[[634]](#footnote-634)This text also circulated in Italy in several polyphonic settings, as demonstrated by a number of surviving manuscripts.

William S. A. Dale has suggested that the figures in the *Magnificat Tondo* and the concentric bands which form the ceiling may be references to the way they would be seen through their reflection on a convex mirror.[[635]](#footnote-635) This would reaffirm the status of the Virgin Mary as a *speculum sine macula* (mirror without sin), and imply that the viewer should seek to mirror her musical devotion as emblematised by the *Magnificat* – the text of which could be found in every book of hours.

*Tondi* that included the *Magnificat* chant must have been widely sought after, as at least two additional compositions survive, also produced by Botticelli’s workshop. A book with the *Magnificat* is again held by an angel in a *tondo* with the Virgin and Child, of which several versions survive (fig. 3.34).[[636]](#footnote-636) In this, the Virgin Mary is sitting on a parapet and embraces her son, while an angel and Saint John the Baptist stand behind it. The angel holds the book towards the viewer. Each verse starts with a red capital letter, and can be clearly read, thus, turning the viewer into an active participant of the depicted scene.

In addition to this, in the smaller tondo with the *Madonna of the Pavilion* (ca. 1490), kept in the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana in Milan, a red capital letter M can be clearly seen on the right page of the open book at the centre of the composition (fig. 3.35). Although this is the only readable letter, it can be inferred that this is an indication that we are, in fact, in the presence of a *Magnificat*.[[637]](#footnote-637) Further evidence for this is provided by another *tondo*, in which the letter M also appears on a book, but where a different version also exists in which the word “Magnificat” is legible in full.[[638]](#footnote-638) This *tondo* can possibly be identified as the “very beautiful” (*molto bello*) and “small” (*picciol*) tondo, described by Vasari in the Prior’s chamber of the Camaldolese monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence.[[639]](#footnote-639)

Although the *Magnificat Tondi* do not include singing angels, the angels do in fact take part in and engage with the Virgin Mary’s musical activity; as such, they may be described as musical angels. In these depictions, the Virgin frequently wears a golden star on her robe, which can also be seen as another musical reference, as discussed previously in the *Raczynski Tondo*. While these *tondi* were probably more exemplary for a woman and mother than for young viewers, it is still true that the latter would have been able to recognise themselves in the angels depicted. Often wingless, haloless and dressed in contemporary attire, the musical angels in the *tondi* produced by Botticelli and his workshop can be interpreted as an idealised portrait of Florentine boys belonging to wealthy families.[[640]](#footnote-640) This would have certainly facilitated their identification with these humanised angelic figures.

### 3.2.2 Tondi with Musical Notation

By showing angels singing from choir books and beating musical time, or by inscribing the words of hymns, as in the case of the *Magnificat*, *tondi* were thus being employed to communicate a message to fifteenth-century Florentine viewers, in particular advocating musical activity as a component of devotional practice. In this context, an excellent visual signifier of music is, of course, musical notation. Musical notes, either functionally accurate or approximated, appear written on scrolls or music books in a number of *tondi*. This section will analyse these, as well as investigate how they may have been intended to communicate with their audiences.

The angels in Filippino Lippi’s *Tondo Corsini* (ca. 1482-1483) kept at the Cassa di Risparmio in Florence are depicted in the act of singing from a notated scroll (fig. 3.36). This is the biggest known *tondo*, measuring 173 cm in diameter, and, as such, it might have been one of the “large” *tondi* mentioned in the inventories of the Villa Medici in Careggi, acquired by the Corsini family in the seventeenth century.[[641]](#footnote-641) Jonathan K. Nelson believes it possible that a large *tondo* of excellent quality such as this would have been produced under the patronage of the Medici.[[642]](#footnote-642) A domestic provenance certainly seems likely, although Nelson does also suggest the possibility that it could have been made for the seat of one of the Florentine guilds.[[643]](#footnote-643)

In this *tondo*, the Virgin is portrayed full-length in a well-defined architectural space, while the infant Christ slips from her arms to play with the pink rose petals carried by one of the angels on the left. The main figures stand in front of a decorated niche, while a small figure of Saint John the Baptist appears in a portico in the background, in front of a Leonardesque seascape.[[644]](#footnote-644)Because of the importance given to the roses in the painting, and since rosary beads can be seen hanging from the two *candelabra* carved on the pilasters of the architecture, Roberta Olson has highlighted the fact that this *tondo* could be related to the devotional practice of rosary recitation.[[645]](#footnote-645) To support her argument, Olson reports that the confraternity of the rosary was already active at San Marco in Florence by 1481-1483, at exactly the same time as when this *tondo* was painted.[[646]](#footnote-646) However, the roses could also simply refer to the Virgin Mary, and as such provide a further musical element as discussed previously with reference to Botticelli’s *Madonna of the Pomegranate*.[[647]](#footnote-647) In addition, the seascape in the background can also be interpreted as a reference to the Virgin Mary as a “Star of the Sea”. This hypothesis is supported by the golden star on the Virgin’s dress, which once more, contributes to the musical resonances of the painting, in much the same way as in Botticelli’s *Raczynski Tondo*.[[648]](#footnote-648)

The three musical angels depicted on the right side are singing from a scroll, upon which music notation can be seen. The music, which does not show any written words, is a functional composition for three voices, in a style typical of simple contemporary secular and sacred polyphony, such as the *lauda*. Timothy McGee, who has transcribed it in detail, suggests that this may be the earliest painting to show a piece of secular polyphonic music.[[649]](#footnote-649) The music that appears on the scroll has not been matched with any surviving contemporary composition. Nonetheless, Bonnie Blackburn has noted a resemblance to a secular song which was very popular in Florence at this time, *Fortuna desperata* (Hopeless Fortune), composed around 1476-78 by the Florentine Ser Felice di Giovanni.[[650]](#footnote-650)

At first, the choice of a piece of music entitled *Hopeless Fortune* might seem inappropriate for a religious painting. However, during the Renaissance it was common practice to base devotional hymns and *laude* on secular melodies by fitting new words to an existing tune. Therefore, it seems highly likely that the song depicted here might well be a sacred version of this composition, possibly dedicated to the Virgin, as suggested by Nelson.[[651]](#footnote-651) The *cantasi come* tradition, which takes its name from the rubric written next to the titles of *laude* in surviving documents paired with the incipit of the song whose tune was to be used (*cantasi come* meaning “to be sung as”), was especially widespread in Florence from the late fourteenth to the first half of the sixteenth century.[[652]](#footnote-652) For example, in one of Lorenzo il Magnifico’s *laude*, which reads “Quanto è grande la bellezza/ di te, Vergin santa e pia!/ Ciascun laudi te, Maria,/ ciascun canti in gran dolcezza” (How great is the beauty of you, holy and pious Virgin! Everyone should praise you, Mary; everyone should sing with great sweetness), the rhythm and tune to which it was to be sung is the same as his carnival song *Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne*, which reads “Quant’è bella giovinezza,/ che si fugge tuttavia!/ chi vuol esser lieto, sia:/ di doman non c’è certezza” (How beautiful youth is, which however flees away! Who wants to be happy, should be: Nothing is certain about tomorrow).[[653]](#footnote-653)

In Filippino’s composition, it seems likely that the music was provided by the commissioner of the *tondo*.[[654]](#footnote-654) However, it is known that Filippino Lippi himself had a certain level of interest in music. An inventory of his possessions carried out on 24 April 1504 lists several musical instruments including a large lute (*uno liuto gramde*), five “good” recorders in a bag (*5 zufoli buoni in uno sacchetto*) and a chansonnier (*uno chamzoniere*).[[655]](#footnote-655) Filippino’s interest in music is further demonstrated by other works in which he touches upon musical themes, including either musical angels or musical instruments, such as the *Portrait of a Musician* now at the National Gallery of Ireland in Dublin (1483-1485, fig. 3.37). In this painting, which Nelson believes to be the earliest known portrait of a figure with a musical instrument, a man holds a *lira da braccio* and seems to be adjusting the tension of the strings by turning the pegs, while resting the bow on his left arm.[[656]](#footnote-656) On a shelf on the left are some books, a sheet (perhaps of music), a small lute, a second *lira da braccio* with its bow, and two recorders. It is likely that Filippino based these depicted instruments on his own, which he probably painted from life.[[657]](#footnote-657) For this reason, it is possible that Filippino himself could be the author of the musical composition in the *Tondo Corsini*, as suggested by McGee. However, Nelson suggests that, due to the fact that the composition is not particularly advanced, it is probably copied from a source provided to the artist.[[658]](#footnote-658)

Although the scroll of music in the *Tondo Corsini* does not present any text, the angels are clearly singing. If the Careggi provenance of this *tondo* proves to be correct, one can imagine the interplay between Filippino’s angels’ singing mouths and two marble heads of singing angels in round frames, now at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, that are believed to have come from the private chapel of the same Medicean villa (figs. 3.38-3.39).

In the *Tondo Corsini* the painter has only identified two of the parts of the composition with particular vocal ranges, using the conventional labels “Tenor” and “Contra”. The absence of text may refer to the fact that singers would learn a text by memory before performing, so the musicians would already know the words. Timothy McGee, on the other hand, suggests that the painting depicts a separate performance practice in which a song was vocalised without text.[[659]](#footnote-659) In his *Musica Practica*, first printed in 1496, Franchino Gafori describes three methods for practicing singing, the second of which involves “uttering only the sounds and pitches while omitting entirely the letters, syllables, and words, a practice which a singer easily follows”.[[660]](#footnote-660) This description highlights the fact that vocalisation without text was a type of pedagogical practice that would allow students to learn gradually. Perhaps the angels are demonstrating this common pedagogical technique for the benefit of their young music students. In addition to this, the angel in an orange robe is using *tactus*,beating musical time with his hand, which was another device used for teaching music to young students as described above. Filippino’s attentiveness to the *tactus* hand is further demonstrated by a study drawing kept at the British Museum (fig. 3.40).

In the *Tondo Corsini*, the musical angels can even be considered the protagonists of the scene. The regression of the black and white square floor tiles constructs the perspective in a way that directs the gaze of the viewer towardsthe musical angels, making them the focal point of the composition, an effect that was surely planned and intended by the artist.[[661]](#footnote-661) Additionally, the musical angels are the only figures who are kneeling in the painting, bringing them closer to the viewer and allowing a more detailed inspection of their musical activity. Amy Gillette notes that this attitude is quite commonly found in depictions of musical angels from the fourteenth century, which she believes were modelled on lay confraternities’ practices of singing and making music in sacred plays and before paintings of the Virgin.[[662]](#footnote-662) That Filippino was acquainted with sacred and secular plays and that he reused some of their most characteristic theatrical elements in his paintings has already been demonstrated by Emanuel Winternitz, in his analysis of the musical instruments and the composition of Filippino’s *Adoration of the Golden Calf*.[[663]](#footnote-663) Hence, Filippino’s kneeling angels in the *Tondo Corsini* are likely to be closely related to singing youths taking part in *sacre rappresentazioni* and processions, while at the same time they seem to be communicating with their viewers in several different ways: by engaging their gaze and inviting them to contribute to the singing of hymns, and by showing devices such as *tactus* or musical notation to inspire musical participation.

Filippino’s *tondo* must have been quite popular, as at least two further versions still exist. A copy by the Master of the Holden Tondo from 1485-1490 is now kept at the Courtauld Gallery in London (fig. 3.41). This version has an almost identical composition to the *Tondo Corsini* although the scene is placed in a different architectural setting, includes only three angels instead of five, and does not seem to have musical notation written on the scroll.[[664]](#footnote-664) This could indicate that the artist who copied Filippino’s *tondo* was not familiar with musical notation himself. A rectangular copy by Filippino’s follower Vincenzo Frediani from Lucca also survives, although its location is currently unknown. In this version, which has one fewer angel and does not include Saint John the Baptist, the artist replaced the shifted perspective for a central one, so the musical angels are no longer the main focus.[[665]](#footnote-665)

For some time, Filippino was thought to have painted another *tondo* in which an angel holds a book with musical notation, now kept in the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in Glasgow. However, this *tondo* with the Virgin and Child, the young Saint John the Baptist and two angels is now universally believed to be Raffaellino del Garbo’s work.[[666]](#footnote-666) This was probably painted by a young Raffaellino while he was still working in Filippino’s workshop (fig. 3.42).[[667]](#footnote-667) The Virgin is portrayed half-length, holding the Child who is standing on a balustrade. In this painting, the infant Christ is seen embracing the young Saint John, who kneels before him, which was one of the subjects recommended by Giovanni Dominici as being especially appropriate for children, corresponding exactly to his advice to show depictions with “Jesus and [Saint John] the Baptist … in youth, joined together.”[[668]](#footnote-668) This motif is most likely based on a similar one on another *tondo* by Filippino, which is now in the Cleveland Museum of Art.[[669]](#footnote-669)

An angel on the right holds a young Saint John, while another angel stands behind the Virgin on the left, presenting an open book of music closer to the viewer’s eye level.[[670]](#footnote-670) This angel, who makes no gestures relating to musical performance, is clearly “showing” the book to the viewers, encouraging them to read. The three parts of the composition are labelled conventionally “S[uperius],” “C[ontra],” and “T[enor],” in a layout similar to that used in contemporary chansonniers and three-voice motets.[[671]](#footnote-671) The proportions of the book also seem to correspond to the latter; chansonniers, in contrast, were generally smaller. Surprisingly, the music depicted is not a real composition, but only an exceptionally convincing impression of notation. Musicologists such as Kenneth Elliot (1965),[[672]](#footnote-672) Bonnie Blackburn (1998),[[673]](#footnote-673) and Tim Shephard (2016)[[674]](#footnote-674) agree on the fact that the music is not performable. Blackburn furthermore proposes that the same person who painted the music in this painting, also painted the musical notation in Filippino Lippi *tondo* discussed above.[[675]](#footnote-675) However, the fact that the notation in Filippino’s work is very close to a real composition suggests another interpretation.

With regards to Raffaellino’s *tondo*, one might easily conclude that it is an approximate copy of a real music book, except for the fact that the comparable contemporary manuscripts have more staves on each page: the book in the painting has only five on the left page and four on the right. Whatever the artist’s original intention, the outcome is to inspire in the viewer not a specific song of praise, but rather a musical frame of mind – a devotional state that is musical in character, but has no sounding outcome.[[676]](#footnote-676) It seems possible that the painter had painted the book first, leaving the pages blank for the notation to be added later. However, when he came to paint the staves and the notation, the space was not large enough to transcribe them correctly. Bearing this observation in mind, the fact that the angel is evidently showing the music book to the beholders in a way that seems to be intended to be legible could be construed as puzzling. An explanation can be provided by the hypotheses that the music shown in this type of painting had an intention other than to be readable, but rather to provide a recognisable musical reference for viewers to look at, in order to inspire musical thoughts.

In Filippino Lippi and Raffaellino del Garbo’s *tondi*, the musical references are the protagonists of the scene. In the first,the kneeling musical angels are the focal point to which the gaze of the viewer is directed by the perspective of the image. Similarly, the angel on the left in the *tondo* attributed to Raffaellino holds the music book closer to the viewer’s eye-level. *Tondi* were usually placed above eye-level, as discussed earlier. In this specific case the intended viewing height is indicated by the gaze of the Virgin, which is directed downwards to her Child.[[677]](#footnote-677) This means that the music is placed at a height that would make the viewer’s inspection possible. Such straightforward and purposeful strategies to highlight angelic musicianship, which draw and focus the viewer’s attention, serve to construct the exemplary and guiding roles of the angels around their musical activities. This presents these specifically as the aspects of the angelic nature that are most obviously available, and most appropriate for imitation. Reflecting themselves in these devotional “mirrors,” youthful viewers could hardly help but see connections between the singing of these young, “human” angels, and their own experience of devotional music-making – which in some cases could even have been undertaken whilst dressed as angels in processional and theatrical contexts.

As discussed in previous chapters, the use of images as *exempla* with a pedagogical purpose was a well-established practice, as children were considered to be highly impressionable and easily influenced by them. Furthermore, they were also accustomed to imitating musical angels through performance. Keeping this in mind, it is possible to read the musical angels in the *tondi* discussed here as a dual pedagogical tool. On the one hand, the angels depicted directly communicate with the viewer, while on the other hand they tempt children to follow their example by effectively “teaching” them about the devotional importance of musical activity.

Both Filippino and Raffaellino touched upon musical themes in other *tondi*. They refer to the *Magnificat* respectively in the Cleveland *tondo* (fig. 3.43) and in a *tondo* now in the Museo e Gallerie Nazionali di Capodimonte in Naples (fig. 3.44), although in these no angels are included in the scene. While the book in Filippino’s *tondo* contains a reference to the sung or recited performance of the *Magnificat* during Vespers through the word “Vesperi”, which is one of the few legible words written upon it, the text in Raffaellino’s *tondo* actually starts with the typical red capital letter M, so often found in Botticelli’s *tondi*. Both books in these works by Filippino and Raffaellino are depicted in a way that would allow the viewer to engage with their content.[[678]](#footnote-678) In addition, Raffaellino produced another completely different *tondo*, now kept in Berlin, in which angels play musical instruments, which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Raffaello Botticini’s workshop is also known to have produced at least one *tondo* that included musical notation. Roberta Olson has documented a surviving *tondo* with the *Virgin and Child with the Young Saint John the Baptist and Angels* produced by Botticini’s workshop, possibly with Giuliano Bugiardini, in which the two angels flanking the Virgin and Child hold notated scrolls (fig. 3.45).[[679]](#footnote-679) Unfortunately, the current location of this *tondo* is unknown and, as such, it has not been possible to analyse the musical notation more closely. In another example paintedby Bugiardini, now in the San Diego Museum of Art, two angels are singing from a book on the left side, while two further angels are reading or singing from a sheet, but in this case it is difficult to discern whether the signs on the sheet are letters or musical notes.

These were not the only artists in fifteenth-century Florence to include musical notation in their *tondi*. Another example that is worth noting is a *tondo* by Piero di Cosimo, currently in the Art Institute of Chicago (fig. 3.46). Here, restoration work has revealed musical notation in the book held by a young girl. In this *tondo*, the Virgin and Child are accompanied by the young Saint John the Baptist, two angels and a young female saint who has been identified as Saint Cecilia, patron of music.[[680]](#footnote-680) Along with the theme of angelic music designed to inspire young minds, this painting also seems to be intended to promote female domestic devotion, as Saint Cecilia is clearly depicted as a young girl from a wealthy family.

When considering all of these Florentine *tondi*, there is one particular recurring subject that is consistently accompanied by angels singing from book or scrolls. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this is the Nativity scene, presented by angels who are usually in the sky, and singing the hymn of praise “Gloria in excelsis Deo”, as described in the Gospel of Luke. As seen in Chapter 2.2, the words and notation of the *Gloria*, which was sung as part of the Latin Mass, often appear in works of art of various types, including panels and glazed terracotta works which were typical of the Della Robbias’ workshop.[[681]](#footnote-681)

A *tondo* with the *Holy Family with the Young St John and a Choir of Angels* by the Master of the Borghese Tondo, the location of which is currently unknown, includes a scroll held horizontally by two flying angels with the words “Gloria in excelsis deo,” along with accurate musical notation associated with its plainchant setting (fig. 3.47).[[682]](#footnote-682) A similar scroll is held by three singing angels in Mariotto Albertinelli’s *Adoration*, kept in the Galleria Palatina at Palazzo Pitti in Florence (fig. 3.48). Here, the words “[G]loria in eccelsis deo” appear in red letters at the bottom of the scroll, while the space above this is blank. This might suggest that the painter had left space for notation and for the capital initial letter G to be inserted but was never able to complete the painting. It is likely that the artist intended this scroll to appear similar to one outlined in a preparatory study, now kept in the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. In this pen drawing, the artist did include both the words and notation.[[683]](#footnote-683) The musical notation in both the Master of the Borghese Tondo and in Mariotto’s *tondi* is identical to that found in the works discussed in Chapter 2.2 with regards to the *Gloria*.

Apart from painted *tondi*, other circular works of art in different media include only the words of the *Gloria*. In a glazed terracotta by Luca della Robbia in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, known as the *Foulc Adoration* (fig. 3.49), one of the four angels depicted holds a thin scroll showing the *Gloria* with one hand, while letting the other end flap towards the figure of the Infant Christ.[[684]](#footnote-684) In another example, a small circular niello print with the *Nativity* by an anonymous artist shows a long scroll with the words “Gloria in excelsis deo” that wraps around the angels. A second scroll swirls its way downwards from a corner where an angel is announcing the birth of Christ to the shepherds, this time inscribed with the words “evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum” (fig, 3.50). In both scrolls, the words appear reversed, as they are the negative of their printing plate.

*Gloria* angels could also appear as an independent subject, rather than being an auxiliary element in Nativity scenes. A maiolica dish produced around 1490 in Faenza kept at the Musée du Louvre in Paris is decorated with three standing angels, who hold a scroll with the words “Gloria in acellis deo” [sic], a slight misspelling of the incipit of the *Gloria* (fig. 3.51). These angels, even though they have been removed from the context in which they originated, still convey their devotional message, looking outwards in order to communicate directly with the viewer.

Based on this, and considering the frequency with which the words and the musical notation of the *Gloria* also appear in non-circular art, it seems likely that a large number of the Nativity scenes depicted in *tondi* that have not survived would also have included some musical angels chanting the *Gloria*. Furthermore, the link between the scene of the birth of Christ and angelic music was so apparent that viewers would likely have been able to make that connection even in those cases when the music did not explicitly appear. The *Gloria* seems indeed to be implicit in Piero di Cosimo’s *tondo* with the *Holy Family with the young St John the Baptist and angels* in the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden (fig. 3.52). In this, two angels are sitting on the top of a rock, positioned above the Holy Family, and are singing from a book, leaving little doubt as to what their song might be.[[685]](#footnote-685)

The link between paintings with the Nativity scene and the music of the *Gloria* would have been strengthened by the number of sacred plays on the theme of the Nativity that took place from the end of the fourteenth until the sixteenth century, most of which would have included a musical element. In a *Rappresentazione della Natività di Cristo*,probably from the late fifteenth century, the angels in the manger sing a *lauda* written by the Jesuate Don Antonio da Siena:

With rejoicing hearts/ we praise Jesus, redeemer of the world./ Glory be in Heaven to the high majesty/ [and] perfect and true peace on Earth/ to people of goodwill … We glorify you, giving thanks/ for your great and infinite Glory … You are king of all glory/ omnipotent, eternal creator.[[686]](#footnote-686)

This would have helped children, who usually played the role of angels in sacred plays, to identify themselves with the young angels that are seen singing the *Gloria* in these *tondi*.

From studying the examples in this section, it is apparent that musical notation would have usually been located in a prominent position, designed to catch the viewer’s attention. Either written on scrolls or on books, musical notation was placed in the lowest section of the *tondi*, allowing for closer inspection, or depicted on a horizontal scroll above the scene, much like a title. In either case, notation in *tondi* is usually connected to childlike musical angels, and this would have served to make these characters particularly compelling to younger viewers. Considering the various moralistic connotations of music and musical practice discussed in previous chapters, these musical elements, in association with relatable angelic figures, suggest that these were carefully placed and considered to help provide children with virtuous exempla within their day-to-day environment.

3.3 Tondi with Angels Playing Musical Instruments

Having discussed the presence of music in *tondi* in the form of both singing and written musical notation, it remains to analyse another category of paintings with a musical subject: the *tondi* which include young angels in the act of playing musical instruments. Among the musical instruments found in *tondi*, the lute seems to have been the most popular, followed by other stringed instruments such as the viella or *lira da braccio* and the rebec. Wind instruments are also present, although in smaller numbers. Thus far, I have not found any *tondo* showing percussion instruments of any kind, which, on the contrary, certainly were present on the reverse of a number of *deschi da parto*, as noted above*.*

In most cases, the angelic musiciansincluded in these *tondi* are depicted in the lowest section of the composition, distributed to either side of the Virgin and Child. Their number is usually smaller than that of the singing angels discussed above, being either a single angel or a pair.

As seen above, these *tondi* were also made by painters who produced work destined for domestic environments, such as Piero di Cosimo, who produced a very large number of such paintings. As Vasari notes: “[He] made many pictures for many citizens in Florence, scattered among their houses, and I have seen a number of these which were very good.” [[687]](#footnote-687) Of several *tondi* attributed to him that have survived, a number comprise angels playing musical instruments. In a *tondo* produced around 1500, now kept in the Galleria Moretti in Florence, the Virgin is sitting on a rock, holding the Child who is playing with a little goldfinch, which is a symbol of the Passion (fig. 3.53).[[688]](#footnote-688) Two angels on the left, one of which is seen from his back, are singing from a book, while a third angel on the right is depicted in profile playing a lute. This kneeling angel, who rotates his head to meet the viewers’ gaze, acting as a *festaiuolo*, might be reminiscent of the music-making children who participated in *sacre rappresentazioni*. It is known that Piero di Cosimo was himself involved in the preparation of *feste* and was likely inspired by the scene that he witnessed.[[689]](#footnote-689)

Two almost identical *tondi* with the *Adoration of the Child* were also produced by Piero in the early sixteenth century, now in the Galleria Borghese in Rome and in the Hermitage Museum (figs. 3.54-3.55).[[690]](#footnote-690) Kristina Hermann Fiore has noted how the painter demonstrated his creativity in this painting, in which the scene of the Nativity in the manger is depicted in an innovative way.[[691]](#footnote-691) The Virgin and the young Saint John the Baptist kneel in adoration on the left side, while the Infant Christ is sitting on a cloth, resting his back against a sack and holding a cross made of reeds. The cross and the transparent veil that covers the Child refer to his Passion, while the golden star on the Virgin’s mantle reminds the viewer that she is the “Star of the Sea,” adding a further musical element to the painting, as discussed previously for Botticelli’s *Raczyinski Tondo*. A door in the centre of the scene reveals a rural landscape with Joseph grazing the donkey and the ox, while the Magi make their way to welcome the new born Christ into the world. Two angels are playing trumpets or long pipes on the right side, counterbalancing the composition. One of these is in the act of playing his trumpet, while the second is pausing.

Another *tondo* by Piero di Cosimo also includes angels playing musical instruments. This is a round version of a rectangular panel that is in the Cini collection in Venice, from the first half of the sixteenth century.[[692]](#footnote-692) The shape is not the only modification to the painting: a trumpeting angel (indebted to the one that Piero di Cosimo painted in the *tondo* discussed previously) has been added on the left-hand side (fig. 3.56).[[693]](#footnote-693) In this *tondo* the Virgin Mary is sitting on a rock, with the Child on her lap. The Infant Christ is embracing a kneeling angel and is grasping the bow of the rebec that the angel is playing. A third musical angel is singing from a book, behind a rock that functions as a parapet. Dennis Geronimus has observed that the painter must have studied a real rebec to be able to reproduce it with such great accuracy in the original rectangular panel.[[694]](#footnote-694)

In another example, a *tondo* produced in the workshop of Lorenzo di Credi, sometimes attributed to a painter called Tommaso, the Virgin is sitting on a throne, holding the child on her lap, while a young Saint John the Baptist kneels in adoration on the steps that form the base of the throne (fig. 3.57).[[695]](#footnote-695) The Virgin and Child are flanked by two musical angels, one playing the lute on the left and one playing the viella or the *lira da braccio* on the right. The *tondi* painted by Lorenzo and his workshop must have been widely appreciated and sought after in his time, if, as Vasari recounts, one of his early *tondi* with the Virgin was sent out to the King of Spain.[[696]](#footnote-696)

A lute-player also accompanies the Virgin and Child in a *tondo* by Biagio di Antonio Tucci, as well as in another produced by Perugino’s circle, both of which are now in the Galleria Franchetti at the Ca’ d’Oro in Venice (figs. 3.58-3.59). In both works, the Virgin is portrayed three-quarter length, but, while in Biagio’s *tondo* she is standing in an interior in front of an altar under an arch, the *tondo* by Perugino’s circle is set instead in an outdoor space. In Biagio’s, the Infant Christ is standing with his legs on one of his mother’s knees, while on their right, the young Saint John the Baptist is standing in front of a window which opens onto a landscape of a town and a river, and is drawing his hands to his chest in reverence. In the *tondo* by Perugino’s circle, a younger Saint John the Baptist stands quietly behind the infant Jesus, who, in turn, looks back as if attempting to see him. In both *tondi*, a single musical angel is portrayed standing behind the Virgin, creating a pleasant musical background that does not seem to disturb the children, but rather harmonises the scene.

In Raffaellino del Garbo’s *tondo* in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin (1496-1498), the Virgin and Child, who stand in front of a balustrade with a verdant landscape in the background, are accompanied by an angel on each side, who are respectively playing a lyre and a syrinx (fig. 3.60).[[697]](#footnote-697) This latter instrument, played by the angel on the right, has some holes that are not in keeping with the real appearance of the instrument, possibly due to the painter’s lack of familiarity with the instrument itself.

The combination of these two musical instruments seems to be unusual for this type of painting. These instruments are more frequently found in secular art, and especially in depictions of the musical contest between the Greek god Apollo (who played the lyre) and the sylvan Pan (who played a panpipe), recounted in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. The contest happened in the presence of the mountain Tmolus, who acted as a judge and declared Apollo the winner, and of King Midas, who, on the contrary, praised Pan’s music, and for this reason was given ass’ ears as punishment by Apollo.[[698]](#footnote-698) This episode can be interpreted from a moralistic point of view, as an opportunity to contemplate the difference between the celestial music produced by Apollo in contrast to the earthly music played by Pan. It can also be associated with the belief that only the study and practice of certain types of music was beneficial in terms of moral education, as discussed in detail in Chapter 1.5.[[699]](#footnote-699) In this context, Tmolus is sometimes substituted in the role of judge by Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom, as suggested in Cristoforo Landino’s commentary to Canto XX of Dante’s *Inferno* (1481). Changing the central character to a goddess of wisdom serves to further highlight the prudence of choosing the celestial music played by the god Apollo, over earthly pleasures.

At first glance it seems that Raffaellino is not referencing this myth in this *tondo*, as this is neither a contest, nor does the Virgin seem to be judging the music. However, the quality of wisdom was also a characteristic of the Virgin Mary, who was herself considered to be a personification of this virtue. Perhaps even more strikingly, both Minerva and the Virgin Mary both share an association with the virtue of chastity, so much so that Minerva even became a symbol of the Virgin Mary during the Middle Ages.[[700]](#footnote-700) In Angelo Poliziano’s *Giostra* of 1475, Giuliano de’ Medici, having fallen victim to Cupid’s amorous arrows, invokes the help of Minerva, addressing her as *Vergine santa* (Holy Virgin), an epithet that is usually connected with the Virgin Mary.[[701]](#footnote-701) The identities of these two figures also seem to demonstrate significant convergence in the case of a painting attributed to Francesco Francia or to Garofalo, now in Dresden (fig. 3.61). Here, Minerva is shown holding her spear, alongside the god of the sea, Neptune. However, an engraving from the eighteenth century shows that the goddess originally had a halo and was holding a cross, attributes that were removed – the cross being transformed into the spear – following restoration work carried out in the nineteenth century.[[702]](#footnote-702) The text accompanying the engraving identifies the subject of this painting as an allegory in which a personification of Religion is inviting the Prince Andrea Doria, in the guise of the god Neptune, to be devoted to her.[[703]](#footnote-703) In this example, the Religion or Virgin Mary figure was accompanied by the mythological figure of Neptune, which led to her transformation into Minerva.

It has been noted previously that Florence was believed to have a special association with the Virgin Mary (as also demonstrated by the dedication of the Cathedral to Santa Maria del Fiore, Saint Mary of the Flower, the “flower” being a symbol of Florence). However, the goddess Minerva was also considered a patron of the town, marking this as a further characteristic shared by the two figures.[[704]](#footnote-704) Furthermore, the tree in the background behind the Virgin in Raffaellino’s *tondo* can be taken to be a stylised olive tree, which recalls the olive branch, which was a typical attribute of Minerva. In light of this, it is possible to suggest that Raffaellino’s *tondo* was based on this classical subject of a musical contest, but in this case charged with Christian significance.

Considered as a metaphor for the exercise of moral judgement, this painting can be compared to other paintings in which the *Judgement of Midas* is depicted. The Venetian painter Cima da Conegliano touched upon this topic on two occasions, the earliest of which - dates from around 1505-1510 and, like Raffaellino’s painting, is also a *tondo* (fig. 3.62). Although Pan is in this case depicted with a stringed instrument rather than his traditional syrinx, the narrative is unaffected. This *tondo*, which was most likely kept in a domestic location, would have again acted as a “mirror,” which viewers could use for their self-improvement. Here, the figure of the music-making Apollo is depicted as a handsome young boy, the figure of which could have acted in the same way as musical angels in the previously discussed *tondi*, providing a model to emulate and a source of identification for young members of the household. Cima returned to this topic in another of his works a few years later, around 1513-1517. In this later panel, Midas is portrayed as a young man, facing the challenge of passing musical and moral judgment between the rustic music played by Pan – who is here again depicted playing a *lira da braccio* instead of his pipe – and the heavenly music played by Apollo (fig. 3.63).[[705]](#footnote-705) If, as Peter Humphrey has suggested, this panel formed part of a decorative chest, this would likely place Cima’s panel in a bedroom, where it would have acted as an example for the viewers to exercise careful musical, and therefore moral, judgement in much the same way as the *cassoni* discussed previously in Chapter 1.4.[[706]](#footnote-706) The story of King Midas would have certainly been familiar to contemporary Florentines, and this character was also depicted by Botticelli in his painting *Calumny of Apelles* (1494-1495).

In light of this, it is possible that Raffaellino, aware of the moral connotations associated with this contest, wanted to remind the viewers of the importance of practising sound judgement in life. This idea is also closely related to another mythological episode, namely the choice the hero Hercules had to make between a tortuous but virtuous path, and an easy one which was filled with vice.[[707]](#footnote-707) This moralistic subject was also depicted in other pieces of domestic art, such as in a *desco da parto* by the Sienese painter Girolamo di Benvenuto (fig. 3.64).

Raffaellino’s *tondo* seems to be imbibed with moralistic connotations, resulting in a painting that appears intended to provide the beholder with a reminder of the virtuous *exempla* that they should follow by preferring the celestial music, under the watchful gaze of the Virgin, who acts as the arbiter of this choice. As discussed earlier in this chapter, children and adolescents were often encouraged to choose a virtuous path in opposition to a sinful one when presented with a choice to be made, emblematised by the shape of the letter Y, and so would likely have also been reminded of this when they encountered this *tondo*. Due to the presence of relatable, child-like angelic figures, the *tondi* discussed in this section seem to have been calculated to have a significant impact on their viewers, but in particular on the children who beheld them.

*Tondi* played a unique role in the domestic environment, being objects of devotion that would have been involved in some of the most personal aspects of spirituality. They served as mirrors that, instead of reflecting reality, showed an idealised, aspirational world, filled with virtuous celestial figures whose qualities the residents of these spaces were encouraged to attempt to realise in themselves. These characters are specifically tailored to particular audiences, as is clearly evident in the case of the Virgin, whose image would be crafted to provide a flawless example of virtuous womanhood and motherhood.

Of course, *tondi* would not only have had an influence on the adults in the household. Many aspects of their composition and subjects seem to be crafted to ensure that they would conform to widely held beliefs about the education and development of children. This is clearly demonstrated by the angels who accompanied the Virgin and Child in these compositions, and who provided role models that the children of the household could imitate. As such, these angels, child-like in their features, perform a distinctly pedagogic function in the domestic environment, designed to impart good morals and character. They were often musical in nature, and their use of instructional devices such as *tactus* would have been recognisable to children who would know these from their own lessons, and which would have helped to inspire an educational disposition in them.

These domestic companions were among the first that children would have during their most formative years. Thus, *tondi* provide a unique synthesis of a mirror-like shape, imitable figures and music, placed within a domestic setting, which made them especially compelling educational tools. As such, the examples above serve to demonstrate the ways in which many of the ideas discussed in previous chapters would have been put into practice, in order to assist with teaching moral lessons to children.

# 4. Beyond Tondi: Musical Angels in Other Domestic Art and Decorated Furniture

As demonstrated in the previous chapters, a wide range of evidence suggests that *tondi* were often used to decorate domestic settings. They provide a rich source of examples of musical angels and divine figures, which are readily interpreted as providing models for the viewers’ religious and ethical development. The previous chapter has looked at various examples of these to demonstrate ways in which they were used as *exempla* for the residents of the house to imitate, and in particular the way in which they appear to utilise a range of widely known methods with the intention of assisting with moral education and promoting virtuous behaviour, especially that of children.

However, *tondi* were far from being the only type of object found in the domestic environment that was decorated in this way. Angels, both musical and otherwise, could be found in images adorning a range of objects across several different media, including wall-hangings, murals and decorated furniture. It is important to appreciate the ubiquity of these types of images, and to understand how often people of all ages, but in particular children, would have come into contact with them.

By analysing some examples of musical angels in domestic ornamentation, the following chapter will provide a brief overview of a number of types of decorated objects and media that were commonly present in the Renaissance home. The first section of this chapter will focus on musical angels in paintings and reproducible media. The popularity of domestic devotional images was closely linked to a widespread desire to engage with personal piety, rather than reflecting an investment in the authorship of a famous master. Accordingly, replicas and copies of original compositions were sold to the mass-market on an unprecedentedly large scale – as was the case, for example, for many of Botticelli’s works.[[708]](#footnote-708) This also applies, perhaps to an even greater degree, to *terracotta* reliefs, as they could be cast multiple times from the same mould, and so were even more easily reproduced in greater numbers.[[709]](#footnote-709)

The second section discusses musical angels in the context of the Magi chapel in Palazzo Medici, the construction and decoration of which are fairly well documented. While very few households would have had such a dedicated space, this serves to demonstrate how such spaces could have been charged with the meanings and messages of musical angels when no expense or extravagance was too great.

Finally, the third section discusses musical angels in domestic furniture, and considers the impact of multi-purpose items in the Florentine household.

4.1 Musical Angels in Paintings and Reproducible Media

As shown by the large number of surviving works of art, as well as by archival documents such as inventories and account books compiled either by the artist or by the buyer, images of the Virgin and Child were the most commonplace depictions in the Renaissance home. These images, which commonly featured groups of angels, were so popular that to cater to the huge demand for them, paintings with the Virgin and Child were not only produced locally, but also imported, as demonstrated by an order of seven hundreds icons from Crete placed by Venetian merchants in 1499.[[710]](#footnote-710) Depictions of the Virgin and Child were produced in a wide variety of formats and media, to suit the needs of a diversified market, and provided both a focus for domestic devotional practices and role models to imitate. As one might expect, it is in the context of these devotional depictions that musical angels appear most often in the domestic environment.

Some families possessed the means and the inclination to provide a dedicated space in the home set aside specifically for personal devotion. Such a space might take the form of a permanent private chapel – which will be the focus of the next section – or alternatively a small, portable altar in the form of a consecrated stone could be procured, provided that the owner was granted a papal or episcopal license. However, it seems that these instances were relatively rare, and in most dwellings sacred and secular spaces would not have been clearly defined.[[711]](#footnote-711) *Camere* (bedrooms) were commonly decorated with works of art that were designed to perform both a devotional and a didactic function. There is also evidence that such exemplary devotional images were displayed in children’s bedrooms. The bedroom of the ten-year-old Giovannino, son of Giovanni di Francesco Tornabuoni, for example, was furnished with images of the Virgin Mary and a tabernacle.[[712]](#footnote-712) Such images could, of course, include depictions of angels, as exemplified in the case of the bedroom of Bartolomeo Sassetti’s son, for which the boy’s father commissioned an artist named Lorenzo to paint a “Nostra Donna col Banbino in collo e uno angelo da llato” (Our Lady with the Child at her neck and an angel at her side).[[713]](#footnote-713) As suggested by Stephanie R. Miller, the decoration of children’s bedrooms was instrumental in the delivery of moral lessons.[[714]](#footnote-714)

A small lunette with a similar depiction of the Virgin with the Child and two angels by Pesellino could be found in the room of “Monsignore,” according to the inventory of Lorenzo il Magnifico’s possessions carried out following his death, in 1492.[[715]](#footnote-715) The designation of this chamber indicates that it was originally occupied by Lorenzo’s son Giovanni, who was later to become Pope Leo X. However, at the time that the inventory was taken another of Lorenzo’s sons, the then thirteen-year old Giuliano, was residing in these quarters, as his older brother had recently been consecrated as cardinal and had left the household.[[716]](#footnote-716) The fact that this room was occupied first by the young Giovanni, and then by Giuliano, clearly indicates that these subjects were deemed appropriate for a space inhabited by children, and, as well as being the focus of their personal devotional activities, would have provided them with a source of positive moral examples.

Sacred spaces within the house, either officially consecrated by a member of the clergy or otherwise, were usually adorned by young members of the household. Giovanni Dominici encouraged the readers of his manual to let their children interact with these devotional arrangements, as the priest would in a Church:

Create a little altar or two in your house, dedicated to the Saviour, whose feast is every Sunday. Put three or four different images there, and let him [your son] or others [with him] be their acolytes, and show them how they should adorn this little chapel in different ways on each feast day. Sometimes, they will busy themselves making garlands of flowers or plants and crown Jesus [with these], adore the painted [image of the] Virgin Mary, make little candles … sing as they can, [or] attempt to say Mass.[[717]](#footnote-717)

This practice seems to have been fairly common, as we know that as a young boy even Gerolamo Savonarola entertained himself by setting up small altars.[[718]](#footnote-718) Girls were also invited to engage with this type of activity. The manual for girls entitled *Decor Puellarum* (On the Custom of Girls), published in Venice in 1471, recommends that girls “make an altar, and devote yourself to adorning it with beautiful and devout images, and with lovely decorations made out of embroidery, or else place some vases on it.”[[719]](#footnote-719) These practices would have likely served to encourage children to develop an interest in Christian practices, shaping play time as an educational activity.

While it is apparent that religious imagery, and angels in particular, were present in a number of locations around the home, it is usually very difficult to assign specific paintings to particular rooms; but in one case at least we can be almost certain which room was the intended destination for a devotional picture. Piero della Francesca’s *Nativity*, now kept in the National Gallery, London, was painted by the artist towards the end of his life, around 1480 (fig. 4.1).[[720]](#footnote-720) This painting is listed in an inventory compiled by Piero’s nephew Bartolomeo in 1500, which recorded the possessions of another of Piero’s nephews, Francesco di Marco. This records that the painting hung in the chamber occupied by Francesco’s widow, Laudomia, until she remarried.[[721]](#footnote-721) Despite being badly damaged by heavy restoration work, the painting’s content is still clearly legible. Piero set the scene in Borgo Sansepolcro, his native town, the location at which the painting was inventoried in 1500, and where it remained at least until the mid-nineteenth-century, as we learn from one of Milanesi’s comments on Vasari’s *Lives*.[[722]](#footnote-722) Here, the Virgin is adoring the Infant Christ, while Joseph is sitting nearby, in the presence of two visiting shepherds and five musical angels. The group of angels is standing on the ground just behind the Child; two of them play lutes, one is playing a viella and two are singing. While the angels playing musical instruments are dressed plainly, the two singers behind them have more elaborate clothing, which recalls deacons’ vestments.[[723]](#footnote-723) There is nothing to specifically indicate which song the angels might be singing, but there is little doubt that they are intended to be singing the *Gloria*, which, as discussed earlier, is nearly always the case in paintings of the Nativity.[[724]](#footnote-724)

It has been suggested that this painting might have either been a wedding gift for Francesco and Laudomia, or perhaps a picture that the artist made for himself, although it does not seem to have been kept in his own room.[[725]](#footnote-725) If we take this to be a wedding gift, the highly humanised wingless angels, or “peasant boys” as Marylin Lavin termed them, were certainly figures in which children could identify themselves, even more so because the landscape would have been so clearly recognisable.[[726]](#footnote-726)

Nevertheless, personal gifts from the artist were an exceptional way in which devotional paintings could reach a domestic space. In fact, domestic paintings would often have been produced by the same workshops that provided painted furniture for the bedchamber. Ellen Callmann’s studies helped recognise Apollonio di Giovannias an artist who was quite capable of decorating entire rooms, rather than merely specialising in *cassone* painting as originally thought. In fact, the workshop he shared with his partner Marco del Buono produced a variety of artistic ornamentation for domestic spaces, encompassing furniture painting, frescoes, devotional panels in different formats (including *tondi*), *deschi da parto* and even manuscript miniatures.[[727]](#footnote-727) For the house of Bernardo di Stoldo Rinieri and his wife Bartolommea di Dietisalvi di Nerone Dietisalvi, Apollonio created a number of different works over the years 1457-1460, including a lunette that was designed to be located over the head of the bed. This type of object would have likely been painted with a devotional image, as Callmann convincingly suggests, although today it is virtually impossible to distinguish lunettes with religious subjects created for bedrooms from those that adorn the upper part of altarpieces, unless documents are found.[[728]](#footnote-728)

Apollonio’s workshop produced objects decorated with literary subjects, such as scenes from Virgil’s *Aeneid* and from Petrarch’s *Triumphs*, as well as panels with sacred images for devotional purposes, a vein of domestic art which is rich in musical subjects. In a panel with the Virgin and Child enthroned from the late 1430s or the early 1440s, which was formerly in Bergamo and whose whereabouts are currently unknown (fig. 4.2), the Virgin and Child are shown flanked by two praying angels who are standing next to the throne, one on each side, while two musical angels sit at its base playing a harp and a viella. Callmann has noticed that the figure of the infant Christ and the childlike angels in this painting, which are typical of Apollonio’s style, resemble the two *putti* playing with poppy pods depicted on the reverse of his *desco da parto*, now in the North Carolina Museum of Art (fig. 4.3).[[729]](#footnote-729) The Bergamo painting has been identified as the prototype for a number of compositions of the same type from the same period, one of which was formerly in the Toscanelli collection (fig. 4.4). This painting has a very similar composition with the Virgin and Child on a throne surrounded by angels, although in this case all four angels are playing musical instruments (a viella and cymbals for the standing angels, and a lute and a harp for those sitting on the base of the throne).[[730]](#footnote-730)

This was not the only compositional type developed by the Apollonio workshop to feature musical angels. In a later panel with the Virgin and Child and four angels from around 1450, now kept in the Doris Ulmann Galleries, Berea College, Berea (KY), all four angels are standing, with two of them peering from behind the throne to catch a glimpse of the Infant Christ, while the other two are playing a lute and a viella in front of the throne (fig. 4.5). The pictures produced in this phase of Apollonio’s career demonstrate that he had been heavily influenced by Fra Filippo Lippi, which can be seen particularly in the gracefulness of the figures and tenderness of the scene.[[731]](#footnote-731) These qualities are also present, for example, in the panel kept at Villa I Tatti in Florence, which includes just two angels sitting at the Virgin’s feet, who are also playing a lute and a viella (fig. 4.6). Although it has a slightly different composition, the Apollonio Virgin and Child now in the Harvard Art Museum is similarly graceful, with the main figures standing behind a parapet together with two angels playing a portative organ and a recorder, while two further angels are again playing a lute and a viella in front (fig. 4.7).[[732]](#footnote-732)

Painters in Apollonio’s workshop would make use of the same drawings as models for figures appearing in a number of different works, both for those in *cassone* panels, and in wall-hung devotional art. This likely allowed them to complete the works that the workshop was commissioned to carry out much more quickly, and with less preparatory effort. This practice is particularly noticeable in the figures of musical angels. The figures of the harpist, lutenist and viella player in the Toscanelli panel reappear respectively in the panels in Bergamo, Villa I Tatti, and Berea.[[733]](#footnote-733) The latter, however, appears to have been mechanically copied from a model by a distracted assistant in Apollonio’s workshop, as the figure was undoubtedly meant to be reversed so the musical angel would be looking towards the Virgin and Child.[[734]](#footnote-734)

The majority of these examples from Apollonio’s workshop show two musical angels (although in two cases they are accompanied by a further two non-musical angels); the four angels appearing in the version in the Harvard Art Museum are rather exceptional. The viella is common to all of the panels and is the only instrument to be also depicted showing its back, in the Harvard panel. It is precisely in these types of depictions that children in wealthy households would have been able to recognise the same instruments that they were learning to play, or that they themselves or other young citizens played during processions and *sacre rappresentazioni*.[[735]](#footnote-735)

Paintings were not the only artistic pieces commissioned for domestic settings. It is highly likely, for example, that a large number of tin-glazed terracotta reliefs produced by the Della Robbias’ workshop were also intended for the home.[[736]](#footnote-736) This is suggested by a pair of entries in the inventory of Lorenzo il Magnifico’s possessions from 1492, which lists “una Nostra Donna di mezzo rilievo invetriata … fitta nel muro” (one Our Lady in bas-relief and glazed … embedded in the wall) in the mezzanine above the antechamber of Lorenzo’s large bedchamber, and “uno colmo di tabernacolo di legname con più ornamenti d’oro … drentovi una Nostra Donna a sedere col bambino in collo, di mezzo rilievo et invetriato” (one *colmo* as a tabernacle in wood decorated with gold … with one Our Lady sitting with the Child at her neck, in bas-relief and glazed) in the *Camera del Monsignore* occupied by the thirteen-year-old Giuliano, Lorenzo’s son.[[737]](#footnote-737) Although these entries do not mention the workshop that produced the works by name, it is likely that they both refer to the tin-glazed terracotta reliefs that were so typical of the Della Robbias’ workshop, and were possibly by Luca della Robbia himself.[[738]](#footnote-738) The first record has been linked to the *Madonna of the Apple* kept in the Museo del Bargello, which is known to derive from the Medici collection (fig. 4.8).[[739]](#footnote-739) Another possible reference to the work of Della Robbia is a record of one “Nostra Donna invetriata” (Our Lady, glazed), belonging to the merchant Giovanni Benci, which was recorded by Neri di Bicci in his *Ricordanze* in 1464.[[740]](#footnote-740) The domestic purpose of these types of works is confirmed by another contemporary record. In 1499, Andrea Minerbetti, in his *Libro di ricordi*, records the purchase of “1 nostra donna della robia murata” (one Our Lady by Della Robbia, in the wall) for a room on the ground floor, which was probably intended to be inserted into the wall, as suggested by Peter Thornton.[[741]](#footnote-741) This particular display practice was clearly not uncommon, as one of the Madonnas in Lorenzo il Magnifico’s possessions mentioned above was also described as “fitta nel muro”.

Tin-glazed terracotta reliefs with the Virgin and Child became extremely popular in fifteenth-century Italy. Often produced serially from a mould on a large scale, these images were intended to satisfy the demand of a growing market.[[742]](#footnote-742) The popularity for these works and their use in domestic environments extended well into the sixteenth century. For example, in 1524, two inexpensive glazed reliefs of the Virgin and Child produced by the Della Robbias’ workshop were explicitly brought to the attention of the *podestà* (town chief magistrate) Alessandro de Segni by his Florentine friend Cappone di Iacopo Capponi, so that he could acquire them to fulfil his desire to display a “Madonna” in the main chamber (*chamera plincipale* [sic]) of his castle in Lari, near Pisa.[[743]](#footnote-743)

In her publication accompanying the 2017 exhibition *Della Robbia: Sculpting with color in Renaissance Florence* at the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.,Marietta Cambareri dedicated a section to domestic art produced by the Della Robbias’ workshop, which included depictions of the Virgin and Child, busts and figures of children in the guise of the young Saint John the Baptist and Christ, and allegoric figures.[[744]](#footnote-744) Although the author does not include music specifically, the importance given to providing a source of imitation and an example to imitate is clear in the *Bust of a Boy* by Andrea della Robbia (fig. 4.9) and the group of figures with the *Meeting of the Christ child and young Saint John the Baptist* by Giovanni (fig. 4.10), both now in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence, which were likely commissioned for these purposes, in the same way as discussed with regards to the marble busts mentioned in Chapter 1.4.[[745]](#footnote-745) However, objects produced by the Della Robbias’ workshop for domestic settings could include musical angels, as demonstrated by surviving Nativity and Adoration scenes which include reference to the *Gloria* chant, such as the *tondo* known as the *Foulc Adoration* by Luca della Robbia discussed in Chapter 3.2.2 (fig. 3.49), although without precise documentation it is difficult to discern if these surviving objects were commissioned specifically for domestic settings. Although the Nativity in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (fig. 4.11)is probably more likely to have been intended as an altarpiece for a private chapel, mainly due to its size (ca. 89 by 74cm),[[746]](#footnote-746) similar objects could have also been produced in a range of sizes to be displayed in domestic interiors.

Aside from these, another Della Robbia composition with the *Virgin of the Humility* (fig. 4.12), of which at least two versions survive, shows the Infant Christ slipping from his mother’s lap to grasp a branch of lilies. As discussed in Chapter 3.2.1, these flowers would have reminded the viewer of the hymns sung regularly at Matins or Vespers during Marian festivities. If the smaller size of these (ca. 48 by 38cm) can be interpreted as an indication of their inclusion among domestic possessions, these depictions, although not including explicitly musical angels, would have reminded their owners of this musical association.

Nonetheless, terracotta was not the only medium that allowed for mass reproduction. Objects made of stucco, as well as bronze, were equally able to be produced in series.[[747]](#footnote-747) Painted stucco reliefs created from moulds, such as the devotional *colmi* produced by Neri di Bicci, must have been quite popular, considering that in the Florentine fiscal accounts of 1480 he is among the richest painters in town, closely followed by his former pupil Giusto di Andrea Manzini.[[748]](#footnote-748) Stucco reliefs could again include angelic figures, as confirmed by Bernardo Rosselli’s purchase of a number of moulded “Vegine [sic] Marie cho’ cherubino” (Virgin Marys with an angel) ready to be painted, bought from an artisan in Empoli.[[749]](#footnote-749) An image of this kind produced by an anonymous artist in a Florentine workshop is now kept in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (fig. 4.13). This oval stucco relief with the *Virgin and Child with Saints and Angels* might have been copied from an original model by Donatello. Here, the Virgin is sitting on a throne with the Child on her lap, flanked by Saint Bartholomew and Saint Sigismund, while two angels are sitting on the step of the throne, playing a viol and a lute.[[750]](#footnote-750) This composition was clearly very popular, as this is virtually identical to an oval marble relief, also kept in the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig. 4.14), although in this case the four figures surrounding the Virgin and Child are all angels.[[751]](#footnote-751)

A Veronese plaquette from around 1490, attributed to Galeazzo Mondella known as Moderno, with the *Virgin and Child in a Niche, between Saint Jerome and Saint Anthony* is constructed as a miniature altarpiece and includes two winged childlike angels sitting and playing lutes on its base (fig. 4.15). There are several other versions of this work known to survive, all with minimal variation, two of which are now kept in the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. At only approximately 11 centimetres in height, these objects would have been extremely portable. They are considered to be collectibles for study rooms, and would likely have been mounted on pieces of furniture, or even used to adorn clothing. Furthermore, it has also been suggested that they could have been freestanding, since they are often equipped with handles. As such, these works could have fulfilled both an ornamental and a more practical devotional function.[[752]](#footnote-752) New technologies such as these allowed for the reproduction of works by great masters in different workshops, sometimes using different material and different scales.

Print also had great importance in the the everyday lives of Fifteenth-century people, across a range of different social classes. Early woodcut prints would have been produced in large quantities, not only for domestic use, but also for use in public religious events such as processions, perhaps commissioned by religious confraternities.[[753]](#footnote-753) Due to the physical nature of the material, prints rarely survive. Where they have, it is mainly due to the practice of attaching them to a hard, wooden support, for easy use in private devotion.[[754]](#footnote-754) As it was relatively inexpensive, this form of devotional art could reach a much larger pool of people than was possible solely by using large paintings, which would usually have been accessible primarily to the most affluent ranks of the society.[[755]](#footnote-755)

Apart from single-sheet devotional prints, it is important to note the impact that the growning availability of printed books would have had among the population, which would have significantly contributed to the dissemination of knowledge. The presence of printed books in private libraries increased hugely between the 1480s and the 1490s, and during the Sixteenth century overtook manuscript texts to become the dominant format across Europe.[[756]](#footnote-756) This phenomenon, of course, would have included books of both music theory and practice. Musical notation was initially added by hand to printed books, but by the 1470s notes were also printed with metal type. Incubula that included musical notation were produced for use during the Liturgy, as well as for lay performance and to be included as part of music theory books. Italy was an important centre for production of printed music books in Europe, second only to Germany.[[757]](#footnote-757) As seen in Chapter 1??, classical texts on music theory were translated and printed. Among these Carlo Valgulio’s translation into Latin of Plutarch’s *De Musica* was printed multiple times, which testifies to its popularity.[[758]](#footnote-758) The printing press meant that music texts were more and more widely available, which would have only increased during the Sixteenth century.[[759]](#footnote-759)

The new technologies that facilitated the reproduction of images and text allowed the extensive circulation of particular images, with the comparatively low cost permitting ownership by individuals from a wide range of different social classes.[[760]](#footnote-760)

4.2 Musical Angels in a Domestic Chapel

While devotional images in bedchambers would have had to share the space with a variety of practical objects for daily use that were kept in the same room, larger *palazzi* owned by prominent families often included one or more private chapels, where Mass could be celebrated away from the prying eyes of the public.[[761]](#footnote-761) The *Cappella dei Magi*, in the Florentine Medici Palace is a well-known example, although the extravagance of this space could hardly be matched by the majority of Florentine patrician families. This small chapel was lavishly decorated by Benozzo Gozzoli (Benozzo di Lese) between the summer and the end of 1459, with frescoes based upon the theme of the visit of the Magi to the new born Christ. Above the altar was Fra Filippo Lippi’s altarpiece of the Virgin adoring her son, accompanied by Saint John the Baptist and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux.[[762]](#footnote-762) On either side of the altar, there are angels placed at various different heights, including some picking flowers and making garlands in the background, while others are shown flying high above in the sky, together with cherubim (figs 4.16 and 4.17).[[763]](#footnote-763)

The angels closest to the new born Christ are arranged in three rows, kneeling in adoration, with their halos appropriately inscribed with the words “adoramus te, glorificamus t[e]” (we adore Thee, we glorify Thee). Standing further back, heavenly choirs are praying and singing, sometimes with their mouths open wide. As well as singing, Dale Kent has interpreted these dynamic figures of angels as if they were dancing, and has linked this to the fact that members of the Medici family would entertain themselves with dance.[[764]](#footnote-764) However, the movements of the angels’ hands seems to indicate a rather different musical activity, as if they were shown practicing *tactus*, which is closely related to singing practices, as discussed in Chapter 3.2.1. This is especially clearly depicted in the fresco on the left side of the chancel, in which several angels touch the shoulders of their fellow singers, while the three angels in the first row are moving their hands in intricate gestures, possibly hinting at the contemporary practice of learning music with the help of the so-called Guidonian hand, or perhaps tapping *tactus* on an imagined surface (fig. 4.18).[[765]](#footnote-765) These singing angels bear halos inscribed with the words “Gloria in excelsis deo,” or individual words such as “ter[r]a” and “pax.” These words remind the viewer that these angels are those who sung in praise on the occasion of the birth of Christ, as described in Luke 2:14. However, the phrase “Adoramus te, glorificamus te” derives not from the biblical narrative but from the liturgical *Gloria*; thus, these angels are not simply re-enacting the biblical narrative, but are representing singing Mass.[[766]](#footnote-766) The lack of music books and of musical notation in this fresco has led Cristina Acidini Luchinat to identify the *Gloria* sung by Benozzo’s angels as the plainchant version of this hymn rather than the polyphonic one, which could be sung from memory, a theory that has also been accepted by Dale Kent.[[767]](#footnote-767)

The presence of the words of the *Gloria* in a Nativity scene was certainly not a novelty in Italian art from this period.[[768]](#footnote-768) However, I am not aware of any other example where the words of the liturgical hymn, rather than simply those of the biblical announcement, are inscribed within the rims of the halos.[[769]](#footnote-769) In Benozzo’s frescoes, both the angels who are explicitly singing and those who are kneeling seemingly silent in adoration bear the *Gloria* words in their halos, suggesting that they each form part of a single group joined together by a shared musical activity.

It has been suggested that members of the Medici family themselves were portrayed in the frescoes taking part in the procession of the Magi, including Cosimo de’ Medici, portrayed on a mule, most likely as a symbol of humility, flanked by his sons Piero, Giovanni and the illegitimate Carlo, followed by Giovanni’s son Cosimino, and Piero’s sons, the then ten-year-old Lorenzo, later known as Il Magnifico, and the six-year-old Giuliano (fig. 4.19).[[770]](#footnote-770) It is known that Cosimo de’ Medici himself took part in the staging of the Magi procession in Florence on several occasions during the years that preceded Benozzo’s frescoes.[[771]](#footnote-771) The musical angels in this chapel likely recalled the children who so often played the role of angels in these events, and in *sacre rappresentazioni*, in Florence.[[772]](#footnote-772) Celebrations including processions and theatrical spectacles around the visit of the Magi to the new born Christ commonly took place in Florence between 1390 and 1470, organised by the *Compagnia de’ Magi*, of which the Medici were members and active supporters.[[773]](#footnote-773)

Rab Hatfield has suggested that the text used for these Nativity plays would have been similar to that of a *Rappresentazione della Natività di Cristo* which was likely staged in the late fifteenth-century, in which musical angels near the manger sing a song of praise in the vernacular based on the *Gloria*, as discussed and quoted in Chapter 3.2.2.[[774]](#footnote-774) If Hatfield’s suggestion is correct, this would place Florentine children playing musical angels in sacred plays with the Nativity theme in the same period as the creation of the chapel frescoes, and so the reference to them in these depictions seems almost certain. Indeed, the life-size angels in the frescoes seem to accurately depict the contemporary Florentine children who would have regularly impersonated them during these events, and their size would make them appear as if they were present in the chapel alongside the viewer. Since the space in this small chapel was rather limited, the crowds of musical angels would likely have been intended to silently complement the relatively restrained celebration of the Mass that the chapel would have been able to accommodate. Again, young people visiting the chapel would have been able to identify with these musical angels (probably with the exception of Lorenzo and Giuliano, who could already see their own portraits elsewhere in the fresco).

The members of the Medici family were certainly not the only individuals to have the privilege of praying in this chapel, as it would have also been open to common citizens on particular occasions. This was noted by the anonymous author of the *Terze rime* *in lode di Cosimo de’ Medici e de’ figli* (Tercets in Praise of Cosimo de’ Medici and His Sons), written in 1459 in honour of the celebrations that took place during the visit of Pope Pius II, Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, *condottiero* and lord of Rimini, and the young Galeazzo Maria Sforza, son of the Duke of Milan, whom Cosimo received in this space.[[775]](#footnote-775) Although the frescoes were not yet present at that date, this event indicates that diplomatic meetings would have occurred in this space. As such, it seems reasonable to assume that this would have continued after the completion of the frescoes, and so would have presented the opportunity for people from outside the Medici family and their entourage to view the decorations as well.

Hospitality was certainly a value of great importance for any patrician at this time, as can be understood from Giovanni Rucellai, in his *Zibaldone* (Miscellany), in which he recommends that “in the house of a rich man numerous guests should be received and they should be honoured with generosity, for if one did otherwise the great house would be a dishonour to the owner”.[[776]](#footnote-776) As such, it seems likely that the musical angels frescoed in the Medici chapel would have been seen by a number of different people in addition to family members and their relatives, including important personalities and dignitaries, as well as common citizens on special occasions.

4.3 Musical Angels in Decorated Furniture

Bedroom furniture, especially that which was dedicated to the storage of domestic goods, such as chests, was often highly decorated. Chests – or dowry chests, due to their association with marriages – were designed to stand against a wall, and were therefore decorated on their front, sides and interior, but not on their back.[[777]](#footnote-777) Although the vocabulary used to describe such objects varied greatly, scholars have settled on the use of the term *cassone*, possibly in accordance with Vasari’s usage of the word.[[778]](#footnote-778) While describing the talent of the painter Dello Delli in painting small scale figures, Vasari recounts the popularity enjoyed by these chests:

It was common for citizens at that time to have large wooden *cassoni* in their chambers … and there were none that did not have the said chests painted … and the stories that were painted on the front were mostly tales from Ovid and other poets, or stories recounted by Greek and Latin historians.[[779]](#footnote-779)

While a fairly large number of decorated *cassoni* have survived either whole or in part, corroborating Vasari’s statement, these chests were not the only pieces of furniture that could be decorated. Other pieces probably had worse luck in surviving, or are now difficult to differentiate from panels intended as independent pictures. On this subject, again in the *Life of Dello*, Vasari notes that:

In such a manner were painted not only *cassoni*, but also *lettucci* [day beds], *spalliere* [wainscoting panels], *cornici* [mouldings] around these, and other similar bedroom decorations that were splendidly used at that time, and an infinite number may be seen throughout the city. And the fact that this is true, has been demonstrated by a number of *cassoni*, *spalliere* and *cornici* that survived until now, in the chambers of the Magnificent Lorenzo de’ Medici, the Elder, where all the jousts, tournaments, hunting scenes, feasts and other spectacles that took place in his time were painted by the hand of … excellent masters, with judgement, invention and marvellous art. Relics of such things are still seen, not only in the palace and the old houses of the Medici, but in all the most noble houses in Florence.[[780]](#footnote-780)

As noted earlier in relation to Apollonio di Giovanni, a single workshop was sometimes able to realise the decoration for an entire room. As recorded by Vasari, Dello Delli himself was charged with the decoration of all the furniture for a room belonging to Giovanni de’ Medici, possibly with assistance from a young Donatello, the result of which was considered to be “a truly extraordinary thing” (*cosa veramente rara*).[[781]](#footnote-781)

The ornamentation of these furniture pieces certainly contributed to making them beautiful objects and thanks to this they were able to perform several, equally important functions simultaneously. In addition to the obvious practical use of these objects for the provision of material storage, James Lindow has suggested that these pieces, used during the first half of the fifteenth century to transport a bride’s dowry from her original residence to that of her new husband on the day of their marriage, would not only have communicated the new alliance of families to the bystanders that witnessed their journey through the city, but also served as a persistent, daily reminder for the couple themselves once fitted into their bedchamber.[[782]](#footnote-782) Additionally, beautifully decorated objects could be acquired simply for their intrinsic visual value, both for the enjoyment of the owner and to impress their guests. As Giovanni Pontano, cultural and political adviser to the King of Naples, stated in his *De Splendore* (On Splendour) of 1498:

The splendid man should not only ensure that he has worthy and elegant furnishings and that his home has abundant ornaments, but as it is even more shameful if he is unprepared for either private or public service, he will have very many things in the house for these occasions when he needs to demonstrate his polish.[[783]](#footnote-783)

Thus, a domestic object was acquired for practical use, but also for its symbolic meaning and its beauty. To these functions, we can add a moralistic purpose, fulfilled by the images painted or carved on the surface of the panels of which chests were composed, as seen in Chapter 1.4.

These depictions would often include childlike figures. Alongside the musical angels on devotional panels, which have been discussed in the previous section, Apollonio’s workshop also produced a large number of *cassoni* painted with figures with childlike features, often holding escutcheons which were decorated with the coats of arms belonging to the family who commissioned the piece. A *cassone* decorated with *The Meeting of King Salomon and the Queen of Sheba* on the frontal panel, now kept at the Victoria and Albert Museum, could perhaps be ascribed to Apollonio’s circle (fig. 4.20).[[784]](#footnote-784) However, the attribution is debated for stylistic reasons, and Attilio Schiaparelli has noticed affinities with other panels that he ascribed to an “imitator of Pesellino” such as another *cassone* with the same subject that is now in the Yale University Art Gallery.[[785]](#footnote-785) Two pairs of winged musical childlike figures, respectively playing the cymbals and lute, and the viella and shawm, are painted on the end panels. Unlike most fifteenth-century *cassoni*, which were usually deconstructed at some point in their history with unrelated parts then assembled into a single chest, or which underwent heavy restoration and alteration, this chest has survived largely in its original form, although some of the mouldings and the gilding are modern.[[786]](#footnote-786) The images displayed on *cassoni* would have been clearly visible to children thanks to their lower vantage point, and, as noted by Adrian Randolph, parents would have been able to use these to impart moral lessons.[[787]](#footnote-787) In this particular case, it is easy to imagine how children would have been able to scrutinise the childlike figures on the end panels in detail, and recognise them as similar to themselves.

Furthermore, Apollonio himself touched upon music in a *desco da parto* with the *Allegory of Music* on the obverse and putti on the reverse, which is dated earlier than the devotional panels described above, and was possibly made for the Ceparelli and Doffi families (fig. 4.21).[[788]](#footnote-788) Much like the *cassone* with musical putti, this *desco* would likely have been part of the furnishings of a bedchamber, and so would have been visible to most members of the household on a regular basis, including the family’s children.

As seen above, other pieces of furniture could also have been decorated. A small (30.5 by 36cm) painted panel by the Sienese Giovanni di Paolo from around 1453 with the scene of the Birth of Saint John the Baptist, now kept at the National Gallery, London, provides an indication of the way beds could be painted (fig. 4.22). This panel was part of a *predella* to an altarpiece dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, probably that of the *Virgin and Child with Saints* now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.[[789]](#footnote-789) In this, musical angels decorate both the headboard and the front panel of Saint Elizabeth’s bed. Although it is probable that this panel is not depicting a real bed, it is known that in the fifteenth century beds were occasionally painted. For example, the bed commissioned by Salvi Borgherini in 1515 as part of his son Pierfrancesco’s matrimonial furniture was decorated with scenes from the biblical story of Joseph, in a very elaborate narrative that linked it to several other scenes decorated on different pieces of furniture, including the wall panelling and *cassoni*.[[790]](#footnote-790) Another painted bed is depicted in a panel with *Saint Francis and the Poor Knight and Francis’ Vision*, part of a large polyptych for the altar of San Francesco in Borgo Sansepolcro painted by Sassetta (Stefano di Giovanni) between 1437 and 1444 (fig. 4.23). In this case, however, the decoration of the top part of the headboard is much simpler: a blue sky with golden stars. Luke Syson has suggested the possibility that bed heads could be painted with images of the Virgin or with the scene of the Annunciation.[[791]](#footnote-791) A bed of this kind survives in the Ospedale del Ceppo in Pistoia, painted with the figures of the Virgin and Child accompanied by a donor, and was made in 1337. Although this particular example was actually made as a votive object, it may reflect a wider practise of painting beds, as is also suggested by Syson.[[792]](#footnote-792) Two further decorated bed heads can be seen depicted in two fifteenth-century Florentine *cassone* panels with the *Story of Antiochus and Stratonice*, produced by the so-called Stratonice Master, although in this particular case the depicted subject is not clearly defined and is therefore not identifiable.[[793]](#footnote-793) In light of these examples, it is conceivable that bed decoration could include figures of musical angels, contributing to the general devotional and moralistic atmosphere of a typical bedchamber of the Florentine elite.

In addition to decorating pieces of furniture, musical angels could also be part of the general decoration of a room, as seen in the *Birth of the Virgin Mary* frescoed by Domenico Ghirlandaio and his workshop as part of the decoration of the Tornabuoni Chapel with stories from the lives of the Virgin and of Saint John the Baptist in the church of Santa Maria Novella, Florence, commissioned by Giovanni Tornabuoni (fig. 4.24). Ghirlandaio carried out this large commission between 1486 and 1490, with the help of his workshop (which included Domenico’s brothers and son, and probably a young Michelangelo).[[794]](#footnote-794) The scene with the *Birth of the Virgin Mary* is the second in this series, and is located on the lower register of the chapel’s left wall. In a lavishly decorated room, Saint Anne is reclining on her bed as three maids prepare a bath for the new-born Virgin Mary, while, in the foreground, a number of elegantly dressed women are depicted visiting. Musical childlike figures appear on a sculptural frieze above Saint Anne’s bed, which runs along two adjoining walls between the inlayed wooden panelling and the ceiling. The figures in the frieze recall, on the one hand, the playful musical children sculpted by Donatello and Luca della Robbia in the *cantorie* for Florence cathedral and, on the other, the glazed terracotta figures produced by the Della Robbias’ workshop.[[795]](#footnote-795) Some of these figures play lyres, cymbals and panpipes and seem to be dancing. At their feet a Latin inscription reads “Nativitas tua dei genitrix virgo gaudium annuntiavit universo mundo” (Thy birth, Oh Virgin Mother of God, brings joy to the whole world). This detail indicates that the childlike figures depicted can be interpreted as musical angels, as these words were the incipit of an antiphon regularly sung at Matins or Vespers on the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin on 8 September, which also survives in polyphonic settings. A motet setting composed by Gaffurius is included in the manuscript known as Librone 4 (Milan, Archivio della Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo, Sezione Musicale, MS 2266), copied under Gaffurius’ supervision in the 1480s, thus exactly the same decade as the frescoes in the Tornabuoni Chapel. Lindow, when considering the wainscot panelling that decorates the walls in this scene, has suggested that the fresco of the *Birth of the Virgin Mary*, although not depicting a specific room in the Tornabuoni palace, may still be representative of a space that its patron would have considered familiar.[[796]](#footnote-796)

Another indication of where childlike figures could be found in Fifteenth-century homes is given by another fresco, also on the theme of the *Birth of the Virgin Mary*, realised between 1513 and 1514 by Andrea del Sarto in the Chiostro dei Voti, the forecourt of the church of Santissima Annunziata in Florence (fig. 4.25). This large fresco (410 by 340cm) also depicts an elaborate contemporary interior as the setting for this scene. In much the same way as the Ghirlandaio’s fresco discussed previously, several women are present in the room, some of whom are visiting Saint Anne and attending to her needs, while others are preparing a bath for new-born near the fireplace. Two large *putti* holding a plaque bearing the artist’s signature are located above the fireplace’s sculptural frieze, the detail of which is unfortunately no longer discernible. Indeed, this particular part of a fireplace was frequently decorated, and could include musical angels, as can be seen in the example realised by the Florentine-trained sculptor Domenico Rosselli for the *Sala degli Angeli* (Angels’ Hall) in the Ducal Palace, Urbino, during the last quarter of the fifteenth century (fig. 4.26). Here, it seems that the artist has attempted to imitate the effect of glazed terracotta, with white figures on a blue background. These childlike figures, playing musical instruments and dancing, provide yet another example of the constant presence of musical angels in the home, serving as moralistic reminders for the occupants.

Small, everyday household objects could also be sumptuously decorated, and, once again, musical subjects often appeared on them, as can be seen, for example, on a walnut coffer possibly from Siena, produced in the early fifteenth century, with gesso figures in relief, painted and gilded, a type ofdecoration known as *pastiglia* (fig. 4.27). While the cover and one of the sides of the main body of the coffer are decorated with images that are typical of courtly love such as a lady crowning a knight surrounded by musicians and dancers, jousting knights and a hunting scene, the sides of the main body show five winged childlike figures in higher relief, of which one is playing a rebec and another possibly a harp. Inscribed on the top of its cover is “onesstà fa bella donna” (Honesty [or Integrity] makes a woman beautiful). Objects such as this were likely to have been betrothal gifts, the word “onestà” being a synonym for “chastity.”[[797]](#footnote-797) Another wooden casket, decorated with similar figures, is now in the Museo Bardini, Florence (fig. 4.28). Although the inlay work decorating this example of Florentine production has suffered some damage, the figures of wingless musical children can still be discerned on its surface. Whereas the children on the two long sides dance and play instruments such as bagpipes, tambourines, triangles and cymbals, the children on the short ends can be seen playing games. These closely resemble those that could be seen on the reverse of *deschi da parto*, which were likely intended to bear similar moralistic connotations.

Casket decorations were not only made from wood and stucco, but also from bone. Such caskets were produced from the same workshop run by Baldassarre degli Embriachi in the first half of the fifteenth century that produced the ivory mirror frame decorated with flying angels discussed in Chapter 3.1.1. A small angelic figure, now kept at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, was likely part of the carved decoration of a casket of this type (fig. 4.29). Here, an angel is holding a blank scroll horizontally with both hands. Ellen Callmann has suggested that the scroll could have been painted with a motto.[[798]](#footnote-798) However, it seems equally likely that the scroll would have been painted with the words of a hymn, or even perhaps tiny musical notes, as it closely resembles a number of the musical angels in other works discussed previously, suggesting that this figure was a musical angel as well.

Engaging with the sense of touch of the owners, domestic objects such as the caskets and coffret described have the potential to render the images depicted or carved in relief upon them even more powerful, thanks to the more intimate interaction with them and the stimulation of tactile sensation.

Domestic environments were inhabited by musical angels that decorated a vast range of objects, from extravagant *cassoni*, fireplaces, decorative friezes and beds, to more everyday items such as small caskets. These examples demonstrate not only how pervasive the presence of angels would have been in the home, but also how familiar these figures would have been to those who lived there. At every turn, the inhabitants of a Florentine home would have encountered musical angels, constantly reaffirming their moral message.

This chapter has looked at a number of further examples of musical angels which could be found among the domestic furnishings in the Renaissance Florentine home. Furthermore, in looking at how a domestic chapel would have been decorated, we have considered the environment in which private religious practices would have been carried out when cost was not a significant factor. These images would have served as examples for the household, and the angels within them would have been particularly resonant for the youngest members. It is notable that some of the children within the household would even have seen themselves realistically depicted within the images, something that would only ever have been possible in a piece specifically commissioned by the family.

However, in contrast to this, inexpensive devotional images, which at this time were becoming progressively more common thanks to developing manufacturing techniques, would have had a significant impact on domestic devotion. By providing a focus for these practices within the home, such images would have aided private piety for a much wider part of society beyond those few who could afford to build a dedicated chapel within their dwellings. These affordable devotional images brought religion into the home for many more people, with their relatable, moralising imagery, and so exposed them to the positive examples that they provide. Their somewhat “mass-produced” nature also represents a shift in their positioning from bespoke works commissioned from the finest masters to much more practical objects, with a functional purpose in addition to their aesthetic value. In this light, it becomes even more apparent that these images were crafted with functional purposes in mind, and among their functions was to bring virtuous examples into the home and place them before its inhabitants. Considered in this way, the musical angels within these images should be seen not just as part of the background noise of domestic decoration, but purposeful images intended to be relatable examples aimed in particular at the young members of the household who would see themselves in these youthful characters.

Finally, the presence of angels decorating domestic furniture serves to underline both the ubiquity of these images, and how visible they would have been to children. It also demonstrates that few opportunities to present positive moral messages in the home would have been missed, with a wide range of objects decorated to reinforce moral messages.

The inclusion of musical angels in the decoration of these objects, as discussed over the previous chapters, was very likely designed to provide examples to children in particular. Bearing in mind contemporary ideas about learning and moral education, the frequent presence of musical angels in domestic decoration corroborates the theory that these images provided positive *exempla* in particular to the youngest members of the household during their formative years.

# Conclusions

This thesis has studied the ways in which musical angels and their visual representations were perceived in fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Florentine society, and the meanings viewers most likely found in them when presented in domestic settings. Given the youthful physical appearance of angels in works of art, it seems quite clear that they held a particularly special relationship with those members of the society that they most closely resembled. In the intimate surroundings of the home, the resonance of this likeness would have had a compelling influence upon young viewers.

The home was considered to be an intrinsically educational space, in which moral training took many forms and the role played by parents in this process was considered to be extremely important. At least at the earliest stages, responsibility for such matters would have largely rested with the child’s mother, who was considered to be responsible for the moral training of children right from the moment of birth. Indeed, it was believed that through breastfeeding moral qualities would be transmitted, even when this task was delegated to wet-nurses, revealing the existence of a connection between lactation and education.

When a child reached the age of seven, formal schooling would begin. During this period in Italy, great importance was given to the relationship between morality and the *studia humanitatis* (humanistic studies), and in particular history and moral philosophy. This correlated closely with the genre of *specula principum* (Mirrors of princes), which sought to impart values such as justice, wisdom, fortitude and temperance (*iustitia*, *sapientia*, *constantia*, *temperantia*) to rulers, through the use of illustrious *exempla*, which individuals were advised to emulate in order to attain similar virtues. Indeed, contemporary humanistic theories of education held imitation in high regard, and advocated its use as a means of teaching young people. This was based on an extensive canon of historical literature reaching back to classical sources, including *exampla* drawn from classical history, but also Christian sources. A primary *exemplum*, in fact, was the Virgin Mary, who was commonly configured as an example of the ideal woman who should be imitated by wives and mothers in their daily lives.

It is clear that Renaissance Italians were encouraged to find and imitate virtuous examples, and children were no exception. However, providing examples that would be attractive and engaging to children required particular deliberation. While figures of the Infant Christ and the young Saint John the Baptist played their part, as recommended by Giovanni Dominici, childlike angels were also an obvious type of *exemplum* for young viewers. Children, at an early stage in their development, were considered to be extremely impressionable. Thus, the domestic environment would have become the location for further teaching, by displaying images designed to have a positive impact on the moral development of young members of the household, and in particular by displaying examples of virtue to which they could relate. Dominici advises parents to “have in the home paintings of young saints or young virgins, in which your child, still in swaddling clothes, may take delight and be blissful for being similar [to them], with acts and signs pleasing to children.”[[799]](#footnote-799)

Music studies were also similarly advocated as means of acquiring virtue. Musical training was thought to “enhance character,” according to Gaffurius,[[800]](#footnote-800) and to “moderate the movements of the soul under the rule of reason,” in the words of Vergerio.[[801]](#footnote-801) Of course, not all music was considered equal: some types of music were considered to be lascivious and sinful, and therefore in order to develop a virtuous character children should only be exposed to the correct music. Music would have permeated the domestic environment, and musical activities would have involved the whole family. The *camera*, in particular, can be understood as a multi-purpose space, in which music-making took place alongside a number of other activities. As young people from elite families would have been closely acquainted with the theory and practice of music, they would have certainly been able to recognise and relate to the musical and music-pedagogical practices depicted in the images around them.

Domestic environments can therefore be seen as the setting for a range of educational practices. Learning was considered to be constantly occurring, and so careful consideration had to be taken in determining the types of visual stimuli that were suitable for this space, due to the perceived power of images over the beholder. This would, of course, have been especially true in spaces where children were present, since they were considered highly impressionable and described by contemporary authors as malleable “like soft wax.” Given the importance assigned to moral education, and the power that images were understood to have, it becomes clear that providing positive moral examples would have been of paramount importance in Renaissance homes.

Angels were omnipresent in the daily lives of Renaissance Florentines. Biblical notions of angels were already well established by this time, and carried enormous significance. Alongside the Virgin and Child, who were unquestionably the most popular subject in religious art, angels appeared frequently in both ecclesiastical and domestic devotional art during this period. Many angels represented in art were explicitly musical, and over the course of this study it has become increasingly obvious that many others contain more subtle musical references which allude to their music-making.

The present research has also reconsidered the traditional definition of *musical* angels, and the indicative factors that facilitate their identification. This has led me to the conclusion that it is possible to identify musical angels based upon a far wider range of indicators than simply the presence of musical instruments or written notation. The words of hymns known to have been set to music during this period, which can be noticed in a number of these works of art, would doubtless have invoked a musical reading of these angels in the minds of contemporary viewers. Marian symbols, or other attributes such as the book of the *Magnificat*, could also be understood as musical references, and would have resonated with contemporary viewers in ways which, from a modern perspective, are no longer obvious. Furthermore, the largely unrecognised presence of the *tactus* gesture in a vast number of works depicting musical angels has been instrumental in allowing this thesis to identify angels who are engaging in musical practices, despite the absence of other visual indicators. This serves to transform them into *musical* angels, and indeed also transforms our understanding of them and their role.

Whether as part of biblical stories, paintings in churches, or private devotional images, the presence of angels would have been constant. However, the scarcity of documentary records concerning the inclusion of angels in images makes their direct study more difficult than their ubiquity would seem to deserve. In view of the extensive angelic contribution to daily life, the presence, significance and influence of musical angels would have been carefully thought through when bringing them into the home. When considering likely models for impressionable children in this light, angelic figures seem a natural choice. While other figures commonly depicted, such as the Virgin Mary, appear to be aimed more at the older members of the family, these youthful characters, seemingly ancillary in much the same way that children themselves were ancillary to the important activities of their mothers and fathers, emerge as an indispensable asset for dispensing moral learning.

This relationship between children and angels was, in fact, complex and profound. Angels were presented as guides and teachers in other contexts. The story of Tobias and the Angel embodies this, as the biblical adult Tobias becomes a child of varying ages in the Florentine art of the time. Young people were encouraged to emulate angels in many different ways, perhaps the most striking example being the way in which children would play the role of angels in *sacre rappresentazioni*, making music and singing. This childhood engagement with the angelic figure and with music-making demonstrates the extent of their interwoven identities. The fact that devices used for teaching music such as *tactus* were depicted in images of musical angels further reinforces their role as guides and teachers.

Considering that contemporary artists routinely modelled their representations of angels on children, it follows that the nature of the relationship between musical angels and children was reciprocal: musical angels were depicted as children, and at the same time actual children imitated musical angels and were described as angelic. In light of this, it seems reasonable to conclude that angelic, music-making figures in the home would have appeared as profoundly relatable for young members of the household. As such, they would have been perfectly placed to provide moralising *exempla* for children, who would be encouraged to imitate them in their music-making, and in their musical praise of divine figures such as the Virgin and Child.

Despite a lack of detailed documentary evidence, and the difficulty in assigning a specific work to a precise domestic location, some works can be placed with a greater degree of certainty. Among these, Florentine *tondi*, frequently featuring musical angels and relatively securely associated with a domestic setting, offer an excellent case study. *Tondi* show a remarkable correlation with domestic mirrors, in both their shape and their usage. Encouraging viewers to “mirror” themselves in the figures depicted within these *tondi* helps to configure them as divine aspirational models, reflecting idealised virtue. The fact that they would often hang in the same domestic space as an actual mirror certainly created a juxtaposition of the earthly and the heavenly, which would have had the effect of accentuating their moralising message. While this imitable quality may seem most apparent when considered in relation to their primary characters – most often the Virgin and Child – this would, of course, equally apply to the musical angels that accompanied them in these *tondi*, whom the children in the house would have been expected to imitate.

Having established that the musical angels in these *tondi* seem to be ideal for providing *exempla* of virtuous behaviour for children, I have used this foundation to provide a new reading of the role of musical angels in a number of surviving *tondi*, including those produced by great masters such as Botticelli. Using these as case studies, it becomes apparent that the musical angels in these works, far from merely being incidental background figures, are in fact performing a complex pedagogic function, engaging with young viewers and providing them with relatable examples to emulate. The inclusion of musical *festaioli* in these pictures serves exactly this purpose, helping to engage young viewers with the event depicted and encouraging them to join in with their musical worship.

While *tondi* provide a rich source of examples which readily demonstrate the positioning of musical angels as didactic models, this concept extends far beyond the *tondi* discussed. I have considered a number of other examples of decorated objects and domestic furnishings in which musical angels appear, which can be interpreted in the same way as seen for *tondi*. In addition, I have reassessed the angelic figures in the Magi Chapel in the Medici Palace, which exemplifies how the function of these musical angels can be understood when employed in the wealthiest domestic environment; and in contrast, I have also studied devotional images in reproducible media, to uncover parallel strategies even in inexpensive domestic images.

In sum, this thesis presents a substantive reconsideration of the role of musical angels during the fifteenth and sixteenth century in Florence, and helps to reinterpret angels as far more significant figures in domestic art than has previously been appreciated. This thesis establishes a firm understanding of their pedagogic function within the home, an area of study which, until this time, has been under-investigated. Whilst I have considered a large portfolio of examples, and given substantial new readings of several artworks, the context and the approach presented here will undoubtedly help to interpret many other images not under consideration in this study, and in taking this work forward future research may uncover further aspects of the didactic function of musical angels. In particular, miniatures of musical angels sometimes decorate the pages of devotional texts such as Books of Hours, a type of image not considered in the present study. Books of hours and psalters were used in teaching children how to read, and so these small-format images would make an obvious starting point for future research on this topic. Furthermore, it would be interesting to see how the depiction of musical angels, and their pedagogic function, changes during the Counter-Reformation, when the production of images was regulated by strict norms dictated by the Catholic Church – or indeed whether musical angels remain unaffected. Finally, it would also be interesting to draw on modern scientific theories on the perception of images as part of child development and learning to investigate the cognitive efficacy of the imitative methods of education discussed in this thesis. These new prospects offer rich possibilities for a postdoctoral project.

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1. “Sono permesse ed ordinate le dipinture degli Angeli e Santi, per utilità mentale de’ più bassi … Nel primo specchio fa’ specchiare i tuoi figliuoli, come aprono gli occhi”. Giovanni Dominici, *Regola del governo di cura familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi (Florence: Angiolo Garinei Libraio, 1860), 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Julia L. Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood in Alberti’s Libri Della Famiglia: Maternal versus Wet-Nursing,” in *Medieval and Renaissance Lactations. Images, Rhetorics, Practices*, ed. Jutta Gisela Sperling (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 190, n.11; Margaret L. King, “The School of Infancy: The Emergence of Mother as Teacher in Early Modern Times,” in *The Renaissance in the Streets, Schools, and Studies: Essays in Honour of Paul F. Grendler*, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler and Nicholas Terpstra (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008), 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Aulus Gellius, *The Attic Nights of Aulus Gellius*, trans. John C. Rolfe (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), 357; Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations: Also, Treatises On The Nature Of The Gods, And On The Commonwealth*, trans. Charles Duke Yonge (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1877), 92, http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/14988; See also King, “The School of Infancy,” 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 192–93. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. English translation from Plutarch, “The Education of Children. De Liberis Educandis,” in *Plutarch’s Moralia*, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt, vol. 1 (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1927), 13, 15 (original Greek: 12, 14); See also David Herlihy, *Medieval Households* (Harvard University Press, 1985), 120; Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 193; King, “The School of Infancy,” 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Francesco Barbaro, “On Wifely Duties,” in *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, trans. Benjamin G. Kohl (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), 221–22; See also Herlihy, *Medieval Households*, 120; See also Margaret L. King, “Caldiera and the Barbaros on Marriage and the Family: Humanist Reflections of Venetian Realities,” *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 6 (1976): 33–34. Barbaro compares a woman or wife to a general who leads her soldiers; See also King, “The School of Infancy,” 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. King, “Caldiera and the Barbaros on Marriage and the Family: Humanist Reflections of Venetian Realities,” 32; King, “The School of Infancy,” 57–58. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. “Cuius ea potentia est, ut in effingendis corporis et animi proprietatibus ad seminis virtutem propiissime accedat.” Francesco Barbaro, “*De Liberorum Educatione* Dal *De Re Uxoria*,” in *Il Pensiero Pedagogico Dello Umanesimo*, trans. Garin Eugenio (Florence: Coedizioni Giuntine Sansoni, 1958), 140 (the Latin extracts in Garin’s text are taken from the version edited by Attilio Gnesotto in 1915). English translation from Barbaro, “On Wifely Duties”, 223; Also quoted in Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 201; and King, “The School of Infancy,” 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. “Quemadmodum enim infantis artus recte formari et componi facile possunt, ita ab ineunte aetate mores apte concinneque fingentur.” Barbaro, “*De Liberorum Educatione* Dal *De Re Uxoria*,” 140 English translation from Barbaro, “On Wifely Duties”, 223. ; Also quoted in Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 202; See also William H. Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre and other humanist educators* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 192–93; The same concept appears in Plutarch, “The Education of Children,” 15 (original Greek, 14). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Barbaro’s *De re uxoria* was prepared for circulation in manuscript form in Verona in 1428. More than fifty manuscript copies survive, most of which are from the fifteenth century. Only in 1548 was it translated into Italian by Alberto Lollio, with the title *Prudentissimi et Gravi Documenti circa la Elettion della Moglie*, and was subsequently printed in Venice. See also Carole Collier Frick, “The Downcast Eyes of the Women of the Upper Class in Francesco Barbaro’s *De Re Uxoria*,” *UCLA Historical Journal*, no. 9 (1989): 26, n.3; Benjamin G. Kohl, *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), 186; King, “The School of Infancy,” 58; Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 191; Barbaro’s desire for popularity is in Barbaro, “On Wifely Duties,” 227. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. “Le nobili madri le quali rifiutano il lactare de’ proprii figliuoli meritino odio da quegli.” Matteo Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, ed. Gino Belloni (Florence: Sansoni, 1982), 18. Palmieri also notes the belief that a lamb, born to a white sheep, would develop dark hair if fed by a black sheep, and likewise would grow thicker hair if fed by a goat; see Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. At least seven manuscript copies are recorded in *Iter Italicum* in Italian libraries. It was printed in 1529 in Florence, and in 1535 in Venice. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Michele Savonarola, *Il Trattato Ginecologico-Pediatrico in Volgare. Ad Mulieres Ferrarienses de Regimine Pregnantium et Noviter Natorum Usque Ad Septennium*, ed. Luigi Belloni (Milan, 1952), 145–48; See also King, “The School of Infancy,” 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Luigi Belloni, in his Introduction to Michele Savonarola, *Il Trattato Ginecologico-Pediatrico*, xi, mentions two manuscript copies in Italian libraries. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ibid., 147–48. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Maffeo Vegio (Maphei Vegii Laudensis), *De Educatione Liberorum et Eorum Claris Moribus Libri Sex: A Critical Text of Books I-III*, ed. Sister Maria Walburg Fanning (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America, 1933), 20–26; Maffeo Vegio (Maphei Vegii Laudensis), “De Educatione Liberorum et Eorum Claris Moribus,” in Eugenio Garin *Il Pensiero Pedagogico Dello Umanesimo* (Coedizioni Giuntine and Sansoni, 1958), 172–73. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Andrea Franzoni, *L’opera pedagogica de Maffeo Vegio* (Lodi: Scoietà Tip. Succ. Wilmant, 1907), 112–13; See also Vincent Joseph Horkan, *Educational Theories and Principles of Maffeo Vegio* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1953), 26–32; King, “The School of Infancy,” 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. English translation from Plutarch, “The Education of Children,” 15,17 (original Greek: 14, 16); See also Herlihy, *Medieval Households*, 120; Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 193; King, “The School of Infancy,” 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. “Vacua, libera e netta di que’ vizii e di quelle macule quali infettano e corrompono il latte e il sangue.” Leon Battista Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, ed. Ruggiero Romano and Alberto Tenenti (Turin: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1969), 41–42; Quoted in translation in Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 204. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. “Tutti gli altri antichi … lodan piú el latte della madre che alcuno altro.” Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, 44; Quoted in Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 205. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. On modern editions of *I libri della famiglia*, see Cecil Grayson, “Notes on the Texts of Some Vernacular Works of Leon Battista Alberti,” in *Studi Su Leon Battista Alberti*, ed. Paola Claut (Florence: Olschki, 1998), 7-43.; The third book of this treatise, on household management, enjoyed more popularity than the complete work, and circulated in manuscript and printed form under the title *Governo della famiglia* with attribution to Agnolo Pandolfini. See David Marsh, “Alberti, Leon Battista,” in *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, ed. Paul F. Grendler, vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1999), 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Barbaro, “*De Liberorum Educatione* Dal *De Re Uxoria*,” 139–45; For the English translation, see Barbaro, “On Wifely Duties,” 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. “Fuisset igitur ab ipsis cunabulis incipiendum, ut nutrices etiam nonnihil tibi contulissent; quas, si fieri posset … ne quid ab illis contagionis contrahi posset: deteriora namque pertinacious haerent, et bona facile mutantur in peius.” Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, “De Liberorum Educatione,” in *Humanist Educational Treatises*, ed. and trans. Craig W. Kallendorf (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 162–63. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Woodward mentions an edition published around 1475 in Cologne; see Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre*, 134–35. *Iter Italicum* lists one manuscript copy in Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Maffeo Vegio (Maphei Vegii Laudensis), “De Educatione Liberorum,” 1.IV, 25–26; Also quoted in an Italian translation in Franzoni, *L’opera pedagogica de Maffeo Vegio*, 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Savonarola, *Il Trattato Ginecologico-Pediatrico*, 145–47. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. “Temulentia, iracundia, ignavia, torpor et his similia etiam cum lacte imbibintur.” Francesco Patrizi da Siena, “De regno et regis institutionis,” in *Il pensiero pedagogico del rinascimento*, ed. Felice Battaglia (Firenze: Giuntine : Sansoni, 1960), 212. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 132-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Rudolph M. Bell, *How to do it. Guides to good living for Renaissance Italians* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 131-36. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. “Tirai dal latte della mia balia gli scarpegli e ‘l mazzuolo con che io fo le *figure*.” This anecdote is reported by Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, ed. Maurizio Marini (Rome: Grandi Tascabili Economici Newton, 2005), 1202; See also Louis Haas, *The Renaissance Man and His Children: Childbirth and Early Childhood in Florence, 1300-1600* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 91; Patricia Simons, “The Social and Religious Context of Iconographic Oddity: Breastfeeding in Ghirlandaio’s Birth of the Baptist,” in *Medieval and Renaissance Lactations: Images, Rhetorics, Practices*, ed. Jutta Gisela Sperling (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, 619; See also Simons, “The Social and Religious Context of Iconographic Oddity: Breastfeeding in Ghirlandaio’s Birth of the Baptist,” 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*; Cf. Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite* Terza Parte (Florence: Lorenzo Torrentino impressor ducale, 1550). Barbaro’s *De re uxoria* was prepared for circulation in manuscript form in Verona in 1428. More than fifty manuscript copies survive, most of which are from the fifteenth century. Only in 1548 was it translated into Italian by Alberto Lollio, with the title *Prudentissimi et Gravi Documenti circa la Elettion della Moglie*, and was subsequently printed in Venice. See also Frick, “The Downcast Eyes of the Women of the Upper Class in Francesco Barbaro’s *De Re Uxoria*.” [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Shulamith Shahar, *Childhood in the Middle Ages*, trans. Chaya Galai (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 277-8 n. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. “La poppa gli dava.” Lucrezia Tornabuoni de’ Medici, “Vita di Sancto Giovanni Battista,” in *I Poemetti Sacri di Lucrezia Tornabuoni*, ed. Fulvio Pezzarossa (Leo S. Olschki, 1978), 164; Lucrezia Tornabuoni de’ Medici, “The Life of St John the Baptist,” in *Sacred Narratives*, ed. and trans. Jane Tylus (Chicago, 2001), 234; Also mentioned in Simons, “The Social and Religious Context of Iconographic Oddity: Breastfeeding in Ghirlandaio’s Birth of the Baptist,” 218. Simons suggests that Lucrezia Tornabuoni based this account on the fourteenth-century Vite de’ Santi Padri written by Fra Domenico Cavalca. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Megan Holmes, “Disrobing the Virgin: The Madonna Lactans in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Art,” in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Grieco (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 167–95, esp. 190.; See also King, “The School of Infancy,” 51–52. The widespread humanisation of the holy figure of the Virgin Mary is probably the basis for the practice of addressing the Virgin Mary as “mother”. Haas, *The Renaissance Man and His Children*, 5; Richard C Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 88 n. 8 mentions that Dominican nuns called a statue of the Virgin Mary nostra mamma (“our mother”), as did the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. “Frontosa, ponere ti vogli sempre dinanti li ochi tuoi la humele vergene de Idio fiolo madre, la quale lactò il proprio suo fiolo e di quello hebbe tanta cura.” M. Savonarola, *Il Trattato Ginecologico-Pediatrico*, 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. On prescriptive literature and its use for research see Frances E. Dolan, *True relations: reading, literature, and evidence in seventeenth-century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), esp. chapter 5 “The Rule of Relation Domestic Advice Literature and Its Readers”, 154-201. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. King, “The School of Infancy,” 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Maffeo Vegio (Maphei Vegii Laudensis), *De Educatione Liberorum et Eorum Claris Moribus Libri Sex: A Critical Text of Books I-III*, 2.I, 51; 2.II, 54; King, “The School of Infancy,” 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. “Stimo tutta quella età tenerina piú tosto devota al riposo delle donne, che allo essercizio degli uomini … Adunque sia questa prima età in tutto fuori delle braccia de’ padri, riposisi, dorma nel grembo della mamma.” Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, 39–40; Quoted in translation in Patricia Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 140; See also Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, “Le Chiavi Fiorentine di Barbablù: L’apprendimento della Lettura a Firenze nel XV Secolo,” trans. Maddalena Santini, *Quaderni storici* Vol. 19, no. 57 (3) (December 1984): 769. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. “Postquam ex infantibus excesserint, ut animi et corporis dotibus excellant, ingenium, curam, operam, matres impendant.” Barbaro, “*De Liberorum Educatione* Dal *De Re Uxoria*,” 140–42; Also quoted in Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre*, 193; English translation from Barbaro, “On Wifely Duties,” 224; Also quoted in King, “The School of Infancy,” 60–61. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. King, “The School of Infancy,” 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. “Maternus sermo patientia conditus et elegantia saepe filius profuit, ut de Cornelia, Graccorum matre, plerique scribunt, cuius eloquentia in filiis redolebat.” Piccolomini, “De Liberorum Educatione,” 162–63; See also Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre*, 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Barbaro, “*De Liberorum Educatione* Dal *De Re Uxoria*,” 140; English translation from Barbaro, “On Wifely Duties,” 223. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, 20; See also Klapisch-Zuber, “Le Chiavi Fiorentine di Barbablù,” 786, n. 29, in which the author interprets Palmieri’s text as describing the mother’s attitude, although my understanding is that it is a more a suggestion of the qualities which should be sought in a nurse. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Maffeo Vegio (Maphei Vegii Laudensis), “De Educatione Liberorum,” 1.IX, 30; See Klapisch-Zuber, “Le Chiavi Fiorentine di Barbablù,” 769, n. 29; Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 191; On Jacopo di Porcia’s advice, see Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre*, esp. 193 n. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H. E. Butler (London: William Heinemann, 1920), 20–23; See also King, “The School of Infancy,” 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, 24; See also Robert Black, *Education and Society in Florentine Tuscany. Teachers, Pupils and Schools, c.1250-1500* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. “Infino ne’ primi anni, i quali s’atribuiscono al governo della balia, essere utile dare a’ piccoli qualche informatione di lettere.” Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. “Come colui che formava le lettere in frutte, berlingozi, et altri cibi puerili; poi, incitando il fanciullo, promettea dargliele s’egli lo conoscesse, dicendogli: ‘Questo torto è uno S, questo tondo uno O, il mezo tondo è uno C’ et simele delle altre lettere.” Ibid., 24; See also Black, *Education and Society*, 121; Klapisch-Zuber, “Le Chiavi Fiorentine di Barbablù,” 769. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. “Et nel principio levatolo dalla balia, formate delle lettere in frutte, berlingozi, zucherini et altri cibi puerili, incitate il fanciullo con essi prometterli dagleli, s’egli li conosce, dicendoli: ‘questo torto è uno S, questo tondo è uno O, questo mezo tondo è uno C’, et simile delle altre lettere.” Giovanni Rucellai, “Il Zibaldone Quaresimale,” in *Giovanni Rucellai Ed Il Suo Zibaldone*, ed. Alessandro Perosa, vol. 1 (London: The Warburg Institute, 1960), 14; See also Black, *Education and Society*, 121–22; Klapisch-Zuber, “Le Chiavi Fiorentine di Barbablù,” 770 n. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. “Quando chol tocho de la tavola che ‘nparava l’abici.” Quoted in Black, *Education and Society*, 122 and 706. Robert Black reports long extracts from the *Ricordanze* di Tribaldo di Amerigo de’ Rossi (1489–1504) in the Appendix 5 of his *Education and Society*, 695-707; In addition to this example, the schoolteacher Vittorino da Feltre used letter-based games to teach young children to read and to count; see Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre*, 38–39 and 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Danièlle Alexandre-Bidon, “A tavola! Les rudiments de l’éducation des enfants italiens à la fin du Moyen Age et au XVIe siècle,” *Chroniques italiennes*, no. 22/23 (1990): 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi, *Lettere di una gentildonna fiorentina del secolo XV ai figliuoli esuli*, ed. Cesare Guasti (Florence: G.C. Sansoni, 1877), letter 70, 587; Also cited in Klapisch-Zuber, “Le Chiavi Fiorentine di Barbablù,” 786 n. 34; and in Black, *Education and Society*, 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Other introductory textbooks similar to the *tavola* are called *carta* (paper) and *quaderno* (notebook); see Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600*, Reprint edition (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 142–43; Black, *Education and Society*, 44–45; Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 278–80; Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. “Acciò [le fanciulle] imparino à leggere almeno, tanto quanto li basta à leggere distintamente l’ufficiolo, il salterio, & altre divote & sante oration.”Quoted in Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 100; In regard to girls, a similar concept appears in Ludovico Dolce’s *Dialogo della instituzion delle donne* published in 1545, in which the author recommends that girls read devotional books; see Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 142. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. “Insegna a ciascheduno che sappia leggere, ad insegnare al suo figliuolo et figliuola, o vero amico, che niente sapino leggere, talmente che ciasheduno potra imparare et etiam le donne grandi, et piccole, che niente sanno potranno imparare a leggere.” Quoted in Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 142 (in English translation), 376 n.20 (in Italian); See also Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. “E comincò a ‘nsegnargli il donadello, ché in chasa avea inparato la tavola e il saltero dalla Bartolomea mie [sic] donna.” Quoted in Black, *Education and Society*, 122 and 669–70; Also quoted in Klapisch-Zuber, “Le Chiavi Fiorentine di Barbablù,” 771; Ronald Witt, “What Did Giovannino Read and Write? Literacy in Early Renaissance Florence,” *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 6 (1995): 96 n.42. *Donadello* is an Italian alteration of Donatus, the name given to the manual of grammar. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Quoted in Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 74, n.13; and in Black, *Education and Society*, 122: “Giovanni, legie la tavola in chasa, d’età d’anni 6”. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Black, *Education and Society*, 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. “Nam et minores maiorum doctrina melius celeriusque proficiunt.” Maffeo Vegio (Maphei Vegii Laudensis), “De Educatione Liberorum,” 2.IV, 57; See also Eugenio Garin, *Il pensiero pedagogico dello umanesimo. A cura di Eugenio Garin* (Florence: Coedizioni Giuntine Sansoni, 1958), 182–83; Franzoni, *L’opera pedagogica de Maffeo Vegio*, 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Ibid., 101; This is contradicted by Black, who suggests that the number of children recorded as starting their learning process directly at school would imply that domestic teaching did not occur frequently; see Black, *Education and Society*, 122–23. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Images of Saint Anne teaching the young Virgin Mary are also found from the fourteenth century, especially in Northern Europe and in Spain; see Pamela Sheingorn, “*The Wise Mother*: The Image of St. Anne Teaching the Virgin Mary,” *Gesta* 32, no. 1 (1993): 69–80; Elizabeth Teresa Howe, *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World* (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 94–96; Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Schools: From Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 117–18; Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre*, 94–95; Craig W Kallendorf, “Introduction,” in *Humanist Educational Treatises*, ed. Craig W Kallendorf (Harvard University Press, 2002), ix. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. “Lacienda sunt igitur in hac aetate fundamenta bene vivendi et conformandus ad virtutem animus, dum tener est et facilis quamlibet impressionem admittere.” Pier Paolo Vergerio, “The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-Born Youth,” in *Humanist Educational Treatises*, ed. Craig W. Kallendorf, trans. Craig W Kallendorf (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 4–5. For further information on the impressionability of children’s minds see Chapter 1.3. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Margaret L. King, *The Death of the Child Valerio Marcello* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 162–72; King, “The School of Infancy,” 49–50; On the role of the father within the family see Claudia Tripodi, “Il padre a Firenze nel Quattrocento. L’educazione del pupillo in Giovanni Morelli,” *Annali di Storia di Firenze* 3 (October 2011): 29–63. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. “Il padre a cui sarà nato il figliuolo, innanzi a ogni altra cosa abbia di lui perfecta speranza et stimilo dovere riuscire virtuoso et degno fa gl’uomini.” Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. “E’ padre soprattutto più che gli altri debbano colle mani e co’ piedi, con tutti e’ nervi, con ogni industria e consiglio, quanto possono sforzarsi ch’e’ figliuoli sieno costumati e onestissimi.” Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Klapisch-Zuber, “Le Chiavi Fiorentine di Barbablù,” 769. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Eugenio Garin, *Ritratti di umanisti* (Florence: Sansoni, 1967), 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. For information about the Medieval curriculum see Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 111–17; On the humanistic novelty see ibid., 117 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Paul Oskar Kristeller, “Humanism,” in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles B. Schmitt et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Eugenio Garin, *L’educazione umanistica in Italia: testi scelti e illustrati* (Bari: Giuseppe Laterza, 1949), 1–2. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Ibid., 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. On civic humanism see Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance. Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955); James Hankins, *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Hanan Yoran, “Florentine Civic Humanism and the Emergence of Modern Ideology,” *History and Theory* 46, no. 3 (October 2007): 326–44; Brian Jeffrey Maxson, *The Humanist World of Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014) andthe collection of essays *After Civic Humanism: Learning and Politics in Renaissance Italy*, eds. Nicholas Scott Baker and Brian Jeffrey Maxson (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. “Has ob res non mediocres musis gratias debes quibus a pueritia usque imbutus et institutus te tuos et urbana negotia regere disponere et administrare, restituere ac sustentare didicisti. Quo effectum est ut musas ipsas non modo chordarum et citharae sed rerum etiam publicarum moderatrices esse demonstres … Quanti igitur facienda, quam laudanda ea doctrina illae artes quibus instituitur is qui futurus est in re publica princeps.” Veronese Guarino, *Epistolario di Guarino Veronese*, ed. Remigio Sabbadini, vol. 1 (Turin: Bottega d’Erasmo, 1959), 263; English translation from Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 127–28. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Ibid., 129–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Ibid., 133. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. On the genre of *Specula Principum* see Diego Quaglioni, “Il modello del principe cristiano. Gli specula principum fra Medio Evo e prima Età Moderna,” in *Modelli nella storia del pensiero politico*, ed. Vittor Ivo Comparato (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1987), 103–22; Giuseppe Tognon, “Intellettuali ed educazione del principe nel Quattrocento Italiano. Il formarsi di una nuova pedagogia politica,” *Mélanges de l’Ecole française de Rome. Moyen-Age, Temps modernes* 99, no. 1 (1987): 405–33; Eric Nelson, “The Problem of the Prince,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 319–37; Marco Giosi, “La Tradizione degli Specula Principum e la Institutio Principis Christiani di Erasmo da Rotterdam,” *Educazione. Giornale di pedagogia critica* V, no. 2 (2016): 43–66. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Giosi, “La Tradizione degli Specula Principum,” 47–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. On princely virtues and *Speculum Principum* literature see István Pieter Bejczy and Cary J Nederman, *Princely Virtues in the Middle Ages, 1200-1500*, ed. István Pieter Bejczy and Cary J Nederman (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 1–8; Ulrich Langer, “Virtue of the Prince, Virtue of the Subject,” in *Rethinking Virtue, Reforming Society: New Directions in Renaissance Ethics, c.1350 - c.1650*, ed. David A. Lines and Sabrina Ebbersmeyer (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 305–12. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Gabriella Zuccolin, “Princely Virtues in *De Felici Progressu* of Michele Savonarola, Court Physician of the House of Este,” in *Princely Virtues in the Middle Ages: 1200-1500*, ed. István Bejczy and Cary J. Nederman (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 240–41. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Jill Kraye, “Moral Philosophy,” in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles B. Schmitt et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 303; On the study of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* and on its commentaries see David A. Lines, *Aristotle’s Ethics in the Italian Renaissance (ca. 1300-1650). The Universities and the Problem of Moral Education* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); David A. Lines, “Sources and Authorities for Moral Philosophy in the Italian Renaissance. Thomas Aquinas and Jean Buridan on Aristotle’s Ethics,” in *Moral Philosophy on the Threshold of Modernity*, ed. Jill Kraye and Risto Saarinen (Springer Science & Business Media, 2005), 7–29; Luca Bianchi, “Renaissance Readings of the Nicomachean Ethics,” in *Rethinking Virtue, Reforming Society. New Directions in Renaissance Ethics, c.1350-c.1650* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 131–67; See also David A. Lines and Jill Kraye, “Sources for Ethics in the Renaissance: The Expanding Canon,” in *Rethinking Virtue, Reforming Society: New Directions in Renaissance Ethics, c.1350-c.1650*, ed. David A. Lines and Sabrina Ebbersmeyer (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 29–56. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Kraye, “Moral Philosophy,” 319–21, 356–59, 367–70, 382–86. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Ibid., 334–37; On moral philosophy see also David A. Lines, “The Importance of Being Good. Moral Philosophy in the Italian Universities, 1300-1600,” *Rinascimento* II s., 36 (1996): 139–93. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. “In horum [philosophy] igitur altero praecepta quid sequi quidve fugere conveniat, in altero [history] exempla invenimus”. Vergerio, “The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-Born Youth,” 48–49; also quoted in Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 118; and in Italian in Garin, *L’educazione umanistica in Italia*, 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. William H. Woodward, *Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance 1400-1600* (Cambridge: University Press, 1906), 44; Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 255–56. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. “Utilissimum ergo est historias quamplures nosse atque in his se exercere, ut aliorum exemplo vel utilia sequi vel noxia vitare scias.” Piccolomini, “De Liberorum Educatione,” 224–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Ibid., 127. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Battista Guarino, “De Ordine Docenti et Studendi,” in *Humanist Educational Treatises*, ed. and trans. Craig W. Kallendorf (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 284–85. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Ibid., 292–93. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 119, reports Bruni’s treatise as being written between 1423 and 1426; Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre*, 119–20, believes it was composed not much later than 1405, the year of Baptista’s marriage. At least three Italian fifteenth-century editions of Bruni’s treatise survived; see Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre*, 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. “Dirigit enim prudentiam et consilium praeteritorum notitia … exemplorum copia, quibus plerumque illustrare dicta nostra oportet, non aliunde quam ab historia commodious sumetur.” Leonardo Bruni, “The Study of Literature,” in *Humanist Educational Treatises*, ed. and trans. Craig W. Kallendorf (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 108–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. “Quae imitationem eis promptissimam, facillimam, et ad nutum semper paratissimam praestabunt.” Maffeo Vegio (Maphei Vegii Laudensis), “De Educatione Liberorum,” 186–87; See also Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, 81; also quoted in Luke Syson and Dora Thornton, *Objects of Virtue: Art in Renaissance Italy* (London: The British Museum Press, 2001), 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. “Sempre in casa si ragioni di cose buone et honeste, et infino alle favole delle donne sieno ammonimenti d’onesto vivere.” Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, 23–24; also quoted in Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 15; Robert Lamberton, “Plutarch,” in *Classical Tradition*, ed. Anthony Grafton, Glen Most, and Salvatore Settis (Cambridge, MA, and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), 747–50; Peter Burke, “Individuality and Biography in the Renaissance,” *The European Legacy*, no. 2, 8 (1997): 1377. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy. Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 247, 274. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Burke, “Individuality and Biography in the Renaissance,” 1373. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 15; Burke, “Individuality and Biography in the Renaissance,” 1373. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, I.2.29, 53; See also Howe, *Education and Women*, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. The complete text of Quinitillian’s *Institutio Oratoria* was discovered by the humanist Poggio Bracciolini in 1416; Cicero’s *De Oratore* was discovered, together with other works by the same author, by Bishop Gerardo Landriani in 1421. See Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 120–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Basil (Saint), *The Letters*, ed. and trans. Roy Joseph Deferrari (Cambridge, MA.: Loeb Classical Library, 1961), I, 14–17; Also quoted in Gary Vikan, “Sacred Images, Sacred Power,” in *Late Antique and Medieval Art of the Mediterranean World*, ed. Eva R Hoffman (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 140; see also Peter Brown, “The Saint as Exemplar in Late Antiquity,” *Representations*, no. 2 (1983): 1–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 282, 285. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Anne Jacobson Schutte, *Printed Italian Vernacular Religious Books 1465-1550: A Finding List* (Geneva: Droz, 1983), 321–23. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Girolamo Savonarola, *Triumphus Crucis seu de Veritate Fidei* (Florence: Bartolomeo di Libri, 1497), III: 18. See also Chapter 1.4 of this thesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. On pictures of the Virgin Mary as models for brides see Luke Syson, “Representing Domestic Interiors,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 97; Mindy Nancarrow Taggard, “Murillo’s *St. Anne Teaching the Virgin to Read* and the Question of Female Literacy and Learning in Golden Age Spain,” *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift/Journal of Art History*, no. 68.1 (1999): 31–33; On the imitation of Christ during Early Christianity see Candida R. Moss, *The Other Christs: Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 19–44. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Maximilian von Habsburg, *Catholic and Protestant Translations of the Imitatio Christi, 1425-1650: From Late Medieval Classic to Early Modern Bestseller* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), esp. 49-78, 79-106. The three Florentine editions noted above, produced by Antonio de Bartolommeo Miscomini, are listed in the Universal Short Catalogue (USTC) online. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. On the use of History as a source of moral exempla see Donald R. Kelley, “The Renaissance,” in *Versions of History from Antiquity to the Enlightenment*, ed. Donald R. Kelley (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 218–19; Donald R. Kelley, “The Theory of History,” in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles B. Schmitt et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 746–50; Donald R. Kelley, *Faces of History: Historical Inquiry from Herodotus to Herder* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 130–61; Timothy Hampton, *Writing from History: The Rhetoric of Exemplarity in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), 1–30; On the imitation of *exempla* see John D. Lyons, *Exemplum: The Rhetoric of Example in Early Modern France and Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 12-14 and passim esp. 47-71; Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 263–64. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. “Cum sancto sanctus eris et cum innocentes innocens eris; et cum electo electus eri, et cum perverso perverteris” (from Psalm 17). Giovanni Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi (Florence: Angiolo Garinei Libraio, 1860), 142. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Vergerio, “The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-Born Youth,” 12–13; Also in Italian in Garin, *L’educazione umanistica in Italia*, 57–58. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. “É tale età come disposta cera, e piglia quella impronta vi s’accosta.” Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, 132; Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. “Haec aetas, hic animus, mollis adhuc ad effingendum facillumum est. Nam ut sigillum teneris ceris imprimimus, sic in pueris nutricis affectiones et morbi celari solent.” Barbaro, “*De Liberorum Educatione* Dal *De Re Uxoria*,” 140; English translation from Barbaro, “On Wifely Duties,” 223–24; Also quoted in Hairston, “The Economics of Milk and Blood,” 202. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. “Iacienda sunt igitur in hac aetate fundamenta bene vivendi et conformandus ad virtutem animus, dum tener est et facilis quamlibet impressionem admittere: quae ut nunc erit, ita et in reliqua vita servabitur.” Vergerio, “The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-Born Youth,” 4–5. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. “Omnes tamen a pueritia studiis laboribusque mancipanci sunt, ‘Dum faciles animi iuvenum, dum mobilis etas’, ut est Maronis versus.” Ibid., 30–31 Here Vergerio refers to Virgil, *Georgics*, 3.165. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Plato, *The Republic*, ed. and trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1968), II, 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Ibid., II, 55; On another occasion Plato goes even further by stating that the soul of drinkers can be trained and moulded, by virtue of their similarity to those of children, see Plato, *The Laws*, trans. Thomas L Pangle (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), II, 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Plutarch, “The Education of Children,” vol.1, 15, 17 (original Greek: 14, 16). [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. “Ubi uxoribus conveniat, nonnisi dignissimos hominum et formosissimos vultus pingas monent; plurimum enim habere id momenti ad conceptus matronarum et futuram spetiem prolis ferunt.” Leon Battista Alberti, *L’Architettura (De re aedificatoria)*, ed. and trans. Giovanni Orlandi (Milan: Edizioni Il Polifilo, 1966), II.9, 805; English translation from Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rywert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1988), 299. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. For further information on the use of images as an educative tool see Richard C. Trexler, “Florentine Religious Experience: The Sacred Image,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 19 (1972): 7–41; Daniel Arasse, “Entre dévotion et culture: fonctions de l’image religieuse au XVe Siècle,” in *Faire croire. Modalités de la diffusion et de la réception des messages religieux du XIIe au XVe siècle* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1981), 131–46; Jeffrey Hamburger, “The Visual and the Visionary: The Image in Late Medieval Monastic Devotions,” *Viator* 20 (January 1, 1989): 161–82; Paola Tinagli, *Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Gender, Representation, Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), esp. chapter 5 “The cult of female saints: images of devotion and exempla”, 155-185; Herbert L. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing: Picturing God’s Invisibility in Medieval Art* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Robert S Nelson, ed., *Visuality before and beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); especially chapters by Cynthia Hahn, “The Cult of Female Saints: Images of Devotion and Exempla,” in *Visuality before and beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw*, ed. Robert S Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 169–96; and Michael Camille, “Before the Gaze. The Internal Senses and Late Medieval Practices of Seeing,” in *Visuality before and beyond the Renaissance. Seeing as Others Saw*, ed. Robert S. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 197–223; Suzannah Biernoff, *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002); François Quiviger, “Seeing and Looking in the Renaissance,” in *La Vista y La Visión* (Valencia: Institut Valencià d’Art Modern, 2003); François Quiviger, *The Sensory World of Italian Renaissance Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 2010) especially the chapter on Sight. 99-104; Vikan, “Sacred Images, Sacred Power,” 135–46; Sara Lipton, “Images and Their Use,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Volume 4, Christianity in Western Europe, c.1100–c.1500*, ed. Miri Rubin and Walter Simons (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 254–82; Beth Williamson, “Sensory Experience in Medieval Devotion: Sound and Vision, Invisibility and Silence,” *Speculum* 88, no. 1 (January 2013): 1–43; Jennifer R. Hammerschmidt, “Beyond Vision: The Impact of Rogier van Der Weyden’s Descent from the Cross,” in *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 201–17; Theresa Flanigan, “Art, Memory, and the Cultivation of Virtue: The Ethical Function of Images in Antoninus’s Opera a Ben Vivere,” *Gesta* 53.2 (Fall 2014): 175–95. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. See Quiviger, *The Sensory World*, 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Gregory the Great, “Liber Regulae Pastoralis,” in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Prima. Patrologiae Tomus LXXVII*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Lutetiae Parisiorum: J. P. Migne, 1849), pars tertia, XI, 64; XXIV, 94; See also Constant J. Mews and Claire Renkin, “The Legacy of Gregory the Great in the Latin West,” in *A Companion to Gregory the Great*, ed. Bronwen Neil and Matthew Dal Santo (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 331–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. “Quod legentibus scriptura hoc idiotis praestat pictura cernentibus, quia in ipsia etiam ignorantes videt quid sequi debeant, in ipsa legunt qui litteras nesciunt. Unde et praecipue gentibus pro lectione pictura est.” Gregory the Great, “Epistola Ad Serenum Massiliensem Episcopum,” in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Prima. Patrologiae Tomus LXXVII*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Lutetiae Parisiorum: J. P. Migne, 1849), 1128; English translation by Robert Austin Markus, *Gregory the Great and His World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 175; See also Gillian Rosemary Evans, *The Thought of Gregory the Great* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Gregory the Great, “Liber Regulae Pastoralis,” 982–91, esp. 990–91; Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing: Picturing God’s Invisibility in Medieval Art*, 121; Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1984), 121–22. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Quiviger, *The Sensory World*, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. “Item scire te volo quod triplex fuit ratio institutionis imaginum in ecclesia. Prima ad instructionem rudium, qui eis quasi quibusdam libris edoceri videntur. Secunda ut incarnationis mysterium et sanctorum exempla magis in memoria nostra essent dum quotidie oculis nostris representantur. Tertia ad excitandum devotionis affectum, qui ex visis efficacius excitatur quam ex auditis.” Quoted in Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy. A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 161; English translation from ibid., 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Fra Michele da Carcano’s *Sermones quadragesimales fratis Michaelis de Mediolano de decem preceptis* are quoted in Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy. A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*, 41; On Johannes de Balbi’s *Summa grammaticalis quae vocatur Catholiconi* see Richard Freedman, *Music in the Renaissance: Western Music in Context* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 59; Margaret R. Miles, *Image as Insight: Visual Understanding in Western Christianity and Secular Culture* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1985), 66. Balbi’s dictionary was printed at least seven times in Venice between 1483 and 1506. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy*, 286–88. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. The *Meditationes vitae Christi* survives in two hundreds manuscript copies and had 52 editions published in Italy, between 1465 and 1550; Schutte, *Printed Italian Vernacular Religious Books 1465-1550 : A Finding List*, 100–104; Quiviger, “Seeing and Looking in the Renaissance,” 76 n. 18; Biernoff, *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages*, 137–38. According to Saint Bernard, higher levels of prayer were imageless, and should rise above pictures; see Donal Cooper, “Devotion,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 190–203; Imageless devotion and the mind’s eye as an inner sense of sight are discussed in Williamson, “Sensory Experience in Medieval Devotion: Sound and Vision, Invisibility and Silence,” : 3, 12-13; see also Quiviger, “Seeing and Looking in the Renaissance,” 74–76; Quiviger, *The Sensory World*, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Plato, *The Republic*, III, 79–80. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Claudio Paolini, “Chests,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 120–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 70–71. See also Adrian W. B. Randolph, *Touching objects. Intimate experiences of Italian Fifteenth-Century Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 148-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. On the reclining nude see Randolph, *Touching objects*, 151-67. See also Deborah L. Krohn, “58b. Inner Lid from a Cassone with Venus Reclining on Pillows,” in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Andrea Bayer (New York, New Haven, Conn.; London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2008), 134–36; E. H. Gombrich, “Apollonio Di Giovanni: A Florentine Cassone Workshop Seen through the Eyes of a Humanist Poet,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 18, no. 1/2 (1955): 27; Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 132; Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, “Imaginative Conceptions in Renaissance Italy,” in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Grieco (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. The episode of the *Rape of the Sabine Women*, recounted by the Roman authors Livy and Plutarch (*Parallel Lives* II, 15 and 19), describes how Roman men abducted women from neighbouring families in order to make them their wives. The term “rape” in this case refers to abduction rather than to sexual abuse. This interpretation is suggested by Gombrich, “Apollonio Di Giovanni,” 27; see also Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, “The Rape of the Sabine Women on Quattrocento Marriage Panels,” in *Marriage in Italy, 1300-1650*, ed. Trevor Dean and K. J. P. Lowe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 66–84. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. See John Pope-Hennessy, *Italian Renaissance Sculpture* (London: Phaidon, 1958), 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. “[Padri e madri] tengono in casa alle lettiere e a lettucci figure disonestissime, fanciulle ignude con huomini, con certi atti e modi disonesti” Girolamo Savonarola, “Predica Duodecima. Che Dio Non Fa Male a Buoni Ne Bene a Cattivi,” in *Prediche Del Reverendo Padre Fra Girolamo Savonarola Da Ferrara, Sopra Il Salmo Quam Bonus Israel Deus* (Venetia, 1539), 252, http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10188962\_00252.html; John Kent Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence” (John Hopkins University, 1987), 173 n. 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. “Imagines fortasse maiorum magis ad aemulationem gloriae animos excitant” Vergerio, “The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-Born Youth,” 12–13; aslo in Italian in Garin, *L’educazione umanistica in Italia*, 57–58. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. “Homines aliquot picturae genere teneantur quo possint tamquam praesenti historiae eruditione frui, quin in his ex vehementi imaginum similitudine aut animi appetitio praeparetur aut motrix evocetur virtus.” Reported in Kathleen Weil-Garris and John F. D’Amico, “The Renaissance Cardinal’s Ideal Palace: A Chapter from Cortesi’s *De Cardinalatu*,” *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome. Studies in Italian Art History 1: Studies in Italian Art and Architecture 15th through 18th Centuries.* 35 (1980): 90–91. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. “Ea [the pictures] maxime esse debent virtutum expressa signa, quibus animi ad similitudinem factorum matutina commonitione excitentur”. Quoted in ibid., 94–95; see also Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Spenser Collection MS 20, fol. 1r New York Public Library. The illuminations of this manuscript (ca.1480-85), produced for Cardinal Giovanni of Aragon, are attributed to Gaspare da Padova. See ibid., 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. “Huiusmodi enim effigies ad recolendam Sanctorum memoriam, ad excitandasque eorum exemplo ad virtutem, sanctitatemque animas, erigendasque ad illorum suffragia pro nobis ad Dominum imploranda adiuventae sunt” Savonarola, *Triumphus Crucis seu de Veritate Fidei*, III.XVIII; English translation from Girolamo Savonarola, *The Triumph of the Cross*, ed. and trans. John Procter (London: Sands, 1901), 152; See also Bartolommeo Aquarone, *Vita Di Fra Jeronimo Savonarola* (Alessandria: Gazzotti e C., 1858), vols. 2, 26, n.14; Alison Brown, “Introduction,” in *Selected Writings of Girolamo Savonarola. Religion and Politics, 1490-1498*, ed. and trans. Anne Borelli and Maria Pastore Passaro (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), xxii; On the editions of Savonarola’s work in the vernacular translation see Schutte, *Printed Italian Vernacular Religious Books 1465-1550 : A Finding List*, 329–35; see also Chapter 1.3 of this thesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. “Picturae quoque res eorum gestas exprimentes, precipue rudibus, litterarumque ignaris pro lectione succurrunt.” Savonarola, *Triumphus Crucis seu de Veritate Fidei*, III.XVIII; English translation from Savonarola, *The Triumph of the Cross*, 152; For more information on Savonarola’s ideas about the use of images in devotional practice, see Ronald M Steinberg, *Fra Girolamo Savonarola, Florentine Art, and Renaissance Historiography* (Athens Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1977), 47–52. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Peta Motture and Luke Syson, “Art in the Casa,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 281; Evelyn Welch, *Art in Renaissance Italy, 1350-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 207. On devotion to the Virgin Mary see, for example, Fredrika H. Jacobs, *Votive Panels and Popular Piety in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 115–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Cooper, “Devotion,” 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. See alsoChapters 1.1 and 1.2 of this thesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Allison Lee Palmer, “The Walters’ *Madonna and Child* Plaquette and Private Devotional Art in Early Renaissance Italy,” *The Journal of the Walters Art Museum* 59 (2001): 79–80; Allison Lee Palmer, “The Maternal Madonna in Quattrocento Florence: Social Ideals in the Family of the Patriarch,” *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 21, no. 3 (2002): 7–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. “Ma diciamo da [sic] la trovò l’Angiolo. Dove credi ch’ella fusse? A le finestre o a fare qualche altro essercizio di vanità? Eh no! Ella stava inserrata in camara, e leggeva, per dare essemplo a te fanciulla, che mai tu non abbi diletto di stare nè a uscio nè a finestra, ma che tu stia dentro in casa, dicendo delle Ave Marie e de’ Pater Nostri.” Original and English translation from Saundra Weddle, “Women’s Place in the Family and the Convent: A Reconsideration of Public and Private in Renaissance Florence,” *Journal of Architectural Education (1984-)* 55, no. 2 (2001): 65; Also quoted in a different translation in Caroline Corisande Anderson, “The Material Culture of Domestic Religion in Early Modern Florence, c.1480 - c.1650” (University of York, 2007), 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Roberta J. M. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Tinagli, *Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Gender, Representation, Identity*, 155–60. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Horace K Mann, *The Lives of the Popes in the Early Middle Ages, Vol. I: The Popes Under the Lombard Rule, Part 2* (Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint, 1976), 191. The letters attributed to Pope Gregory II are published in the original Greek and French translation in Jean Gouillard, “Aux origines de l’iconoclasme: le témoignage de Gregoire II?,” *Travaux et mémoires* 3 (1968): 286–87; see also Edward James Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy* (London and New York: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Macmillan Co, 1930), 36–37. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Arnold Victor Coonin, “Portrait Busts of Children in Quattrocento Florence,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 30 (1995): 64; see also Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 136–37. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Dominici’s life and writing have been discussed by several scholars, of which the most relevant in this case are: Giuseppina Battista, *L’educazione dei figli nella regola di Giovanni Dominici* (Florence: Pagnini and Martinelli, 2002); Pino Da Prati, *Giovanni Dominici e l’Umanesimo* (Naples: Istituto Editoriale del Mezzogiorno, 1965); Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby, *Renaissance Florence in the Rhetoric of Two Popular Preachers: Giovanni Dominici (1356-1419) and Bernardino Da Siena (1380-1444)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001); Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby, “Political Views in the Preaching of Giovanni Dominici in Renaissance Florence, 1400-1406,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (2002): 19–48; Arthur Basil Coté, “Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare, Parte Quarta: *On the Education of Children*” (The Catholic University of America, 1927). [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. The biography of Bartolomea degli Alberti is reported in Donato Salvi, “Prefazione,” in *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi (Florence: Angiolo Garinei Libraio, 1860), lxxiii–lxxxi. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. “La prima [regoluzza] si è d’avere dipinture in casa di santi fanciulli o vergini giovanette, nelle quali il tuo figliuolo, ancor nelle fascie, si diletti come simile e dal simile rapito, con atti e segni grati all’infanzia. E come dico di pinture, così dico di scolture”. Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, 131–32. The translation in the text is mine; another English translation of Dominici’s text can be found in Coté, “Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare, Parte Quarta: *On the Education of Children*,” 34; also quoted in Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, 131–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. On images compared to mirrors, see Chapter 3.1.1 of this thesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. Salvi, “Prefazione”; Coté, “Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare, Parte Quarta: *On the Education of Children*,” 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. “[Una Vergine] la quale lasciò in casa, ritenneva per contento di fanciugli.” Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual*, 321 n.39; translation from ibid., 321. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. The original manuscript is dedicated to Dianora di Francesco Tornabuoni, while another almost identical copy is believed to have been produced for her sister Lucrezia Tornabuoni, see Flanigan, “Art, Memory, and the Cultivation of Virtue,” 175–77. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. “O volete in chiesa o volete in camera vostra, inginocchiatevi dinanzi ad un Crucifizzo, e cogli occhi della mente, più che con quegli del corpo, considerate la faccia sua.” Antoninus (Saint), *Opera a ben vivere*, ed. Francesco Palermo (Florence: Tipi di M. Cellini e C., 1858), 169; English translation from Flanigan, “Art, Memory, and the Cultivation of Virtue” Flanigan reports Chapter 11 *Meditation on the Passion of Christ, and upon it fifteen Our Fathers* in its entirety in translation, in the Appendix, 194-195. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. Antoninus (Saint), *Opera a ben vivere*, III.xi, 169-174; see also Flanigan, “Art, Memory, and the Cultivation of Virtue,” 178–79. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Flanigan, “Art, Memory, and the Cultivation of Virtue,” 180, n. 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. Ibid., 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. “Imagines autem sanctorum fiunt in ecclesia, non ad exhibendum eis cultum latriae; sed ad imprimendum efficacius excellentiam eorum mentibus hominum.” Sancti Antonini archiepiscopi Florentini, *Summa Theologica in Quattuor Partes Distribute* (Veronae: Ex typographia seminarii, apud Augustinum Carattonium, 1740), II.xii.1.2, col. 1136c-d; English translation from Samuel Edgerton, *The Mirror, the Window, and the Telescope: How Renaissance Linear Perspective Changed Our Vision of the Universe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 182, n. 15; A different English translation can be found in Flanigan, “Art, Memory, and the Cultivation of Virtue,” 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. See also Sancti Antonini archiepiscopi Florentini, *Summa Theologica in Quattuor Partes Distribute*, III.xii.9. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. “Nihil [e]n[im] aeque animos ad diversissimos affectus brevi momento traducere.” Franchinus Gaffurius, *Practica musicae* (Milan: Guillaume Le Signerre, per Giovanni Pietro da Lomazzo, 30 IX, 1496; Madison, Milwaukee and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), f. v3; English translation from Franchinus Gaffurius, *The Practica Musicae of Franchinus Gafurius*, ed. and trans. Irwin Young (Madison, Milwaukee and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Gaffurius, *Practica musicae*, xv, xviii, xxiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. Ibid., xvii–xviii. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. “Velut morum parentem altricemq[ue] summo studio excoluerunt”. Ibid., f. 3v; English translation from Gaffurius, *The Practica Musicae of Franchinus Gafurius*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. Gaffurius, *Practica musicae*, f. 3v; English translation from Gaffurius, *The Practica Musicae of Franchinus Gafurius*, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. Gaffurius, *Practica musicae*, f. 4r; English translation from Gaffurius, *The Practica Musicae of Franchinus Gafurius*, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. Claude V. Palisca, “Introduction,” in *Fundamentals of Music*, ed. Claude V. Palisca, trans. Calvin M. Bower (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), xiii. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. Ibid.; Hyun-Ah Kim, *The Renaissance Ethics of Music: Singing, Contemplation and Musica Humana* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2015), 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. “Ita nobis musicam naturaliter esse coniunctam, ut ea ne si velimus quidem carere possimus.” Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, *De institutione arithmetica libri duo; De institutione musica libri quinque*, ed. Gottfried Friedlein (Lipsiae: B.G. Teubner, 1867), 187; English translation from Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, ed. Claude V. Palisca, trans. Calvin M. Bower (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 8; See also Calvin M. Bower, “Introduction,” in *Fundamentals of Music*, ed. Claude V. Palisca, trans. Calvin M. Bower (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), xx. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. “Nihil est enim tam proprium humanitatis, quam remitti dulcibus modis, adstringi contrariis.” Boethius, *De institutione*, 179; English translation from Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. Boethius, *De institutione*, 180; Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Boethius, *De institutione*, 182–87; Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, 4–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. Boethius, *De institutione*, 187; Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Boethius, *De institutione*, 187–89; Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, 9–10. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. “Incorpoream rationis vivacitatem corpori misceat.” Boethius, *De institutione*, 188; English translation from Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. Kim, *The Renaissance Ethics of Music*, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Ibid., 18–20. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. For an overview of Marsilio Ficino’s interest in music Jacomien Prins, *Echoes of an Invisible World: Marsilio Ficino and Francesco Patrizi on Cosmic Order and Music Theory* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), esp. 25-118; On Ficino’s musical activity see Daniel Pickering Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic: From Ficino to Campanella* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Marsilio Ficino, *Three Books on Life*, ed. Carol V. Kaske and John R. Clark (Tempe, AZ: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies in conjunction with the Renaissance Society of America, 1998), 3.21, 356–59. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. “Hinc quidem spiritum nostrum ad coelestem influxum, inde vero influxum ad spiritum mirifice provocat.” Ibid., 3.21, 358–59. [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. Ibid., 3.21, 355, 363. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. “Musicae illius incomparabilis accipit. Quibus in eius qua antea fruebatur harmoniae, intimam quandam, ac tacitam recordationem reducitur, totusque desiderio feruet, cupitque ut uera musica rursus fruatur, ac sedes proprias reuolare.” Marsilio Ficino, *Epistolae Marsilii Ficini Florentini* (Nuremberg: Per Antonium Koberger ímpraesse, 1497), liber primus, f. vr; English translation from Marsilio Ficino, *The Letters of Marsilio Ficino*, trans. from the Latin by members of the Language Department of the School of Economic Science, London, vol. 1 (London: Shepheard-Walwyn, 1975), letter n.7, 45; Ficino arranged his letters in twelve volumes and circulated them in manuscript copies from 1470s and in printed copies from 1495. See Paul Oskar Kristeller, “Preface,” in *Marsilio Ficino, The Letters of Marsilio Ficino* (London: Shepheard-Walwyn, 1975), vols. 1, 17–18. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. “Nam cum cantus sonusque ex cogitatione mentis & impetu phantasiae cordisque affectu proficiscatur atque una cum aere fracto & temperato, aereum audientis spiritum pulset qui animae corporisque nodus est facile phantasiam movet, afficitque cor & intima mentis penetralia penetrat. Corporis quoque humores & membra sistit & movet.” Ficino, *Epistolae Marsilii Ficini Florentini*, liber primus, f. xxxv; English translation from Ficino, *The Letters of Marsilio Ficino*, 1:letter n. 92, 142; see also Angela Voss, “Magic, Astrology and Music: The Background to Marsilio Ficino’s Astrological Music Therapy and His Role as a Renaissance Magus” (City University London, 1992), 257 (original Latin, 332. n.14). A different translation can be found in Walker, *Spiritual and Demonic Magic: From Ficino to Campanella*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. James Hankins, *Plato in the Italian Renaissance* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 300–301. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Plato, *The Republic*, III, 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. Plato, *The Laws*, II. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Harris Rackman (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1959), VIII.2.3 see esp. 639, 661. Aristotle explains his argument further in VIII.4.3 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Kim, *The Renaissance Ethics of Music*, 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. Prins, *Echoes of an Invisible World*, 156–57. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. “Quantum flevi in hymnis et canticis tuis, suave sonantis ecclesiae tuae vocibus commotus acriter! Voces illae influebant auribus meis, et eliquabatur veritas in cor meum, et exaestuabat inde affectus pietatis, et currebant lacrimae, et bene mihi erat cum eis.” Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. William Watts (London: William Heinemann, 1912), vols. II, 9.6, 28–29. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. “Cantandi consuetudinem approbare in ecclesia, ut per oblectamenta aurium infirmior animus in affectum pietatis adsurgat.” Ibid., vols. II, 10.33, 167–169. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. “Ex quo opinati sunt quidam antiquorum animum nostrum harmoniam esse et numerum … sit cuncta secundum naturam simili cognatoque maxime gaudere, nihil autem est omnium, quo animus noster tantum … gaudeat, quantum harmonia et numero.” Bruni, “The Study of Literature,” 116–17. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. “Non quidem ad lasciviae incitamentum, sed ad motus animae sub regula rationeque moderandos.” Vergerio, “The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-Born Youth,” 52–53. [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. Ibid., 86–87. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. “Ad remissionem animi sedandasque passions.” Ibid., 52–53. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. Johannes Tinctoris, “A Compendium of Music’s Effects,” in *“That Liberal and Virtuous Art”: Three Humanist Treatises on Music*, ed. and trans. J. Donald Cullington (Newtownabbey: University of Ulster, 2001), 58–86. The effects listed are the following: to please God, to add beauty to God’s praises, to enhance the joys of the blessed, to make the church militant like the church triumphant, to prepare for acceptance of divine blessing, to stir up feelings of devotion, to banish sorrow, to soften hardheartedness, to drive away the devil, to induce rapture, to uplift the earthly mind, to check evil desire, to make people glad, to heal the sick, to ease toil, to spur men’s spirits to battle, to attract love, to increase the merriment of a feast, to glorify those skilled in it and to bring souls to bliss. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. “Desides et ignavos ad virtutem excitamus.” Carlo Valgulio, “Risposte to a Slanderer of Music,” in *“That Liberal and Virtuous Art”: Three Humanist Treatises on Music*, ed. and trans. J. Donald Cullington (Newtownabbey: University of Ulster, 2001), 97. English translation: 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Quoted and translated in Nino Pirrotta, “Music and Cultural Tendencies in 15th-Century Italy,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 19, no. 2 (1966): 148, 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Kim, *The Renaissance Ethics of Music*, 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. “Sed certe non ars despicitur, neque illius reprehenditur usus ... non esset ergo huius disciplinae mediocris fugienda cognition, si praeceptores non vitiosi reperirentur.” Piccolomini, “De Liberorum Educatione,” 248–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Valgulio, “Risposte to a Slanderer of Music,” 88–89. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. “Quam rem Plato et Aristoteles prae ceteris magna contention non cessant iubere, ut protinus recte amare et recte odisse, hoc est virtutem amore et odio vitia prosequi, discant et consuescant: quod quidem in pueris efficit musica.” Ibid., 89 (original Latin at 99). [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. “Iussu disciplinandis adolescentibus et naturalis et artificiosae vocis vsus plurimum comendatur.” Gaffurius, *Practica musicae*, f. 5r; English translation from Gaffurius, *The Practica Musicae of Franchinus Gafurius*, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. “Iuvenes arti musicae operam dare ut sense effecti recte de ea iudicare gaudereque possint”. Quoted in Tim Shephard, “Noblewomen and Music in Italy, c. 1430-1520: Looking Past Isabella,” in *Gender, Age and Musical Creativity*, ed. Catherine Haworth and Lisa Colton (Dorchester: Ashgate, 2016), 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, I.10.31, 175; See also Kim, *The Renaissance Ethics of Music*, 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Kim, *The Renaissance Ethics of Music*, 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. “Caeteru[m] cum de Musica loquor, non hanc Theatralem, atq[ue] effoeminata[m] intelligo, que mores publicos corru[m]pit potius, q[uam] informet, sed illam modestam atq[ue] virilem antiq[ui]s heroibus celebratam, qu[a]e Mensis Regum Convivialibusq[ue] epulis admota … clarissimorum viroru[m] egregia facinora decantabat, quod maximum profecto ad virtutis studia incitamentu[m] fuit.” Gaffurius, *Practica musicae*, f. 4r; English translation from Gaffurius, *The Practica Musicae of Franchinus Gafurius*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. “Non quidem amatorias cantiones, sed virorum fortium laudes modulantem.” Vergerio, “The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-Born Youth,” 84–87. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. “Plurimum namque spiritus reficit et ad tolerantiam laboris exhilarat mentes non immodicus neque lascivius musicorum concentus.” Piccolomini, “De Liberorum Educatione,” 248–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Woodward, *Studies in Education*, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. “Nam propter impudica enervataque carmina multos saepe adulescentes perditos corruptosque ac virilis nihil unquam roboris adeptos fuisse compertum est.” Maffeo Vegio (Maphei Vegii Laudensis), *De Educatione Liberorum et Eorum Claris Moribus Libri Sex: A Critical Text of Books I-III*, 105; English translation from Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre*, 239–40. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. “Gli orecchi stendi a udire i divini comandamenti, i celestiali consigli, la lode divina, la dottrina santa, la miseria dell’afflitto, le melodie degli uccelli facendo dolci versi al suo signore … Non le tenere aperte nè a favole nè a canzoni… la lingua serpentina dei maldicenti … eretici … indemoniati … predicatori che cerchino la gloria propria, o commentatori de’ pagani.” Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, 47–48. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. “Concorda la mente con la voce quanto puoi.” Ibid., 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. Black, *Education and Society*, xv, xviii, 206, 210, 222, 327, 440. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. Robert Black, “École et Société à Florence Aux XIVe et XVe Siècles: Le Témoignage Des Ricordanze,” trans. Aurélien Berra, *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, no. 59.4 (August 2004): 845–46, n.99. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. Gianluca D’Agostino, “Gli Alberti e la Musica tra Tre e Quattrocento,” ed. Paola Benigni et al., *L’Ars Nova Italiana del Trecento, vol. ix, Atti del Convegno internazionale “Letteratura e Musica del Duecento e del Trecento” (Certaldo, 17-19 dicembre 2015)*, 2017, 165; Woodward, *Studies in Education*, 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. Frank A. D’Accone, “Lorenzo il Magnifico e la musica,” ed. Piero Gargiulo, *Musica a Firenze al tempo di Lorenzo il Magnifico: Congresso internazionale di studi, Firenze, 15-17 giugno 1992*, 1993, 235. Further examples can be found in Judith Bryce, “Performing for Strangers: Women, Dance, and Music in Quattrocento Florence,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (2001): 1074–1107. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. Maria Pia Paoli, “Di madre in figlio: per una storia dell’educazione alla corte dei Medici,” *Annali di Storia di Firenze* 3 (October 2001): 67; see also Flora Dennis, “Music,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. Black, “École et Société à Florence,” 839; See also Klapisch-Zuber, “Le Chiavi Fiorentine di Barbablù,” 789, n. 68, in which the name of Spini’s daughter is reported as Simona. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. Freedman, *Music in the Renaissance*, 125–26; Flora Dennis, “Unlocking the Gates of Chastity: Music and the Erotic in the Domestic Sphere in Fifteenth and Sixteenth-Century Italy,” ed. Sara F. Matthews-Grieco, *Erotic Cultures of Renaissance Italy*, 2010, 223–45. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. “Per saper cantare et sonar come meretrice.” Giovanni di Dio da Venezia, *Decor Puellarum* (Venice, 1471), f. 57r-57v, http://www.internetculturale.it/jmms/iccuviewer/iccu.jsp? id=oai%3A193.206.197.121%3A18%3AVE0049%3AVEAE127961&mode=all&teca=marciana. The author records that a married woman could be taught “honest dancing” by her husband and not by anyone else: “Ma dome[n]tre che sonno spose possano i[m]pre[n]dere dal suo p[ro]prio sposo et no[n] d’altri ballo honesto & commune”. Also quoted in Marta Ajmar-Wollheim, “Housework,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 158–59. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. Antoninus (Saint), *Opera a ben vivere*, III.xiii, 177-178; Theresa Flanigan, “Disciplining the Tongue: Archbishop Antoninus, the *Opera a Ben Vivere* and the Regulation of Women’s Speech in Renaissance Florence,” *The Open Arts Journal*, no. 4 (2015): 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. Dennis, “Music,” 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. Francesco da Barberino, *Reggimento e costumi di donna*, ed. Carlo Baudi di Vesme (Bologna: Romagnoli, 1875), 30–31, 53. These recommendations were only valid for women from the upper class of the society, while women from the countryside were more free to express themselves musically, see Maria Caraci Vela, “La dama di palazzo e il *nobile ornamento*: L’esercizio della musica come spazio di libertà e cultura,” in *Costumi educative nelle corti Europee (XIV-XVIII secolo)*, ed. Monica Ferrari (Pavia: Pavia University Press, 2010), 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. “I suoni, i canti e le lettere che sanno le femine, sono le chiavi che aprano le porte de la pudicizia loro.” Quoted in Dennis, “Unlocking the Gates of Chastity,” 223, 237 n. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. “Il sonare e’ cosa strana e leggera.” Dennis, “Music,” 235; English translation from Freedman, *Music in the Renaissance*, 126. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. “Cominciò mio padre a insegnarmi sonar il flauto e cantar di musica; e contuttochè l’età mia fosse tenerissima, dove i piccoli bambini sogliono aver piacere d’uno zufolino e di simili trastulli, io ne aveva dispiacere inestimabile; ma solo per ubbidire sonavo e cantavo.” Benvenuto Cellini, *Vita*, ed. Giovanni Palamede Carpani (Milan: Società Tipografica de’ Classici Italiani, 1806), 10. A slightly different English translation can be found in Bonnie J. Blackburn, “Myself When Young: Becoming a Musician in Renaissance Italy - or Not,” *Proceedings of the British Academy*, no. 181 (2012): 169–70. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. Blackburn, “Myself When Young,” 170. [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, 151; Also quoted in Fortini Brown, “Children and Education,” 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. “Suge; canam tibi naeniolam. Nae… naenia nonne/ nota tibi, nate, est naenia naeniola?” Quoted in Lauro Martines, *Strong Words: Writing & Social Strain in the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 51–52. Giovanni Pontano wrote twelve Latin lullabies, *Neniae*, for his son Lucio between 1469-1471, published posthumously in 1505 as part of his De amore coniugali; see Bruno Figliuolo, “Pontano, Giovanni,” 2015, <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-pontano_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/>. Later examples of the practice of singing lullabies are mentioned in Dennis, “Music,” 239. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. The role of music in the educational programme of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance has been discussed by, among others, Susan Forscher Weiss, Russell E. Murray Jr, and Cynthia J. Cyrus, eds., *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 2010; Claudio Gallico, “Musica nella Ca’ Giocosa,” in *Vittorino da Feltre e la sua scuola: Umanesimo, Pedagogia, Arti*, ed. Nella Giannetto (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1981), 189–98; Stefano Lorenzetti, *Musica e identità nobiliare nell’Italia del Rinascimento. Educazione, mentalità, immaginario* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2003); Nan Cooke Carpenter, *Music in the Medieval and Renaissance Universities* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958); Leeman Lloyd Perkins, *Music in the Age of the Renaissance* (New York and London: Norton, 1999), 74–87 and 135–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. Garin, *Il pensiero pedagogico*, 528–29. [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. Woodward, *Studies in Education*, 71, 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. James Haar, “Some Introductory Remarks on Musical Pedagogy,” in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Susan Forscher Weiss, Russell E. Murray Jr, and Cynthia J. Cyrus (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 4–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. Ibid., 6. On the Guidonian hand see also Susan Forscher Weiss, “Vandals, Students, or Scholars? Handwritten Clues in Renaissance Music Textbooks,” in *Music Education in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. Russell E. Murray Jr., Susan Forscher Weiss, and Cynthia J. Cyrus (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 207–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. “Nec atrocior iniuria musico dicta putetur, quam si manum suam nescire dicatur.” Johannes Tinctoris, *Expositio Manus Secundum Magistrum Iohannem Tinctoris in Legibus Licentiatum Ac Regis Sicilie Capellanum*, lines 15-17, accessed April 20, 2017, http://www.stoa.org/tinctoris/expositio\_manus/expositio\_manus.html; See also Albert Seay, “The Expositio Manus of Johannes Tinctoris,” *Journal of Music Theory* 9, no. 2 (Winter 1965): 43; Susan Forscher Weiss, “Disce Manum Tuam Si Vis Bene Discere Cantum: Symbols of Learning Music in Early Modern Europe,” *Music in Art* 30, no. 1/2 (2005): 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. Forscher Weiss, “Disce manum tuam”, 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. Forscher Weiss, “Disce manum tuam,” 52–53. [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. Ibid., 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Ann E. Moyer, “Introduction,” in Raffaele Brandolini*, On Music and Poetry (De Musica et Poetica, 1513)*, ed. and trans. Ann E. Moyer and Marc Laureys (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), xiii–xiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. Ibid., xiii–xvi. [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. “Id maiores nostri accuratissime conspicati liberos a se institutos huius artis expertes esse non permisere.” Raffaele Lippo Brandolini, *On Music and Poetry (De Musica et Poetica, 1513)*, ed. and trans. Ann E. Moyer and Marc Laureys (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), 16. English translation: 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. “Poetica venustate ac dignitatate … adolescientiam agit, iuventutem exercet.” Ibid., 80. English translation: 81. [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. “La primiera cosa, che posta nella bocca rozza di fanciuletti per ordine de’ padri accorti, a de’ maestri considerati, è la musica veramente ad imitation di Chirone che in tal maniera allevò il valoroso Achille.” Quoted in Franca Trinchieri Camiz, “Music Settings to Poems by Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna,” in *Art and Music in the Early Modern Period: Essays in Honor of Franca Trinchieri Camiz*, ed. Katherine McIver (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 382. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. This passage from Tinctoris’ *De inventione et usu musice* is quoted in Chapter 3.2.1 of this thesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. “A voi ricorro, non avendo alcuno altro protreptore, e come servitore dela casa vostra che sempre son stato e sono; perché anchora essendo io stato vostro maestro dela viola.” Quoted in D’Accone, “Lorenzo il Magnifico e la musica,” 234. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. “Nella chamera delle due letta: un orghano di carta impastata … un orghano di carta fatto a chiocciola … un orghano di legname e di stagno e chon grave chordo … un orghano di channa, a una channa per tasto semplice … un organetto a una mano, di stagno … uno gravicembolo ch’a a servire anche a orghano, mancavi le channe …uno gravicembolo scempio, cholle tire … uno gravicembolo doppio, cholle tire … dua gravicembali scempi, picholi … tre gravichordi … una vivuola cho’ tasti, a uso di monachordo … una arpe a quattro filari … uno liuto grande … uno liuto rotto … tre vivuole grandi … uno giuocho di zufoli a uso di pifferi, cholle ghiere nere e bianche, sono zufali cinque … tre zufoli chon ghiere d’argento”. Quoted in ibid., 229–30 n.26. I thank Dr Tim Shephard for his advice on the identification of the musical instruments in this and in the following inventories; see Maria DePrano, “*Chi Vuol Esser Lieto, Sia*: Objects of Enterteinment in the Tornabuoni Palace in Florence,” in *The Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior, 1400-1700: Objects, Spaces, Domesticities*, ed. Elizabeth Carroll Consavari, Stephanie R Miller, and Erin J Campbell (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), 133 for a different identification of the instruments. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. "1a viuola con l’archetto, 2 zufoli da suonare, 1° chorno d’osso con lavori … 1a arpa grande da sonare … 1a viuola da sonare.” Quoted in DePrano, “Chi Vuol Esser Lieto, Sia,” 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. “1° monachordo cho’ la chassa, un paio d’orghanetti cho la chassa”; “1° monachordo dipinto bello cholla chassa”; “1° paio d’orghani grandi”; “1° libro di musicha. 1° libro di chanto fighurato”. Quoted in ibid., 134 nn.77–79. [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. Flora Dennis, “When Is a Room a Music Room? Sounds, Spaces, and Objects in Non-Courtly Italian Interiors,” in *The Music Room in Early Modern France and Italy: Sound, Space and Object*, ed. Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti (Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2012), 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. Stephanie R Miller, “Parenting in the Palazzo: Images and Artifacts of Children in the Italian Renaissance Home,” in *The Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior, 1400-1700: Objects, Spaces, Domesticities*, ed. Elizabeth Carroll Consavari, Stephanie R Miller, and Erin J Campbell (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 78–79. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. DePrano, “Chi Vuol Esser Lieto, Sia,” 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. Richard J. Agee, “Ruberto Strozzi and the Early Madrigal,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 36, no. 1 (1983): 5; Richard J. Agee, “Filippo Strozzi and the Early Madrigal,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 38, no. 2 (1985): 228; see also Dennis, “Music,” 238. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. Mario Ruffini, “Savonarola e la musica: dalla lauda al Novecento,” in *La figura de Jerónimo Savonarola O.P. y su influencia en España y Europa: actas del Congreso Internacional, Valencia, 22-26 mayo 2000*, ed. Donald Weinstein, Júlia Benavent i Benavent, and J. Inés Rodríguez Gómez (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo per la Fondazione Ezio Franceschini, 2004), 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. Haas, *The Renaissance Man and His Children*, 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. Brenda Preyer, “The Florentine Casa,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 41; DePrano, “Chi Vuol Esser Lieto, Sia,” 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Preyer, “The Florentine Casa,” 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. Quoted in Dennis, “Music,” 233. [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Ibid., 229. [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. Sydney Joseph Freedberg, *Painting in Italy, 1500 to 1600* (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 1993), 534. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. Maria H. Loh, *Titian Remade: Repetition and the transformation of Early Modern Italian art* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007), 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. Several versions of this composition are known. Two versions of Titian’s *Venus with an Organist* from ca. 1545-50 are kept in the Museo del Prado, Madri, while a third one is at the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin. One version of *Venus with a Lutenist* from 1555-65 is kept at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, while a later version from 1565-70 is at the Metropolitan Museum, New York. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. Loh, *Titian Remade*, 40-42. On the sensorial engagement and erotism in Titian’s paintings see Marlene Eberhart, “Sensing, Time and the Aural Imagination in Titian's ‘Venus with Organist and Dog,’” *Artibus et Historiae*, Vol. 33, No. 65 (2012): 79-95, esp. 86-87. See also Katherine McIver, “Visual pleasures, sensual sounds: Music, morality, and sexuality in paintings by Titian,” in *Sexualities, Textualities, Art and Music in Early Modern Italy*, eds. Melanie L. Marshall, Linda L. Carroll, and Katherine A. McIver (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2014), 13-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. The addition of a viol in the paintings of *Venus with a Lutenist* may also be interpreted as reinforcing the lascivious reading, as suggested in Malachai Komanoff Bandy, “‘With The Base Viall Placed Between My Thighes’: Musical Instruments and Sexual Subtext in Titian’s Venus with Musician Series,” paper presented at the Music and Visual Culture in Renaissance Italy Conference, Sheffield, 13-15 June 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. Victor Coelho, “Bronzino’s Lute Player: Music and Youth Culture in Renaissance Florence,” in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Joseph Connors*, ed. Machtelt Israëls, Louis Alexander Waldman, and Guido Beltramini (Florence: Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, 2013), 655–56. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. Several other portraits of lutenists from the Florentine area could be added, such as that by Tuscan School in the Wallace collection (inv. P542) from 1540-1560, and that by Pontormo in the Lingenauber Collection from 1530-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. For the identification of the sitters see Michael Jaffe, “Pesaro Family Portraits: Pordenone, Lotto and Titian,” *The Burlington Magazine* 113, no. 825 (1971): 700. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. Ibid., 696. [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. Ibid., 700. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. See, among others, Allen Duston and Arnold Nesselrath, *Angels from the Vatican: The Invisible Made Visible* (Alexandria, Va.: Art Services International, 1998); Francesco Buranelli, *Between God and Man: Angels in Italian Art*, ed. Robin C. Dietrick (Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi Museum of Art, 2008); Richard Rastall, “Heaven: The Musical Repertory,” in *The Iconography of Heaven*, ed. Clifford Davidson (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1994), 162–96; Marco Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli: racconto di immagini e di idee* (Milano: Rusconi, 1991), 272–85; David Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 175–76; an exception to this is Reinhold Hammerstein, *Die Musik der Engel: Untersuchungen zur Musikanschauung des Mittelalters* (Bern: Francke, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. For example: Emanuel Winternitz, “On Angel Concerts in the 15th Century: A Critical Approach to Realism and Symbolism in Sacred Painting,” *The Musical Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (1963): 450–63; Howard Mayer Brown, “Trecento Angels and the Instruments They Play,” in *Modern Musical Scholarship*, ed. Edward Olleson (Stocksfield: Oriel Press, 1980), 112–40; Katherine Powers, “The Lira Da Braccio in the Angel’s Hands in Italian Renaissance Madonna Enthroned Paintings,” *Music in Art* 26, no. 1/2 (2001): 20–29; Katherine Powers, “Music-Making Angels in Italian Renaissance Painting: Symbolism and Reality,” *Music in Art* 29, no. 1/2 (Spring-Fall 2004): 52–63; Katherine Powers, “Marco Palmezzano’s Music-Making Angels: Holding the Fiddle in the Renaissance,” *The Galpin Society Journal* 59 (May 2006): 139–46, 258–59. [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. See, for example, Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*; Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*; Steven Chase, *Angelic Spirituality: Medieval Perspectives on the Ways of Angels*, trans. and intro by Steven Chase, preface by Ewert H. Cousins (Paulist Press, 2002); Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham, *Angels in the Early Modern World*, ed. Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1–40; A comprehensive bibliography on angels can be found in George J Marshall, *Angels: An Indexed and Partially Annotated Bibliography of Over 4300 Scholarly Books and Articles Since the 7th Century B.C.* (Jefferson, North Carolina, and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. Marco Bussagli, “Angels: From Their Origins to the Middle Ages Theology and Iconography,” in *Between God and Man: Angels in Italian Art*, by Francesco Buranelli, ed. Robin C. Dietrick (Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi Museum of Art, 2008), 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 48; Bussagli, “Angels: From Their Origins to the Middle Ages Theology and Iconography,” 16; Glenn Peers, *Subtle Bodies: Representing Angels in Byzantium* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 21–23. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. For more examples of early depictions of angels Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 48–49; ibid., 53–55. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. Maurizio Sannibale and Paolo Liverani, “The Classic Origins of Angel Iconography,” in *Angels from the Vatican: The Invisible Made Visible,* Exh.Cat., ed. Allen Duston and Arnold Nesselrath (Alexandria, Va.: Art Services International, 1998), 63; For more information about depictions of angels with wings see Gunnar Berefelt, *A Study on the Winged Angel: The Origin of a Motif.*, trans. Patrick Hort (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1968). [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. Sannibale and Liverani, “The Classic Origins of Angel Iconography,” 64–68. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 58; Bussagli, “Angels: From Their Origins to the Middle Ages Theology and Iconography,” 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. On the similarities and differences between angels and Nike see Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 63–71; Bussagli, “Angels: From Their Origins to the Middle Ages Theology and Iconography,” 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. Psalm 104:4, English Standard Version; See Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 109; Bussagli, “Angels: From Their Origins to the Middle Ages Theology and Iconography,” 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. Peers, *Subtle Bodies*, 33–35. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. “Omnis spiritus ales est; hoc angeli et daemones. Igitur momento ubique sunt; totus orbis illis locus unus est; quid ubi geratur tam facile sciunt quam adnuntiant. Velocitas diuinitas creditor, quia substantia ignoratur.” Tertullian (Q. Septimi Florentis Tertulliani), *Apologeticus*, ed. Franz Oehler and John E. B. Mayor, trans. Alexander Souter (Aberdeen: University Press, 1926), ch.22, 76; English translation from Peers, *Subtle Bodies*, 35 n.42. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. “Quibus ideo pictoris licentia pennas facit, ut celerem eorum in cuncta discursum significant, sicut et juxta fabulas poetarum venti pennas habere dicuntur, propter velocitatem, scilicet.” Isidore of Seville, “Opera Omnia,” in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 82 (Paris: Migne, 1859), 272 (Etymologiarum VII.5.3); English translation from Sannibale and Liverani, “The Classic Origins of Angel Iconography,” 69; see also Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 61–62; Bussagli, “Angels: From Their Origins to the Middle Ages Theology and Iconography,” 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. “Complacuit itaque mysteriorum sacrorum principi constitutioni, immateriales coelesteque hierarchias materialibus figuris ac formis exponere, ut pro captu nostro ab hisce sacris efformationibus, ad formarum figurarumque expertes anagogas traducamur. Ecce, enim, inquit, facies secundum exemplar quod tibi monstratum est: quandoquidem fieri non possit ut mens nostra ad immateriatam istam constitutionem immediate subrigatur, nisi formis quibusdam ac figuris quasi manu ducta fuerit, et ex his illa conjecerit. Atque apparentes quidem pulchritudines, temple, dico, venustaem ac decorum, occultae illius venustatis imagines prae se ferre.” Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, “Opera Omnia,” in *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 3 (Paris: Migne, 1857), 133–34; English translation from Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibhéid (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1987), 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. John of Damascus, “Opera Omnia,” in *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 94 (Paris: Migne, 1857), 934–38 (*Expositio Fidei*, II.18); see Peers, *Subtle Bodies*, 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. Angels are described as circumscribable in John of Damascus, “Opera Omnia” (*Expositio Fidei*, II.3). [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. “Corporum quidem, ut quae figuras, limitesque corporeos, et colorem habent, imagines haud incongruenter deformnatur. Angelus vero, et anima, et daemones, licet corporeum crassumque nihil asmittant, suapte tamen natura figurantur et circumscribuntur.Nam quia intellectuals sunt, intellectuali modo in locis intelligibilibus adesse creduntur at agere.” Ibid., 1343 (*Oratio adversus eos qui sacras imagines abjiciunt*, III.24); Quoted in translation in Peers, *Subtle Bodies*, 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. “Quartum imaginis genus est ipsa scriptura, quae figuras et formas et exempla rerum invisibilium et incorporearum corporeo modo expressarum fingit et efformat, ut obscuram saltem Dei angelorumque notitiam percipiamus: eo quod sine speciebus conditioni nostrae congruentibus res corporeas intueri neutiquam possimus; quemadmodum Dionysius Areopagita divinarum rerum peritissimus docet.” John of Damascus, “Opera Omnia,” 1342 (*Oratio adversus eos qui sacras imagines abjiciunt*, III.21); Quoted in translation in Peers, *Subtle Bodies*, 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. “Cum itaque Deus ea nos ignorare noluerit, quae corporea non sunt, naturae habita ratione eadem formis, et figuris, necnon imaginibus circumvestivit; figuris, inquam, corporeis, quibus ea oculo mentis a materia remoto considerantur. Haec porro sunt quae figuris et imaginibus adumbramus. Quomodo enim Cherubim effingi imaginibus et exprimi unquam potuissent?” John of Damascus, “Opera Omnia,” 1346 (*Oratio adversus eos qui sacras imagines abjiciunt*, III.25); Quoted in translation in Peers, *Subtle Bodies*, 114, where it is incorrectly referenced as III.24. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. For more information on Iconoclasm and the Nicaean council see Peers, *Subtle Bodies*, 13–14; On medieval angelology see Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. “Quod autem venti nominentur, hoc eorum celerem conficiendi rationem indicat, ad omnia ferme absque mora penetrantem … Possit etiam quis dicere ventosum illud nomen spiritus aerei coelestium intelligentiarum deiformitatem designare: siquidem et illi divinae efficacitatis imago quaedam inest ac figura … nempe ob vivificam mobilitatem velocemque et insuperabilem meatum, nec non inaspectabile latibulum moventium principorum ac terminationum.” Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, “Opera Omnia,” 333–36 (*De coelesti hierarchia* 15.6); English translation from Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, 187; see also Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. Isidore of Seville, *Liber Sententiarum* I. 10, 19 and Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q.51, a. 2, ad 3, quoted in Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 96–97. [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. Ibid., 98–100. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. Ibid., 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. Marco Bussagli, “Gli Angeli dal Rinascimento al Barocco. Dalla luce alla carne,” in *Angeli: volti dell’invisibile,* exh.cat., ed. Serenella Castri (Turin: Umberto Allemandi, 2010), 59. Another example of transparent angels can be seen in Gentile da Fabriano’s fresco with the Virgin and child in Orvieto’s cathedral, where two angels appeared underneath the figure of St Catherine of Alexandria, when this was removed during conservation works. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. Examples can be found in ibid., 60–61. [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 195–96. [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. Ibid., 194–95. The topic of angels as mirror of God will be considered in chapter 3 of this thesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. Alessio Geretti, “Missus est Angelus,” in *Angeli: volti dell’invisibile,* exh.cat., ed. Serenella Castri (Turin: Umberto Allemandi, 2010), 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. Ibid., 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. Luke 24:4, English Standard Version. See Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 235–36. [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. Ibid., 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. Ibid., 208–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. Ibid., 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. Ibid., 276.See Boethius concept of *musica mundana* discussed in this thesis, Chapter 1.5. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. “Sed omnia in mensura, et numero et pondere disposuisti”. Wisdom 11:21, Biblia Sacra Vulgata. English version from Common English Bible, Wisdom 11:21. [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. Bussagli, “Angels: From Their Origins to the Middle Ages Theology and Iconography,” 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. Sannibale and Liverani, “The Classic Origins of Angel Iconography,” 68. [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. Bussagli, “Angels: From Their Origins to the Middle Ages Theology and Iconography,” 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. Ibid., 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. Charles Dempsey, *Inventing the Renaissance Putto* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 18–20. [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. Ibid., 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. Ibid., 3–6, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. Ibid., 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. Charles L. Stinger, *Humanism and the Church Fathers : Ambrogio Traversari (1386-1439) and Christian Antiquity in the Italian Renaissance* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977), 158–62. [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. Ibid., 88, 107–8. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. Bruce Gordon, “The Renaissance Angel,” in *Angels in the Early Modern World*, ed. Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 41–43. Pico’s ideas will be discussed later in this chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. On biblical references to angelic musicianship see especially Rastall, “Heaven: The Musical Repertory,” 163–65. [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. “Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus exercituum plena est omnis terra gloria eius” *Vulgata*, Isaias 6:3. English translation from Isaiah 6:3, English Standard Version. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. “Sanctus sanctus sanctus Dominus Deus omnipotens qui erat et qui est et qui venturus est.” *Vulgata*, Apocalypsis 4:8. English translation from Revelation 4:8, English Standard Version. [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. Revelation 5:11-12 and 8:6-13, English Standard Version. See also Gill, 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. “Gloria in altissimis Deo et in terra pax in hominibus bonae voluntatis.” *Vulgata*, Lucas 2:14. English translation from

     Luke 2:14, English Standard Version. [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. “Laudate eum in sono tubae laudate eum in psalterio et cithara/ laudate eum in tympano et choro laudate eum in cordis et organo/ laudate eum in cymbalis bene sonantibus laudate eum in cymbalis iubilationis.” *Vulgata*, Psalmi 150:3-5. English translation from Psalm 150 :3-5, English Standard Version. [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. See Rastall, “Heaven: The Musical Repertory,” 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. Johannes Tinctoris, “Opus Musices” ca 1483, MS. 835 fol.2r. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. On Luca della Robbia’s Cantoria see especially Gary M Radke, *Make a Joyful Noise: Renaissance Art and Music at Florence Cathedral* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. Meredith J. Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. Susan Grange, *Giovanni Bellini: Music, Art and Venice* (Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse, 2014), 145. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. The *Legenda Aurea* was printed in numerous Italian editions both in Latin and in the vernacular from 1475; See Anne Jacobson Schutte, *Printed Italian Vernacular Religious Books 1465-1550 : A Finding List* (Geneva: Droz, 1983), 321–23; Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600*, Reprint edition (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 282–85; Grange, *Giovanni Bellini: Music, Art and Venice*, 143; Hammerstein, *Die Musik der Engel*, 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. Powers, “The Lira Da Braccio in the Angel’s Hands in Italian Renaissance Madonna Enthroned Paintings,” 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. Katherine Tycz, “Praying for Protection,” in *Madonnas & Miracles: The Holy Home in Renaissance Italy*, Exh.Cat., ed. Maya Corry, Deborah Howard, and Mary Laven (Cambridge: The Fitzwilliam Museum, 2017), 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. On Walter Frye’s composition David J Rothenberg, *The Flower of Paradise: Marian Devotion and Secular Song in Medieval and Renaissance Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 123–50; Paolo Emilio Carapezza, “Regina Angelorum in Musica Picta,” *Rivista Italiana Di Musicologia* 10 (1975): 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. Brown, “Trecento Angels and the Instruments They Play,” 112; On musical angels see Hammerstein, *Die Musik der Engel*, 1962. [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. “Pictores quando beatorum gaudia designare volunt, angelos diversa instrumenta musica concrepantes depingunt. Quod ecclesia non permitteret nisi gaudia beatorum musica amplificarit crederet.” Johannes Tinctoris, “A Compendium of Music’s Effects,” in *“That Liberal and Virtuous Art”: Three Humanist Treatises on Music*, ed. and trans. J. Donald Cullington (Newtownabbey: University of Ulster, 2001), Third effect, par. 53–54, page 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. “Musica angelica est illa quae ab angelis ante conspectum Dei semper administrat[ur].” Quoted in original Latin and English translation in Willem Elders, *Symbolic Scores: Studies in the Music of the Renaissance* (Leiden; New York: E. J. Brill, 1994), 214; see also Oliver Huck, “The Music of the Angels in Fourteenth- and Early Fifteenth-Century Music,” *Musica Disciplina* 53 (2003): 187–89; Compare with Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, *De institutione arithmetica libri duo; De institutione musica libri quinque*, ed. Gottfried Friedlein (Lipsiae: B.G. Teubner, 1867), 187–89; Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, ed. Claude V. Palisca, trans. Calvin M. Bower (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 9–10. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. For Jewish and Christian views on the language that angels speak (whether Hebrew or an esoteric heavenly language) see John C. Poirier, *The Tongues of Angels: The Concept of Angelic Languages in Classical Jewish and Christian Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. Huck, “The Music of the Angels in Fourteenth- and Early Fifteenth-Century Music,” 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. See also Rastall, “Heaven: The Musical Repertory,” 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. Ibid., 146–65; see also Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 24; see also Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. See Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 25; Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. See Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 25; Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. “O frate Ruffino, non sai tu che frate Francesco è come un angelo di Dio, il quale ha luminate tante anime nel mondo, e dal quale noi abbiamo avuto la grazia di Dio?” Francis of Assisi (Saint), *I Fioretti di S. Francesco (secondo la lezione adottata dal P. A. Cesari), e Lo Specchio della vera penitenza di Fra Iacopo Passavanti*, ed. Antonio Cesari (Firenze: Poligrafia Italiana, 1847), chaps. XXIX, 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. Ronald W. Lightbown, “Heaven Depicted in 15th Century: Italian Painting and Sculpture,” in *Mosaics of Friendship: Studies in Art and History for Eve Borsook*, ed. Ornella Francisci Osti (Florence: Centro Di, 1999), 82; Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 24; For more information on angels wearing ecclesiastical garments, see Bussagli, *Storia degli angeli*, 159–74. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)
371. Cristina Acidini Luchinat, “The Choirs of Angels,” in *The Chapel of the Magi: Benozzo Gozzoli’s Frescoes in the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi Florence*, ed. Cristina Acidini Luchinat, trans. Eleanor Daunt (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-371)
372. Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-372)
373. “Numquid hanc vocem agnovistis? numquid nostra est, an vero Seraphim? Et nostra et Seraphim, beneficio Christi, qui medium parietem maceriae sustulit, et pacificavit omnia quae in caelis sunt, et quae in terris.” John Chrysostom (Saint), “In illud, Vidi Dominum, Homilia in Seraphim,” in *Opera Omnia*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 56, Patrologia Graeca (Paris: Migne, 1862), 6.3, 138. [↑](#footnote-ref-373)
374. “Et tu itaque quasi in regiam ingrediens non terrenam, sed in multo terribiliorem, nempe caelestem, magnam exhibe modestiam. Nam et cum angelis choreas agis, et archangelorum es socius, et cum Seraphim canis ... His itaque te admisceas in precando, mysticumque ipsorum ornatum, imitare”. John Chrysostom (Saint), “In Matthaeum homilia,” in *Opera Omnia*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 57, Patrologia Graeca (Paris: Migne, 1862), XIX.2, 227; English translation quoted in Christopher J. Samuel, “‘Heavenly Theologians’: The Place of Angels in The Theology of Martin Luther” (Marquette University, 2014), 109 n. 331. [↑](#footnote-ref-374)
375. “Quid vero? Hymni non sunt caelestes? Annon quae apud superos canunt chori Virtutum incorporearum, ea nos quoque qui infra sumus canimus illis consonantia? Annon et ara est caelestis? Quomodo? Nihil habet carnale: sunt spiritualia omnia quae sunt proposita … Quomodo autem non sunt caelestia quae perficiuntur mysteria … qui nunc ministrant sibi ipsis id ipsum audiunt dictum?” John Chrysostom (Saint), “In Epistolam ad Ebreos homilia,” in *Opera Omnia*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 63, Patrologia Graeca (Paris: Migne, 1862), XIV.2, 111-112; English translation from Samuel, “Heavenly Theologians,” 110 n. 332. [↑](#footnote-ref-375)
376. “Quis enim fidelium habere dubium possit, in ipsa immolationis hora ad sacerdotis vocem caelos aperiri, in illo Jesu Christi mysterio angelorum choros adesse, summis ima sociari, terram caelestibus iungi, unumque ex visibilibus atque invisibilibus fieri?” Gregory the Great, “Dialogorum libri quattuor,” in *Opera Omnia*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 77, Patrologia Latina (Paris: Migne, 1896), IV.58, cols. 425–28. [↑](#footnote-ref-376)
377. “Cantica angelorum cantamus, quia per hoc sacrificium terrena iungi celestibus non dubitamus.” Johannes Beleth, “Summa de ecclesiasticis officiis,” in *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis*, ed. Herbert Douteil, vol. 41 (Turnholt: Brepols, 1976), 45.18-19, 81; see Tim Shephard, Laura Ştefănescu, and Serenella Sessini, “Music, Silence, and the Senses in a Late Fifteenth-Century Book of Hours,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (2017): 483. [↑](#footnote-ref-377)
378. “[Cum autem prodeunt cantores in due, chori suscipiunt gratulando, cantantes Introitum cum Gloria in excelsis, nempe] cantores sive clerici in albis exultantes. Angeli sunt, qui Christum ascendentem, cum gloria, et laudibus in altissimis acceperunt.” Gulielmo Durando, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* (Naples: Josephum Dura Biblippolam, 1859), IV.6, 160. [↑](#footnote-ref-378)
379. On Saint Bonaventure see Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, 181; also Samuel, “Heavenly Theologians,” 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-379)
380. “Musica ecclesiam militantem triumphanti assimilat.” Tinctoris, “A Compendium of Music’s Effects,” chapter 4, 77; English translation from ibid., 60; see also Shephard, Ştefănescu, and Sessini, “Music, Silence, and the Senses in a Late Fifteenth-Century Book of Hours,” 482–84. [↑](#footnote-ref-380)
381. “Dum igitur clerici requiem aeternam inciperent et pro eo missam agerent defunctorum, subito, ut ajunt, angelorum chori adstantes voces cantantium interrumpunt, martiris missam incipiunt, laetabitur justus in domino, concinuntet caeteri clerici prosequuntur … dum cantus moeroris vertitur in canticum laudis, cum illum, cui defunctorum suffragia inchoaverant martirum, postmodum hymnis laudant.” Jacobi a Voragine, *Legenda Aurea*, ed. Graesse (Lipsiae: Impensis Librariae Arnoldianae, 1801), 68; English translation from Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-381)
382. “Cum apud sanctam Mariam majorem in die paschae missam celebraret et pax domini pronuntiaret, angelus domini alta vocc respondit: et cum spiritu tuo. Unde papa apud illam ecclesiam in die paschae stationem facit nec sibi, cum dicit pax domini, in hujus miraculi testimonium respondetur.” Jacobi a Voragine, *Legenda Aurea*, 196; English translation from Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-382)
383. “Son tanti spiriti angelici desesi de cielo e venuti insieme con nui a laudare la clementia divina.” Illuminata Bembo, *Specchio di illuminazione*, ed. Silvia Mostaccio (Florence: Sismel, 2001), V.9, 29; see also Shephard, Ştefănescu, and Sessini, “Music, Silence, and the Senses in a Late Fifteenth-Century Book of Hours,” 484. [↑](#footnote-ref-383)
384. “In cuius quidem sacratissimi corporis elevatione tantis armoniarum symphoniis / tantis insuper diversorum instrumentorum consonationibus omnia basilicae loca resonabant: ut angelici ac prorsus divini paradisi sonitus cantusque demissi caelitus ad nos in terris divinum nescio quid ob incredibilem suavitatem quandam in aures nostras insusurare non immerito viderentur”. Quoted in original and in translation in Klaus Pietschmann, “The Sense of Hearing Politicized: Liturgical Polyphony and Political Ambition in Fifteenth-Century Florence,” in *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 276–77. [↑](#footnote-ref-384)
385. “Diuinam s[cilicet] trinitatem et angelicam harmonia[m] (vt ipsi aiunt) me[n]te et animo interea percurrentes.” Franchinus Gaffurius, *Practica musicae* (Milan: Guillaume Le Signerre, per Giovanni Pietro da Lomazzo, 30 IX, 1496; Madison, Milwaukee and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), I.15, 52; English translation from Franchinus Gaffurius, *The Practica Musicae of Franchinus Gafurius*, ed. and trans. Irwin Young (Madison, Milwaukee and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), I.15, 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-385)
386. “E quella più volte sonando lei, parea tuta se deleguase como fa la cera al fuocho, ora cantando, hora stava con la facia verso el cielo stando como muta.” Bembo, *Specchio di illuminazione*, VII.67, 66; Shephard, Ştefănescu, and Sessini, “Music, Silence, and the Senses in a Late Fifteenth-Century Book of Hours,” 481. [↑](#footnote-ref-386)
387. “Tutto il colorito di quell’opera par che sia di mano d’un Santo o d’un Angelo, come sono; onde a gran ragione fu sempre chiamato questo da ben religioso, frate Giovanni Angelico.” Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti* (*Vita di fra’ Giovanni da Fiesole*), 383. [↑](#footnote-ref-387)
388. “Perché Francesco era di bellissima aria et aveva il volto e l’aspetto grazioso molto e più tosto d’angelo che d’uomo, pareva la sua effigie in quella palla una cosa divina.” Ibid., 780 (*Vita di Francesco Mazzuoli*). [↑](#footnote-ref-388)
389. “Ella [Firenze] ha fanciulle e donne di tanta gentilezza e di be’ costumi, oneste e vertudiose e belle a maraviglia che paiono angeli discesi da cielo.” Judith Bryce, “Performing for Strangers: Women, Dance, and Music in Quattrocento Florence,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, no. 4 (2001): 1084. [↑](#footnote-ref-389)
390. “Distinctae namque conversationes hominum singulorum agminum ordinibus congruunt, et in eorum sortem per conversationis similitudinem deputantur.” Sancti Gregorii Magni and Romani Pontificis, *XL Homiliarum in Evangelia Libri Duo* (Oeniponte Libraria Academica Wagneriana, 1892), Homily 34, section 11, 286; Chase, *Angelic Spirituality*, 34 and 91–106, esp. 101; see also Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-390)
391. “Ergo et nos cherubicam in terris vitam aemulantes, per moralem scientiam affectuum impetus coercentes, per dialecticam rationis caliginem discutientes, quasi ignorantiae et vitiorum eluentes sordes animam purgemus, ne aut affectus temere debacchentur aut ratio imprudens quandoque deliret.” Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *De hominis dignitate, in De hominis dignitate. Heptaplus. De ente et uno*, ed. Eugenio Garin (Florence: Vallecchi editore, 1942), 112–14; English translation from Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man*, trans. Glenn Charles Wallis (reprinted Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998), 9; see also Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 135–37. Pico’s oration was written in 1486, as introduction to his *Conclusiones* but it was never delivered. In 1487, Pico’s theses were found heretical and were banned by a commission nominated by Innocent VIII. [↑](#footnote-ref-391)
392. “Nos omnes, quibus data potestas filios Dei fieri per gratiam cuius dator est Christus, supra angelicam dignitatem evehi possumus.” Pico della Mirandola, *Heptaplus*, 266; English translation from Pico della Mirandola, *On the Dignity of Man*, 116; Pico della Mirandola’s *Heptaplus* (1488-9) was condemned as heretical by the Church. On Pico’s view about the relationship between human beings and angels, see Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 135–39. [↑](#footnote-ref-392)
393. Chase, *Angelic Spirituality*, 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-393)
394. Amy Gillette, “Depicting the Sound of Silence: Angels’ Music and ‘Angelization’ in Medieval Sacred Art,” *Imago Musicae* XXVII (2015): 104. [↑](#footnote-ref-394)
395. Ibid., 109; The inspirational role of musical angels appearing in Marian paintings is also mentioned by Katherine Powers, see Powers, “Marco Palmezzano’s Music-Making Angels,” 146; Powers, “Music-Making Angels in Italian Renaissance Painting,” 61. [↑](#footnote-ref-395)
396. See especially Blake Wilson, *Music and Merchants: The Laudesi Companies of Republican Florence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). [↑](#footnote-ref-396)
397. Quoted in Bonnie J. Blackburn, “*Te Matrem Dei Laudamus*: A Study in the Musical Veneration of Mary,” *The Musical Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (1967): 53–76; also quoted in Powers, “The Lira Da Braccio in the Angel’s Hands in Italian Renaissance Madonna Enthroned Paintings,” 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-397)
398. “Per te el chor de li anzoli canta: Ave stella matutina!” Quoted in Powers, “The Lira Da Braccio in the Angel’s Hands in Italian Renaissance Madonna Enthroned Paintings,” 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-398)
399. Letter from Sigismondo Gonzaga to Francesco Gonzaga quoted in original and English translation in William F. Prizer, “Laude Di Popolo, Laude Di Corte: Some Thoughts on the Style and Function of the Renaissance Lauda,” in *La Musica a Firenze Al Tempo Di Lorenzo de Medici*, ed. Piero Gargiulo (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1993), 190; also quoted in Powers, “The Lira Da Braccio in the Angel’s Hands in Italian Renaissance Madonna Enthroned Paintings,” 26; see also Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, 184–85. [↑](#footnote-ref-399)
400. The earliest Laudesi company was founded in Siena in 1267. See Grange, *Giovanni Bellini: Music, Art and Venice*, 141–42. [↑](#footnote-ref-400)
401. Ibid.; see also Gillette, “Depicting the Sound of Silence,” 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-401)
402. Gillette, “Depicting the Sound of Silence,” 111; The practice of making music and kneeling to worship the Virgin is documented for example for the Orsanmichele’s company. See Blake Wilson, “If Monuments Could Sing: Image, Song, and Civic Devotion inside Orsanmichele,” ed. Carl Strehke, *Studies in the History of Art 76: Symposium Papers LIII: Orsanmichele and the History and Preservation of the Civic Monument*, 2012, 155, n. 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-402)
403. Franco Sacchetti’s plans are outlined in his poem *Capitolo dei Bianchi* (1400). Quoted in Brown, “Trecento Angels and the Instruments They Play,” 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-403)
404. Grange, *Giovanni Bellini: Music, Art and Venice*, 142–43. [↑](#footnote-ref-404)
405. Powers, “The Lira Da Braccio in the Angel’s Hands in Italian Renaissance Madonna Enthroned Paintings,” 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-405)
406. “Actores et tutores a Patre positos, et praepositos nobis. Nunc enim filii Dei sumus, quod adhuc parvuli sub actoribus et tutoribus sumus” Bernard of Clairvaux (Saint), *Sermons in Psalmum* Qui Habitat, ed. Jean Leclercq and Henri-Marie Rochais, vol. IV, S. Bernardi Opera (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1966), Sermon 12.7; Chase, *Angelic Spirituality*, 55 and 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-406)
407. “Surgit enim cum nos erigit; ambulat, cum nos proficere facit; stat, cum nos in beato proposito figit.” Hugonis de S. Victore, *De sex alis cherubim*, falsely attributed to Alan de Lille in Alani de Insulis, “De sex alis cherubim,” in *Opera Omnia*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 210, Patrologia Latina (Paris: Migne, 1855), 270; English translation from Chase, *Angelic Spirituality*, 34; see also ibid., 121–45. [↑](#footnote-ref-407)
408. “Apparvono gli Angioli di noi tre a Fra Silvestro (dico li Angioli, perché cosí ho creduto che fussino) et con una cordella o vero catena d’oro ci legarono insieme, cantando, se io bene mi ricordo: Ecce quam bonum et quam iocundum habitare fratres in unum.” Quoted in original and in translation in Patrick Paul Macey, *Bonfire Songs: Savonarola’s Musical Legacy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-408)
409. Ibid., 23–24. [↑](#footnote-ref-409)
410. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, 289. [↑](#footnote-ref-410)
411. Carla Vivarelli, “Nicola Da Capua,” in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani*, 2013, accessed online on 15th December 2017: http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/nicola-da-capua\_(Dizionario-Biografico)/. [↑](#footnote-ref-411)
412. Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, 161–65, esp. 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-412)
413. “Ad secundum dicendum quod officium custodiae ordinatur quidem ad illuminationem doctrinae sicut ad ultimum et principalem effectum.” Thomas Aquinas (Saint), *Summa Theologiae, Vol. 15, The World Order*, ed. and trans. Maxwell John Charlesworth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), q.113, a.5, 62; English translaton in ibid., 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-413)
414. “Cuilibet enim homini dantur duo angeli, unus malus ad exercitium, alter bonns ad custodiendum.” Jacobi a Voragine, *Legenda Aurea*, 649; English translation from Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, 593; Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham, “Migrations of Angels in the Early Modern World,” in *Angels in the Early Modern World*, ed. Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 10–11. [↑](#footnote-ref-414)
415. Chase, *Angelic Spirituality*, 147 ff; see also Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 32–33. [↑](#footnote-ref-415)
416. Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*, 161. [↑](#footnote-ref-416)
417. “Intelligendum est, quod ad custodiam hominis Angelus deputatur ab ortu nativitatis; et non solum intelligit de nativitate ex utero, sed etiam de nativitate in utero. Ex tunc enim, non ante, debet angelica custodia circa eum qui nasciturus est, deputari.” Bonaventure (Saint), “Commentaria in Quatuor Libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi,” in *Opera Omnia*, ed. the College of St. Bonaventura, vol. 2 (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, n.d.), lib.2, distinctio XI, dub. I. [↑](#footnote-ref-417)
418. “Sed ea quae providentur homini a Deo, inquantum habet naturam rationalem, ex tunc ei exhibentur, ex quo nascendo talem naturam accipit. Et tale beneficium est custodia Angelorum … Unde statim a nativitate habet homo Angelum ad sui custodiam deputatum … puer quandiu est in materno utero, non totaliter est a matre separatus … Et ideo probabiliter dici potest quod Angelus qui est in custodia matris, custodiat prolem in matris utero existentem.” Thomas Aquinas (Saint), *Summa Theologiae, Vol. 15, The World Order*, q.113, a.5, 62; English translation in ibid., 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-418)
419. Konrad Eisenbichler, “Devotion to the Archangel Raphael in Renaissance Florence,” in *Saints Studies in Hagiography*, ed. Sandro Sticca (Binghamton, New York: Center for Medieval & early Renaissance Studies, 1996), 251–52 and 255; see also Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 171–92. [↑](#footnote-ref-419)
420. Gertrude M. Achenbach, “The Iconography of Tobias and the Angel in Florentine Paintings of the Renaissance,” *Marsyas* III (1945): 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-420)
421. Eisenbichler, “Devotion to the Archangel Raphael in Renaissance Florence,” 257. [↑](#footnote-ref-421)
422. E. H. Gombrich, *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Phaidon, 1972), 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-422)
423. Achenbach, “The Iconography of Tobias and the Angel in Florentine Paintings of the Renaissance,” 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-423)
424. Alessandro d’Ancona, *Sacre Rappresentazioni dei Secoli XIV, XV e XVI*, vol. 1 (Florence: Successori Le Monnier, 1872), 97–128. [↑](#footnote-ref-424)
425. “L’Angiolo Raffaello, che come guardò Tubbiuzzo da pericolo e da inganni, e poi lo rimenò al padre e alla madre, così rimeni voi a vostra madre, che con tanto disiderio v’aspetta.” Alessandra Macinghi negli Strozzi, *Lettere di una gentildonna fiorentina del secolo XV ai figliuoli esuli: pubblicate da Cesare Guasti.*, ed. Cesare Guasti (Firenze: G.C. Sansoni, 1972), letter 59, 517; English translation from Eisenbichler, “Devotion to the Archangel Raphael in Renaissance Florence,” 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-425)
426. Achenbach, “The Iconography of Tobias and the Angel in Florentine Paintings of the Renaissance,” 81-82 n.10. [↑](#footnote-ref-426)
427. Ibid., 76–77; see also Eisenbichler, “Devotion to the Archangel Raphael in Renaissance Florence,” 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-427)
428. Michele Danieli, “Arcangelo Michele,” in *Angeli: volti dell’invisibile,* exh.cat., ed. Serenella Castri (Turin: Umberto Allemandi, 2010), 191–92. [↑](#footnote-ref-428)
429. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-429)
430. Sabrina Massini, “30. San Michele Arcangelo,” in *Pinacoteca comunale e Museo della Pieve di San Giuliano a Castiglion Fiorentino*, ed. Sabrina Massini, 2012, 48–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-430)
431. Tobit 12:18, English Standard Version. [↑](#footnote-ref-431)
432. Eisenbichler, “Devotion to the Archangel Raphael in Renaissance Florence,” 259–61; for more information on the *La Scala* confraternity see Konrad Eisenbichler, *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A Youth Confraternity in Florence, 1411-1785*, 1998. [↑](#footnote-ref-432)
433. Quoted in English translation in Eisenbichler, *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael*, 29; see also 147, 236. [↑](#footnote-ref-433)
434. “Quattro fanciulli incoronati e vestiti da angioli con un cembalo in una mano o una cetra o un tamburino.” Quoted in d’Ancona, *Sacre Rappresentazioni dei Secoli XIV, XV e XVI*, 1:247. This passage does not appear in Nerida Newbigin, *Feste d’Oltrarno: Plays in Churches in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (Firenze: Olschki, 1996). The original text is in Russian. [↑](#footnote-ref-434)
435. Newbigin, *Feste d’Oltrarno*, 1:6. See Alessandro D’Ancona, *Origini del Teatro Italiano*, vol. I (Turin: Ermanno Loescher, 1891), 248 for a slightly different Italian translation: “Lassù, sulla tribuna, si vede Dio Padre ... Dei fanciulli vestiti di bianco, raffiguranti gli angioli, lo attorniano, alcuni col cembalo, altri col flauto o la cetra, facendo uno spettacolo lieto e d’’ inesprimibile bellezza” (little boys in white robes, representing angels, surround him [God], some with the cymbal, others with the pipe or the lute, making the show pleasant and of inexpressible beauty).” [↑](#footnote-ref-435)
436. Newbigin, *Feste d’Oltrarno*, 1:6. The original text is in Russian; see D’Ancona, *Origini del Teatro Italiano*, I:249 for a slightly different Italian translation: “L’angiolo è un bel giovane, vestito di un abito bianco come neve, ornato d’oro: proprio come si veggono dipinti gli angioli celesti. Intanto ch’ei scende, canta a bassa voce” (a handsome young boy, dressed in a robe white as snow, decorated with gold: exactly like one can see celestial angels being painted. While he comes downwards, he sings with a low voice); see also Roberto Tessari, “Attori con le Ali: Gli Angeli negli Spettacoli Teatrali e Cinematografici,” in *Angeli: volti dell’invisibile,* exh.cat., ed. Serenella Castri (Turin: Umberto Allemandi, 2010), 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-436)
437. Newbigin, *Feste d’Oltrarno*, 1:61. The original text is in Russian; see D’Ancona, *Origini del Teatro Italiano*, I:251 for a slightly different Italian translation: “Fanciulli con flauti, cetre e campanelli”( young children with pipes, lutes and small bells). [↑](#footnote-ref-437)
438. Newbigin, *Feste d’Oltrarno*, 1:62. The original text is in Russian; see D’Ancona, *Origini del Teatro Italiano*, I:253 for a slightly different Italian translation: “I fanciulli che rappresentano gli angioli si muovono intorno a lui, mentre una musica armoniosa e un dolce canto risuona da lungi” (the children who represent angels move around Him, while a harmonious music and a sweet song resounds from afar); on the Feast of Ascension see also Cyrilla Barr, “Music and Spectacle in Confraternity Drama of Fifteenth-Century Florence: The Reconstruction of a Theatrical Event,” in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, ed. John Henderson and Timothy Verdon (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 376–404; Alessandra Buccheri, *The Spectacle of Clouds, 1439-1650: Italian Art and Theatre* (Oxon and New York: Ashgate, 2014), 387 for a visual interpretation of the Ascension play. [↑](#footnote-ref-438)
439. Barr, “Music and Spectacle in Confraternity Drama of Fifteenth-Century Florence,” 387. [↑](#footnote-ref-439)
440. “Che e’ fanciulli venghino alla predica domattina tutti, perché ell’è la loro e acciò che non si facci scandolo gli uomini gli presteranno tutti questi gradi che sono intorno.” Girolamo Savonarola, *Prediche sopra Amos e Zaccaria*, ed. Paolo Ghiglieri (Roma: Angelo Belardetti, 1972), 3:139; English translation from Michel Plaisance, *Florence in the Time of the Medici: Public Celebrations, Politics, and Literature in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. and trans. Nicole Carew-Reid (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008), 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-440)
441. “Facevano grillande e cantavano laude, che pareva un paradiso.” Savonarola, *Prediche sopra Amos e Zaccaria*, 3:152; English translation from Plaisance, *Florence in the Time of the Medici*, 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-441)
442. “Questa predicazione è de’ fanciulli e per loro la facciamo, ma sarà anche di quelli grandi che vorranno diventare fanciulli per purità … Sarà adunque la predicazione de’ fanciulli per età e de’ fanciulli per purità.” Savonarola, *Prediche sopra Amos e Zaccaria*, 3:147; see also Plaisance, *Florence in the Time of the Medici*, 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-442)
443. Barr, “Music and Spectacle in Confraternity Drama of Fifteenth-Century Florence,” 376–404. [↑](#footnote-ref-443)
444. Giuseppina de Sandre Gasparini, “Proiezione civica del culto antoniano e processioni cittadine nel Quattrocento,” in *“Vite” e Vita di Antonio di Padova*, ed. Luciano Bertazzo (Padova: Centro Studi Antoniani, 1997), 271–72. [↑](#footnote-ref-444)
445. “Fanciulli in forma di angeli, de’ quali alcuni dolcemente cantavano, altri suonavano organi: nessuno strumento dell’arte musicale mancava.” Quoted in D’Ancona, *Origini del Teatro Italiano*, I:235; and in Tessari, “Attori con le Ali: Gli Angeli negli Spettacoli Teatrali e Cinematografici,” 77; English translation from Emanuel Winternitz, *Musical Instruments and Their Symbolism in Western Art*, 1st ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), 220. [↑](#footnote-ref-445)
446. “Nè altro infatti parve se non un Paradiso quando i cantori, quasi angeli, intuonarono dolci canti … Ora si udivano soave melodie di voci umane, ora deliziosi accordi di musici strumenti.” Quoted in D’Ancona, *Origini del Teatro Italiano*, I:237; English translation from Winternitz, *Musical Instruments and Their Symbolism in Western Art*, 220; see also Daniel V. Filippi, “Sonic Afterworld: Mapping the Soundscape of Heaven and Hell in Early Modern Cities,” in *Cultural Histories of Noise, Sound and Listening in Europe, 1300-1918.*, ed. Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 196. [↑](#footnote-ref-446)
447. “Diciotto furono i fanciulli che, nel volto, nella voce e nell’abito imitavano la natura degli angeli, e che con soave canto alternamente dicevano i carmi ordinati”. Quoted in Tessari, “Attori con le Ali: Gli Angeli negli Spettacoli Teatrali e Cinematografici,” 78. [↑](#footnote-ref-447)
448. Barr, “Music and Spectacle in Confraternity Drama of Fifteenth-Century Florence,” 386. [↑](#footnote-ref-448)
449. Nerida Newbigin, “Pavilioned in Splendour: Performing Heaven in Fifteenth-Century Florence,” in *Medieval Theatre Performance: Actors, Dancers, Automata and Their Audiences*, eds Philip Butterworth and Katie Normington (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2017), 97, 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-449)
450. Angels painted by Masolino are mentioned in Barr, “Music and Spectacle in Confraternity Drama of Fifteenth-Century Florence,” 381; see also ibid., 385. [↑](#footnote-ref-450)
451. “Questi putti che in tutto erano dodici, essendo accomodati come si è detto, sopra le base, e vestiti da angeli con ali dorate e capegli di matasse d’oro, si pigliavano, quando era tempo, per mano l’un l’altro; e dimenando le braccia pareva che ballassino, e massimamente girando sempre e movendosi la mezza palla.” Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, 346 (*Vita di Filippo Brunelleschi*). [↑](#footnote-ref-451)
452. “Sempre in casa si ragioni di cose buone et honeste, et infino alle favole delle donne sieno ammonimenti d’onesto vivere: con quelle s’impaurischino dal male et dispongansi a amare le cose buone, come dire l’orco essere in inferno piloso et cornuto per pigliare i tristi, et i buoni fanciulli andare in paradiso ballando con gli agnoli.” Matteo Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, ed. Gino Belloni (Florence: Sansoni, 1982), 23–24. [↑](#footnote-ref-452)
453. “Così ti parrà avere in casa gli angeli, non cessanti di cantare al Salvatore sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus sabaoth.” Giovanni Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi (Florence: Angiolo Garinei Libraio, 1860), 153–54 In this passage the author compares children also to orators, prophets and apostles, martyrs and confessors. [↑](#footnote-ref-453)
454. William F. Prizer, “Games of Venus: Secular Vocal Music in the Late Quattrocento and Early Cinquecento,” *The Journal of Musicology* 9, no. 1 (1991): 53–54; Tim Shephard, “Noblewomen and Music in Italy, c. 1430-1520: Looking Past Isabella,” in *Gender, Age and Musical Creativity*, ed. Catherine Haworth and Lisa Colton (Dorchester: Ashgate, 2016), 31. The custom of having children play the part of musical angels is not limited to the Italian states, see Richard Freedman, *Music in the Renaissance: Western Music in Context* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 73–74. [↑](#footnote-ref-454)
455. “La mia leggiadra e candida angioletta”. Quoted in Shephard, “Noblewomen and Music in Italy,” 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-455)
456. “E nota, che in quel tenpo era tanto spirito in quella chiesa, e tanta dolceza a udire que’ figliuoli cantare, quando di sopra, quando di sotto e quando da lato, cantando a parte con ogni modestia e silenzio, che non pareva cosa da fanciugli. Io lo scrivo perchè mi trovai presente e vidi molte volte, e sentii tale dolceza spirituale. Veramente era piena la chiesa d’angioli.” Luca Landucci, *Diario Fiorentino Dal 1450 Al 1516 Di Luca Landucci Continuato Da Un Anonimo Fino Al 1542*, ed. Iodoco del Badia (Florence: Sansoni, 1883), 136–37; English translation from Luca Landucci, *A Florentine Diary from 1450 to 1516 by Luca Landucci Continued by an Anonymous Writer till 1542 with Notes by Iodoco Dal Badia*, ed. Iodoco Del Badia, trans. Alice de Rosen Jervis (London; New York: Dent Dutton, 1927), 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-456)
457. “Due fanciulli che suonano uno il liuto e l’altro la lira.” Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, 592; Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-457)
458. “Gli suoi angelici et dolcissimi figl[i]uoli … certo mi pare, quando io gli veggo, vedere tanti angeli et udendoli sentire tanti Spiriti del cielo”. Agnolo Bronzino, *Letter to Pier Francesco Riccio in Florence*, written in Pisa on 27 January 1551. This letter is transcribed in its entirety in Detlef Heikamp, “Agnolo Bronzinos Kinderbiltnisse Aus Dem Jahre 1551,” *Mittelungen Des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 7, no. 2 (August 1955): 137–38; this passage is also quoted in a different translation in Nancy Edwards, “Entry 128,” in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Andrea Bayer (New York, New Haven, Conn.; London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2008), 277. [↑](#footnote-ref-458)
459. See “Figure of a boy playing the bagpipes” in John Pope-Hennessy and Ronald W Lightbown, *Catalogue of Italian Sculpture in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, vol. I: Text. Eighth to Fifteenth Century (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1964), 215–16. On the statuette of a boy playing the bagpipes see Reino Liefkes, *Masterpieces of World Ceramics in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, ed. Reino Liefkes and Hilary Young (London: V & A Publishing, 2008), 62–63. [↑](#footnote-ref-459)
460. Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Children* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 264. [↑](#footnote-ref-460)
461. Beth Williamson, “Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion,” *Speculum* 79, no. 2 (2004): 380–81, n.156. [↑](#footnote-ref-461)
462. Ibid., 381. [↑](#footnote-ref-462)
463. Devotion towards the Madonna of the Fire is studied in Lisa Pon, *Printed icon in early modern Italy: Forlì's Madonna of the fire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) and in Lisa Pon, “Il Tabernacolo e la Processione: la Madonna del Fuoco di Forlì come Sito Funzionale,” in *I Territori del patrimonio: Dinamiche della patrimonializzazione e culture locali (secc. XVII-XX)*, ed. Roberto Balzani (Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 2015), 63-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-463)
464. Pon, *Printed icon in early modern Italy*, 102-03. [↑](#footnote-ref-464)
465. Williamson, “Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion,” 362. [↑](#footnote-ref-465)
466. Ibid., 352. [↑](#footnote-ref-466)
467. Carlo Cavalli, “Tra devozione pubblica e private: un reliquiario trecentesco per la confraterinata di Santa Maria dei Battuti nella Cattedrale padovana”, in *Pregare in casa: oggetti e documenti della pratica religiosa tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, eds. Giovanna Baldissin Molli, Cristina Guarnieri, and Zuleika Murat (Rome: Viella, 2018), 132. See also Tiziana Franco, “Pregare in Casa. Conclusioni,” in *Ibidem*, 299. [↑](#footnote-ref-467)
468. Pon, *Printed icon in early modern Italy*, 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-468)
469. Williamson, “Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion,” 380. [↑](#footnote-ref-469)
470. Abigail Brundin, Deborah Howard, and Mary Laven, *The Sacred Home in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-470)
471. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-471)
472. Luke Syson, “Representing Domestic Interiors,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 86–88. [↑](#footnote-ref-472)
473. Decorated furniture will be analysed in chapter 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-473)
474. Attilio Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV e XV*, vol. 1 (Florence: G.C. Sansoni, 1908), 187–88; See also John Kent Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence” (John Hopkins University, 1987), 176. [↑](#footnote-ref-474)
475. Caroline Corisande Anderson, “The Material Culture of Domestic Religion in Early Modern Florence, c.1480 - c.1650” (University of York, 2007), 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-475)
476. Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 167, 168 n.35. [↑](#footnote-ref-476)
477. Ibid., 65, n.85. [↑](#footnote-ref-477)
478. Ibid., 143. [↑](#footnote-ref-478)
479. “Uno colmo di marmo sopra l’uscio dell anticameretta chon cholonne da lato di legname et chapitelli messi d’oro, e in detto colmo una Nostra donna chol bambino in braccio di mezo rilievo, con 4 agnoli, c[i]oe dua per lato.” Quoted in Roberta J. M. Olson, “Lost and Partially Found: The Tondo, a Significant Florentine Art Form, in Documents of the Renaissance,” *Artibus et Historiae* 14, no. 27 (1993): 36 and 57 n.60. [↑](#footnote-ref-479)
480. “Uno colmetto picholo cornicie messe d’oro entrovi dipinto una Nostra Donna a sedere col bambino in braccio, con dua agnoletti a piedi, di mano di Francesco di Pisello.” Quoted in ibid., 58 n.69. [↑](#footnote-ref-480)
481. “Apollonio di Giovanni dipintore per 4 spiritegli mi conperò da Francesco danzello de’ Signori.” Quoted in Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 265. See also ibid., 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-481)
482. “III agnioletti di giesso auti da Francesco mercaio e per dipintura d’essi a Richardo dipintore.” Quoted in Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 284. See also ibid., 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-482)
483. “2 fighure con 12 banbini sopra al uscio,” quoted in Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 68, n.94; “2 figure di terra, 1 di Nostro Signore e 1 di bambino,” quoted in ibid., 69, n.94. These works are listed in the inventory of Inghirammi’s possessions carried out on 16 April 1513. [↑](#footnote-ref-483)
484. Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 177. Lydecker quotes a number of inventories from Florentine households throughout his dissertation, which include at least one depiction of the Virgin. [↑](#footnote-ref-484)
485. Cooper, “Devotion,” 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-485)
486. Depictions of musical angels will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. More information on *tactus* can be found in chapter 3.2.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-486)
487. In fact, sometimes even the main characters, such as the infant Christ, are omitted in these descriptions. [↑](#footnote-ref-487)
488. Quoted in Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV e XV*, 1:184, n.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-488)
489. Ibid., 1:186–87, n.1; More examples of tavole di Nostra Donna can be found in Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 61–64. [↑](#footnote-ref-489)
490. On the frequent presence of material and sizes in the description of objects, see Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-490)
491. Ronald G. Kecks, *Madonna Und Kind : Das Häusliche Andachtsbild Im Florenz Des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1988), 65; on the likeness of sixteenth-century depictions of angels to humans, see also Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, 151; Gill, *Angels and the Order of Heaven in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*. [↑](#footnote-ref-491)
492. Piero della Francesca’s *Nativity* will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-492)
493. See Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis, eds., *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (London: V&A Publications, 2006); Elizabeth Carroll Consavari, Stephanie R Miller, and Erin J Campbell, eds., *The Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior, 1400-1700: Objects, Spaces, Domesticities* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014); Giovanna Baldissin Molli, Cristina Guarnieri, and Zuleika Murat, eds., *Pregare in casa: oggetti e documenti della pratica religiosa tra Medioevo e Rinascimento* (Rome: Viella, 2018); Brundin, Howard, and Laven, *The Sacred Home in Renaissance Italy*; Maya Corry, Marco Faini, and Alessia Meneghin, eds., *Domestic Devotions in Early Modern Italy* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018). Earlier studies on domesticity include Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence”; Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance interior: 1400-1600* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991); Margaret Ann Morse, “The Arts of Domestic Devotion in Renaissance Italy: The Case of Venice” 2006; Flora Dennis, “Sound and Domestic Space in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Italy,” *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 16, no. 1 (2008): 7–19. [↑](#footnote-ref-493)
494. Katherine Tycz, “Daily Devotions,” in *Madonnas & Miracles: The Holy Home in Renaissance Italy*, Exh.Cat., ed. Maya Corry, Deborah Howard, and Mary Laven (Cambridge: The Fitzwilliam Museum, 2017), 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-494)
495. Evelyn Welch, *Art in Renaissance Italy, 1350-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 307; Peta Motture and Luke Syson, “Art in the Casa,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 281; On devotion to the Virgin see, for example, Fredrika H. Jacobs, *Votive Panels and Popular Piety in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 115–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-495)
496. Roberta J. M. Olson, “Lost and Partially Found: The Tondo, a Significant Florentine Art Form, in Documents of the Renaissance,” *Artibus et Historiae* 14, no. 27 (1993): 33; Cooper, “Devotion,” 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-496)
497. Roberta J. M. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 2, 14–17; on the historical genesis of the *tondo* see ibid., 7–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-497)
498. Abigail Brundin, Deborah Howard, and Mary Laven, *The Sacred Home in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 182; On this topic see Michelle O’Malley, “Quality Choices in the Production of Renaissance Art: Botticelli and Demand,” *Renaissance Studies* 28, no. 1 (2014): 4–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-498)
499. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 70; Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 43; Ellen Callmann, *Apollonio Di Giovanni* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 35, 78 n.78; Ellen Callmann, “Apollonio Di Giovanni and Painting for the Early Renaissance Room,” *Antichità Viva* XXVII, no. 3–4 (1988): 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-499)
500. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 70; Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 43; Callmann, “Apollonio Di Giovanni and Painting for the Early Renaissance Room,” 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-500)
501. Callmann, *Apollonio Di Giovanni*, 79, no. 108; Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 43, n.91. [↑](#footnote-ref-501)
502. Callmann, *Apollonio Di Giovanni*, 35, 79, n.113; Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 70; Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 43, n.92. [↑](#footnote-ref-502)
503. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 61; Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-503)
504. John Kent Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence” (John Hopkins University, 1987), 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-504)
505. Ibid., 65–66. [↑](#footnote-ref-505)
506. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 61; Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 33. [↑](#footnote-ref-506)
507. “Uno tondo chon chornicione d’oro di Nostra Donna et Magi che ofersono a Christo”, located in the “chamera di Lorenzo bella in su la sala in palco.” Maria DePrano, *Art Patronage, Family, and Gender in Renaissance Florence: The Tornabuoni* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-507)
508. Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 46, 63 n.108 and 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-508)
509. “Uno tondo chon festone messo d’oro dov’è la Nostra Donna et Santo Giovanni.” DePrano, *Art Patronage, Family, and Gender in Renaissance Florence*, 141, 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-509)
510. Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 181–82. [↑](#footnote-ref-510)
511. For example, Saint Catherine of Siena had a vision of a male child in a circle in 1378, see Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-511)
512. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 93–94. [↑](#footnote-ref-512)
513. Ibid., 94–96. [↑](#footnote-ref-513)
514. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-514)
515. Debora Shuger, “The ‘I’ of the Beholder. Renaissance Mirrors and the Reflexive Mind,” in *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday*, ed. Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-515)
516. Ibid., 22; on mirrors, see Nancy M Frelick, *The Mirror in Medieval and Early Modern Culture: Specular Reflections*, 2016; Laurie Schneider, “Mirrors in Art,” *Psychoanalytic Inquiry Psychoanalytic Inquiry* 5, no. 2 (1985): 283–324; Paula M. Hancock, “Transformations in the Iconography of the Mirror in Medieval Art” (Emory University, 1988). [↑](#footnote-ref-516)
517. The inscription in the vernacular reads “Spechiatevi in costoro voi che reggete se volete regnare mille et mille anni”. [↑](#footnote-ref-517)
518. Nicolai Rubinstein, “Political Ideas in Sienese Art: The Frescoes by Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Taddeo Di Bartolo in the Palazzo Pubblico,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 21, no. 3/4 (1958): 190–93. [↑](#footnote-ref-518)
519. “Magis autem id ipsum consequi fortasse poterunt, si non tam suam speciem quam alieno probati hominis mores et vivum speculum intuebuntur.” Craig W Kallendorf, “Introduction,” in *Humanist Educational Treatises*, ed. Craig W Kallendorf (Harvard University Press, 2002), 41–42, translation at p. 6; see also Stefano G. Casu, “Speculum Principis: Notes on Two Plaquettes by Filarete,” *The Medal / Publ. by the British Art Medal Trust in Assoc. with FIDEM, the Fédération Internationale de La Médaille*, 2015, 41–42. [↑](#footnote-ref-519)
520. “T’ingegna d’avere usanza e dimestichezza con uno o con più valente uomo, savio e antico e sanza vizio … da lui imprendi, da lui appara, e così seguita e t’ingegna di somigliarlo: abbilo sempre innanzi e nella tua mente, e quando fai una cosa ispecchiati in lui”. Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, quoted and translated in Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 171; see also Tim Shephard, “A Mirror for Princes: The Ferrarese Mirror Frame in the V&A and the Instruction of Heirs,” *Journal of Design History* 26, no. 1 (2013): 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-520)
521. “Honesto loco natos paternae gloriae lumen obscuros esse non patitur; qui parentum imagines sibi plus oneris quam honoris afferre intelligunt, nisi sua virtute majorum dignitati ac amplitudini responderint.” Quoted in Margaret L. King, “Caldiera and the Barbaros on Marriage and the Family: Humanist Reflections of Venetian Realities,” *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 6 (1976): 33; see also Shephard, “A Mirror for Princes,” 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-521)
522. “Nel primo specchio fa’ specchiare i tuoi figliuoli, come aprono gli occhi.” Giovanni Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi (Florence: Angiolo Garinei Libraio, 1860), 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-522)
523. “Hoc porro speculum est proborum virorum memoria, necnon beatae ipsorum vitae historia, Scripturarum lectio, leges a Deo datae. Si vel semel volueris Sanctorum imagines contemplari, deformitatem animae tuae videbis: qua semel conspecta, nullo alio egebis ut ab hac turpitudine libereris. Ad hoc enim utile nobis est hoc speculum, facilemque nobis reddit hanc mutationem.” John Chrysostom (Saint), “Homilia IV.8,” 49; English translation from John Chrysostom (Saint), *The Homilies of St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, On the Gospel of St. Matthew*, 58, (*Homily IV*). See also Shuger, “The ‘I’ of the Beholder. Renaissance Mirrors and the Reflexive Mind,” 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-523)
524. “Dinanzi alla figura del crocifisso Figliuolo di Dio … incominciai prima a immaginare e ragguardare vi me i miei peccati.” Cooper, “Devotion,” 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-524)
525. “Scorgonsi i suoi difetti in lo specchiarsi, non facili a veder come gli altrui; onde può l’uom da sé ben misurarsi e dir ‘miglior sarò da quell ch’io fui.’” Singleton, *Canti carnascialeschi del Rinascimento*, 352 (Giambattista Gelli, *Canzona de' maestri di far specchi*); English translation from Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study*, 174; see also Burke, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy*, 196. [↑](#footnote-ref-525)
526. On the presence of mirrors in the study, see Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study*, 167–74. [↑](#footnote-ref-526)
527. Deborah Howard, “Devozione in Villa: alcune osservazioni sulla vita spirituale dei veneziani in contesto rurale nel Cinquecento,” in *Pregare in casa: oggetti e documenti della pratica religiosa tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, eds Giovanna Baldissin Molli, Cristina Guarnieri, and Zuleika Murat (Rome: Viella, 2018), 251. [↑](#footnote-ref-527)
528. Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study*, 169; see also Clifford M. Brown and Anna Maria Lorenzoni, *Isabella d’Este and Lorenzo Da Pavia: Documents for the History of Art and Culture in Renaissance Mantua* (Geneva: Droz, 1982), 240–42. [↑](#footnote-ref-528)
529. Brundin, Howard, and Laven, *The Sacred Home in Renaissance Italy*, 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-529)
530. “Io l’ho ben visto al lume et col vetro et col specchio.” Quoted in Maria Forcellino, “Vittoria Colonna and Michelangelo: Drawings and Paintings,” in *A Companion to Vittoria Colonna*, eds Abigail Brundin, Tatiana Crivelli, and Maria Serena Sapegno (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), 291, n.69. See also Brundin, Howard, and Laven, *The Sacred Home in Renaissance Italy*, 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-530)
531. DePrano, *Art Patronage, Family, and Gender in Renaissance Florence*, 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-531)
532. “1 Nostra Signora tonda, di sopra, dorata intorno cho’l figliuolo e Santo Giovanni.” Quoted in Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 49, 64 n.126; see also Jonathan Katz Nelson, “Putting Botticelli and Filippino in Their Place,” in *Invisibile agli occhi: atti della giornata di studio in ricordo di Lisa Venturini*, ed. Nicoletta Baldini (Florence: Fondazione di studi di storia dell’arte Roberto Longhi, 2007), 53–63. [↑](#footnote-ref-532)
533. Peta Motture and Luke Syson, “Art in the Casa,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 278; Geraldine A. Johnson, “Art or Artefact? Madonna and Child Reliefs in the Early Renaissance,” in *The Sculpted Object, 1400-1700*, ed. Stuart Currie and Peta Motture (Aldershot; Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press; Ashgate, 1997), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-533)
534. Casu, “Speculum Principis,” 39–40. [↑](#footnote-ref-534)
535. Ibid., 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-535)
536. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 101; Anthony Radcliffe and Charles Avery, “The ‘Chellini Madonna’ by Donatello,” *The Burlington Magazine* 118, no. 879 (1976): 383; Giancarlo Gentilini, ed., *I Della Robbia: La Scultura Invetriata nel Rinascimento* (Florence: Cantini, 1992), 22, 146, note 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-536)
537. Luke Syson, “Representing Domestic Interiors,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-537)
538. Caroline Corisande Anderson, “The Material Culture of Domestic Religion in Early Modern Florence, c.1480 - c.1650” (University of York, 2007), 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-538)
539. Shephard, “A Mirror for Princes,” 104–5. [↑](#footnote-ref-539)
540. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-540)
541. “Nella giovaneza, quando già si conosce il bene e il male, dicono cominciare le dua vie del Y, cioè della nostra vita, in nel quale tempo o gl’uomini seguitano la via più ritta, cioè delle virtù, o veramente se ne vanno per la via piana et più bassa de’ vitii.” Matteo Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, ed. Gino Belloni (Florence: Sansoni, 1982), 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-541)
542. Anderson, “The Material Culture of Domestic Religion in Early Modern Florence, c.1480 - c.1650,” 106; Luke Syson and Dora Thornton, *Objects of Virtue: Art in Renaissance Italy* (London: The British Museum Press, 2001), 51–52; John Pope-Hennessy, “A Cartapesta Mirror Frame,” *The Burlington Magazine* 92, no. 571 (October 1950): 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-542)
543. “In his omnibus interna perfectio producit externa. Illam bonitatem, hanc pulchritudinem possum appellare. Quocirca bonitatis florem quendam esse pulchritudinem volumus, cuius floris illecebris, quasi esca quadam, latens interius bonitas allicit intuentes. Quoniam vero nostrae mentis cognitio a sensibus ducit originem, bonitatem ipsam in rerum penetralibus insitam nec intelligeremus umquam, neque appeteremus, nisi ad eam speciei exterioris indiciis manifestis proveheremur.” *Marsilio Ficino’s Commentary on Plato’s Symposium*, ed. and trans. Sears Reynolds Jayne (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1944), Oratio Quinta, capitulum I, 64; English translation from ibid., Fifth Speech, chapter 1, 164-165; see also Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-543)
544. On Baldassarre degli Embriachi’s mirrors see Ellen Callmann, *Beyond Nobility: Art for the Private Citizen in the Early Renaissance* (Allentown: Allentown Art Museum, 1980), entry 70: 72-74; on the MET mirror see ibid., entry 69: 71-72. [↑](#footnote-ref-544)
545. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-545)
546. “Candor est enim lucis aeternae, et speculum sine macula Dei majestatis, et imago bonitatis illius.” Wisdom, 7:26, Biblia Sacra Vulgata. English version from Common English Bible. [↑](#footnote-ref-546)
547. “O[mn]ia e[ni]m que su[n]t in speculo reluce[n]t. Sic in b[ea]ta virgine tanq[ue] in speculo dei debe[n]t o[mn]es suas impuritates et maculas videre et eas mundare et corrigere. Nam superbi ibi cognoscent suas maculas respiciendo ibi ad sua[m] humilitatem[m]. Avari respiciendo ad suam paupertate[m]. Luxuriosi respiciendo ad sua[m] virginitate[m].” Jacobus de Voragine, *Mariale Sive Sermones de Veata Maria Virgine* (Paris, 1503), sermo VII, f. 83; English translation from Ernest Cushing Richardson, ed., *Materials for a Life of Jacopo Da Voragine*, vol. 2 (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1935), 66; Partially quoted in Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 96, where it is incorrectly reported as being from the sixth sermon. [↑](#footnote-ref-547)
548. “Angelus est manifestatio occulti luminis,speculum purum, clarissimum, incontaminatum, incoinquinatum, immaculatum, suscipiens, si fas est dicere, pulchritudinem Dei boniformis Deiformitatis.” Jacobi a Voragine, *Legenda Aurea*, ed. Graesse (Lipsiae: Impensis Librariae Arnoldianae, 1801), 324; English translation from Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 296. [↑](#footnote-ref-548)
549. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-549)
550. “Tondi nei quali si porta da mangiare alle donne di parto.” Ibid. (*Vita di Francesco detto de' Salviati*). [↑](#footnote-ref-550)
551. Cecilia de Carli, *I deschi da parto e la pittura del primo Rinascimento toscano* (Turin: Umberto Allemandi, 1997), 21–22; On *deschi da parto* bearing messages for female viewers specifically, see Adrian W. B Randolph, “Gendering the Period Eye: Deschi Da Parto and Renaissance Visual Culture,” *Art History* 27, no. 4 (2004): 545–47; Randolph, *Touching Objects*, 169-203. [↑](#footnote-ref-551)
552. Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 13–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-552)
553. “Uno descho tondo da parto, dipintovi il Trionfo della Fama.” Marco Spallanzani and Giovanna Gaeta Bertelà, *Libro d’inventario dei beni di Lorenzo il Magnifico* (Florence: Assoc. Amici del Bargello, 1992), 27; Musacchio, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy*, 68; on Lorenzo il Magnifico’s *desco* see Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, “Entry 70,” in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Andrea Bayer (New York, New Haven, Conn.; London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2008), 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-553)
554. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 28–29; on the function performed by *deschi da parto* see de Carli, *I deschi da parto e la pittura del primo Rinascimento toscano*, 13–15. [↑](#footnote-ref-554)
555. Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-555)
556. de Carli, *I deschi da parto e la pittura del primo Rinascimento toscano*, 17. See also Chapter 4.3 of this thesis. [↑](#footnote-ref-556)
557. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-557)
558. de Carli, *I deschi da parto e la pittura del primo Rinascimento toscano*, entry 26, 122-123; see also Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, “Conception and Birth,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 125. [↑](#footnote-ref-558)
559. The attribution of this *desco* to Lippo d’Andrea is given by Cecilia de Carli; see de Carli, *I deschi da parto e la pittura del primo Rinascimento toscano*, entry 13, 90-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-559)
560. Ibid., 36–39. [↑](#footnote-ref-560)
561. On *belle donne* dishes, see Marta Ajmar and Dora Thornton, “When Is a Portrait Not a Portrait? *Belle Donne* on Maiolica and the Renaissance Praise of Local Beauties,” in *The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the Renaissance*, ed. Nicholas Mann and Luke Syson (London: British Museum Press, 1998), 138–53. [↑](#footnote-ref-561)
562. Radcliffe and Avery, “The ‘Chellini Madonna’ by Donatello,” 377-385+387. [↑](#footnote-ref-562)
563. William Dale, “Donatello’s *Chellini Madonna*: *Speculum Sine Macula*,” *Apollo* 141, no. 397 (March 1995): 4–5. [↑](#footnote-ref-563)
564. On the use of coral for protection, see Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, “Lambs, Coral, Teeth, and the Intimate Intersection of Religion and Magic in Renaissance Italy,” in *Images, Relics, and Devotional Practices in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. Scott Montgomery and Sally Cornelison (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 151–53. [↑](#footnote-ref-564)
565. Shephard, “A Mirror for Princes,” 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-565)
566. “Nel primo specchio fa’ specchiare i tuoi figliuoli, come aprono gli occhi.” Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-566)
567. The “frame of proper reference”, or “field of imaginative association,” includes arguments created using analogies between parallel phenomena, when finding direct evidence proves impossible. On the different methods to carry out art-historical research see William Hood, “The State of Research in Italian Renaissance Art,” *The Art Bulletin* 69, no. 2 (June 1987): esp. 184. [↑](#footnote-ref-567)
568. Thornton and Wilson 2009 list several other versions of this dish, including one in the Musée du Louvre in Paris (inv. OA 1457), see Dora Thornton and Timothy Wilson, *Italian Renaissance Ceramics: A Catalogue of the British Museum Collection* (London: British Museum Press, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-568)
569. Ibid., vol.2, 472 no.280. [↑](#footnote-ref-569)
570. Timothy Wilson and Luke Syson, *Maiolica: Italian Renaissance Ceramics in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016), 244–45; Thornton and Wilson, *Italian Renaissance Ceramics*, vol.2, entry 280, 471-472. [↑](#footnote-ref-570)
571. “Dish with Angel, ca. 1510–30,” in *Metropolitan Museum Catalog*, accessed October 20, 2018, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/204522. [↑](#footnote-ref-571)
572. “E se non vuogli, o non puoi, di tante dipinture fare quasi tempio in casa, avendo balia fa’ sieno menati spesso in chiesa.” Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-572)
573. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-573)
574. See Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-574)
575. Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, 493 (*Vita di Sandro Botticello*); see also Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-575)
576. Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 125–26. [↑](#footnote-ref-576)
577. Ronald W. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work* (London: Elek, 1978), vol.2, entry C21, 126. [↑](#footnote-ref-577)
578. “È di mano di Sandro in San Francesco, fuor della porta a San Miniato, in un tondo una Madonna con alcuni angeli grandi quanto il vivo, il quale fu tenuto cosa bellissima.” Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, 494 (*Vita di Sandro Botticello*); see also Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.2, entry B40; Ruben Rebmann, “Entry 113,” in *Botticelli Reimagined*, ed. Mark Evans, Stefan Weppelmann, and Ana Debenedetti (London: V & A Publishing, 2016), 264; Nicoletta Pons, *Botticelli: Catalogo complete* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1989), entry 46, 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-578)
579. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.2, entry B40, 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-579)
580. Frank Zöllner, *Sandro Botticelli* (Munich; London; New York: Prestel, 2005), 224–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-580)
581. Margot Elsbeth Fassler, *Music in the Medieval West: Western Music in Context* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2014), 3–10. [↑](#footnote-ref-581)
582. On choir books, see Thomas Schmidt-Beste, “Polyphonic Sources, ca.1450-1500,” in *The Cambridge History of Fifteenth-Century Music*, ed. Anna Maria Busse Berger and Jesse Rodin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 643–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-582)
583. James Haar and John Nádas, “The Medici, the Signoria, the Pope: Sacred Polyphony in Florence, 1432-1448,” *Recercare* 20, no. 1/2 (2008): 39; Charles Hamm and Ann Besser Scott, “A Study and Inventory of the Manuscript Modena, Biblioteca Estense, α.X.1.11 (ModB),” *Musica Disciplina* 26 (1972): 122; “ModB,” in *Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music*, accessed March 14, 2019, https://www.diamm.ac.uk/sources/146/#/inventory. [↑](#footnote-ref-583)
584. “Ora a voi, fanciugli, parliamo un poco. Ascoltate me: voi cantate qua delle laude la mattina e sta bene; ma io vorrei ancora che voi cantassi qualche volta de’ canti della Chiesta come è Ave maris stella … e quando io vengo in pergamo, se io trovassi che voi cantassi quella Ave maris stella canterei forse ancora io.” Quoted in Mario Ruffini, “Savonarola e la musica: dalla lauda al Novecento,” in *La figura de Jerónimo Savonarola O.P. y su influencia en España y Europa: actas del Congreso Internacional, Valencia, 22-26 mayo 2000*, ed. Donald Weinstein, Júlia Benavent i Benavent, and J. Inés Rodríguez Gómez (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo per la Fondazione Ezio Franceschini, 2004), 100–101; an English translation of the first part of this passage can be found in Iain Fenlon, “Music and Domestic Devotion in the Age of Reform,” in *Domestic Devotions in Early Modern Italy*, ed. Maya Corry, Marco Faini, and Alessia Meneghin (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018), 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-584)
585. Marica Tacconi, *Cathedral and Civic Ritual in Late Medieval and Renaissance Florence: The Service Books of Santa Maria Del Fiore*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 212. [↑](#footnote-ref-585)
586. Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy. A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-586)
587. Mark Evans, “Entry 114,” in *Botticelli Reimagined*, ed. Mark Evans, Stefan Weppelmann, and Ana Debenedetti (London: V & A Publishing, 2016), 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-587)
588. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.1, 105-106. [↑](#footnote-ref-588)
589. Ibid., vol.2, entry B48, 65-66; Pons, *Botticelli: Catalogo complete*, entry 69, 74; Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 43–44. [↑](#footnote-ref-589)
590. Roberta J.M. Olson, “An Old Mystery Solved: The 1487 Payment Document to Botticelli for a Tondo,” *Mitteilungen Des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 39, no. 2/3 (1995): 393–96; Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 71; see also Zöllner, *Sandro Botticelli*, 228–30. [↑](#footnote-ref-590)
591. Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-591)
592. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.1, 106; “Ave Maria,” in *Grove Music Online*, accessed February 16, 2019, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.sheffield.idm.oclc.org/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000001578. [↑](#footnote-ref-592)
593. On the association of roses with the Virgin see Mirella Levi D’Ancona, *The Garden of the Renaissance : Botanical Symbolism in Italian Painting* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1977), 332–37. [↑](#footnote-ref-593)
594. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.2, C28,130-131; Pons, *Botticelli: Catalogo complete*, entry 91, 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-594)
595. Ruth DeFord, *Tactus, Mensuration and Rhythm in Renaissance Music*, 2018, 51–53; Alexander Blachly, “*Mensura* versus *Tactus*,” *Quellen Und Studien Zur Musiktheorie Des Mittelalters* 3 (2001): 429. [↑](#footnote-ref-595)
596. DeFord, *Tactus, Mensuration and Rhythm in Renaissance Music*, 51–53. [↑](#footnote-ref-596)
597. “Cantor neque admodum accelerans cantum vel in longam vocem protrahens pedis anteriora quatit immota calce, vel manum admovet manui aut dorso discipuli quantum potest equaliter.” Anselmi 1961, 171; English translation from DeFord 2015, 54-55. For a different translation see Blachly, “*Mensura* versus *tactus*”, 429-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-597)
598. Blachly, “*Mensura* versus *Tactus*,” 430. [↑](#footnote-ref-598)
599. “Duplex est tempus, scilicet perfectum et imperfectum. Perfectum est, quod continent numerum ternarium in semibrevibus et illud debet tangi tribus digitis, id est tactibus. Sed tempus imperfectum est, quod continent numerum binarium in semibrevibus et illud debet tangit duobus digitis.” Quoted in DeFord, *Tactus, Mensuration and Rhythm in Renaissance Music*, 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-599)
600. “Cum igitur cantor recte et commensurate cantare desiderat, instar pulsius istius pedem aut manum sive digitum tangens in aliquem locum canendo moveat.” Quoted in DeFord, *Tactus, Mensuration and Rhythm in Renaissance Music*, 56; for a slightly different translation see Blachly, “*Mensura* versus *Tactus*,” 443–44 and Bank, *Tactus, Tempo and Notation in Mensural Music from the 13th to the 17th Century*, 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-600)
601. DeFord, *Tactus, Mensuration and Rhythm in Renaissance Music*, 55; Blachly, “*Mensura* versus *Tactus*,” 443–44; on music and pulse see Nancy G. Siraisi, “The Music of Pulse in the Writings of Italian Academic Physicians (Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries),” *Speculum* 50, no. 4 (1975): 689–710. [↑](#footnote-ref-601)
602. For an explanation of the meanings that *tactus* could have during the Renaissance and some representations in visual art see Jane Hatter, “Col Tempo: Musical Time, Aging and Sexuality in 16th-Century Venetian Paintings,” *Early Music* 39, no. 1 (2011): 3–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-602)
603. Gaffurius, *Practica musicae*, fol. A1r. This illustration is mentioned in DeFord, *Tactus, Mensuration and Rhythm in Renaissance Music*, 53 and Hatter, “Col Tempo,” 5–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-603)
604. The role of *tactus* Luca della Robbia’s *Cantoria* is discussed in Blachly, “*Mensura* versus *Tactus*” and is mentioned in Mode, “Adolescent Confratelli and the Cantoria of Luca Della Robbia,” 67–71; Radke, *Make a Joyful Noise*, 26; DeFord, *Tactus, Mensuration and Rhythm in Renaissance Music*, 53; Hatter, “Col Tempo,” 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-604)
605. Mode, “Adolescent Confratelli and the Cantoria of Luca Della Robbia,” 67–71; Radke, *Make a Joyful Noise*, 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-605)
606. “Il gonfiare delle gole di chi canta, il battere della mani da chi regge la musica in sulle spalle de’ minori, et insomma diverse maniere di suoni, canti, balli et alter azzioni piacevoli che porge il diletto della musica.” Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, 289 (*Vita di Luca della Robbia*); for a different translation, see Radke, *Make a Joyful Noise*, 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-606)
607. Radke, *Make a Joyful Noise*, 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-607)
608. On the Magi chapel, see Cristina Acidini Luchinat, *The Chapel of the Magi: Benozzo Gozzoli’s Frescoes in the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi Florence*, ed. Cristina Acidini Luchinat, trans. Eleanor Daunt (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994); Dale Kent, *Cosimo De’ Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron’s Oeuvre* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-608)
609. The haloes of the angels in the foreground, who are not singing, are inscribed “Adoramus Te, Glorificamus Te”. This fresco is discussed in Josep Smits van Waesberghe, “Singen und Dirigieren der mehrstimmigen Musik im Mittelalter: Was Miniaturen uns hierüber lehren,” in *Mélanges offerts à René Crozet*, ed. Pierre Gallais and Yves-Jean Riou, vol. II (Poitiers: Societé d’Études Médiévales, 1966), 1348. [↑](#footnote-ref-609)
610. The notes on the scroll are not realistic. On the scroll is written “po-r-te”. See ibid., 1346. [↑](#footnote-ref-610)
611. Jaynie Anderson, *Giorgione: The Painter of “Poetic Brevity”* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997), 298. [↑](#footnote-ref-611)
612. Ibid., 164–65. [↑](#footnote-ref-612)
613. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-613)
614. Enrico Maria dal Pozzolo, “Entry 42,” in *Giorgione*, ed. Enrico Maria dal Pozzolo and Lionello Puppi (Milano: Skira, 2009), 421–23, esp. 422. [↑](#footnote-ref-614)
615. Nicholas Penny, *National Gallery Catalogues the Sixteenth Century Italian Paintings: Volume II : Venice 1540-1600* (London: National Gallery Company, 2008), 298. [↑](#footnote-ref-615)
616. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.2 c25; Ruben Rebmann, “Entries 124,125,” in *Botticelli Reimagined*, ed. Mark Evans, Stefan Weppelmann, and Ana Debenedetti (London: V & A Publishing, 2016), 274–75. [↑](#footnote-ref-616)
617. The earliest mention in the sixteenth century of a tactus composed by an upwards and downwards movement can be found in Martin Agricola’s *Musica figuralis deudsch* (1532), who described the tactus as a motion of the hand of the singer, lowering and raising it: “The beat, as it is usually understood, is a steady and measured motion of the hand of the singer, by means of which–like a gauge–the note of song are measured in accordance with the [mensuration] signs” (“Der Tact odder Schlag, wie er alhie genomen wird ist eine stete und messige bewegung der hand des sengers, durch welche gleichsam in richtscheit, nach ausweisung der zeichen, die gleicheit der stymmen und Noten des gesangs recht geleitet und gemessen wird.”) Quoted in Roger Mathew Grant, *Beating Time and Measuring Music in Early Modern Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 19; Zarlino states that: “such a sign was best when it was made by the hand in a way visible to all the singers” (Et s’imaginarono che fusse bene, se cotal segno fusse fatto con la mano; accioche ogn’uno de i cantori lo potesse vedere”). Gioseffo Zarlino, *La terza parte delle istituizioni harmoniche*. Venice 1588, quoted in Alison McLamore, “A Tactus Primer,” in *Musica Franca: Essays in Honor of Frank A. D’Accone*, ed. Irene Alm, Alison McLamore, and Colleen Reardon (Stuyvesant, N.Y: Pendragon Press, 1996), 302; and in Grant, *Beating Time and Measuring Music in Early Modern Era*, 23, 60 in a slightly different translation. See also Blachly, “*Mensura* versus *Tactus*,” 427. Also Giovanni Maria Lanfranco in his *Scintille di Musica* (1533), Stephano Vanneo in his *Recanetum de Musica aurea* (1533) and Gioseffo Zarlino in his *Istituzioni harmoniche* (1558) wrote about beating musical time with a visible motion of the hand in the air, downwards and upwards. See Blachly, “*Mensura* versus *Tactus*,” 425-427; DeFord, *Tactus*, 53 and 58-59. [↑](#footnote-ref-617)
618. Blachly, “*Mensura* versus *Tactus*,” 442–45. [↑](#footnote-ref-618)
619. Augustine, in the fifth century, had described a *plausus* in which “the hand is raised and lowered”, clearly explaining that tactus was a visual device: “Fix your ears on the sound and your eyes on the beat. For the hand beating time is not to be heard but seen”, cited ibid., 430: “Intende ergo et aurem in sonum, et in plausum oculos, non enim audiri, sed videri opus est plaudentem manum, et animadverti acriter quanta temporis mora in levatione, quanta in positione sit.”; see also ibid., 440. [↑](#footnote-ref-619)
620. In a personal communication to the writer, Jane Hatter agrees that, given the volume of similar representations of *tactus* from the same period and location, Botticelli’s painting in Vienna is probably depicting tapped *tactus*. Jane Hatter, “Personal Communication - Tactus,” June 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-620)
621. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.2, 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-621)
622. Rebmann, “Entries 124,125,” 274–75. [↑](#footnote-ref-622)
623. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.1, 54; see also Zöllner, *Sandro Botticelli*, 209; Pons, *Botticelli: Catalogo complete*; Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-623)
624. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.1, 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-624)
625. Ibid., vol.2, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-625)
626. Susan Schibanoff, “Botticelli’s Madonna Del Magnificat: Constructing the Woman Writer in Early Humanist Italy,” *PMLA* 109, no. 2 (1994): 190–92, 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-626)
627. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.1, 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-627)
628. Luke 1:46–55, English Standard Version. “Magnificat anima mea Dominum: et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo. Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes, quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est: et sanctum nomen ejus, et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies timentibus eum. Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit superbos mente cordis sui. Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles. Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites dimisit inanes. Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae: sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini ejus in saecula,” Biblia Sacra Vulgata, Lucas 1:46-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-628)
629. Edward R. Lerner, “The Polyphonic Magnificat in 15th-Century Italy,” *The Musical Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (1964): 47; see also Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 187; Shephard, Ştefănescu, and Sessini, “Music, Silence, and the Senses in a Late Fifteenth-Century Book of Hours,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (2017): 495. [↑](#footnote-ref-629)
630. Hamm and Scott, “A Study and Inventory of the Manuscript Modena, Biblioteca Estense, α.X.1.11 (ModB),” 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-630)
631. “Quom natus infans humanitus vagiret, superius ostendimus; etiam antequam nasceretur canticum hoc egregium Magnificat, ab ea … in novitate spiritus compositum, amenissime cantavit. Nam hec Augustinus in sermone de Nativitate dicit, ‘Audite quemadmodum tympanistria nostra cantaverit: ait enim, Magnificat anima mea Dominum.’” Johannes Tinctoris, *De Inventione et Usu Musice*, ed. and trans. Jeffrey Dean, 2015, 2.20.2, http://earlymusictheory.org/Tinctoris/texts/deinventioneetusumusice. [↑](#footnote-ref-631)
632. “Neque silencio transeundum est ipsam virginem intemeratam almam Mariam (ut Albertus Magnus piissime scientissimeque scribit) inter cetera gratiarum dona musicam habuisse divinitus infusam; qua scilicet carissimum eius infantem Jhesum humanitus vagientem mellifluis cantibus et a fletu temperaret et ad gaudium provocaret. Cuiquidem Jhesu unico salvatori nostro, super quem (iuxta vaticinium Isaie) requievit spiritus sapiencie, intellectus, ac sciencie, fuit musica (quemadmodum et relique sciencie) ab instanti sue conceptionis infusa.” Ibid., 1.11. [↑](#footnote-ref-632)
633. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.2, B29, 42-44; Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 187 n.79; see also Ruben Rebmann, “Entry 117,” in *Botticelli Reimagined*, ed. Mark Evans, Stefan Weppelmann, and Ana Debenedetti (London: V & A Publishing, 2016), 267; Sabine Hoffmann, “Entries 115, 116,” in *Botticelli Reimagined*, ed. Mark Evans, Stefan Weppelmann, and Ana Debenedetti (London: V & A Publishing, 2016), 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-633)
634. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 187–88. [↑](#footnote-ref-634)
635. Dale, “Donatello’s *Chellini Madonna*,” 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-635)
636. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.2, c50, 142; see also http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2017/master-paintings-n09601/lot.11.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-636)
637. Ibid., vol.1, 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-637)
638. This composition shows the Virgin and Child with Saint John the Baptist. See Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.2, 139; Ana Debenedetti, “Entry 119,” in *Botticelli Reimagined*, ed. Mark Evans, Stefan Weppelmann, and Ana Debenedetti (London: V & A Publishing, 2016), 269; see also http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2015/so-moretti-n09306/lot.125.html and http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2017/master-paintings-sculpture-day-sale-n09602/lot.123.html (accessed on 10th February 2019). The rectangular version of this painting is kept in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. [↑](#footnote-ref-638)
639. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.1, 117; see also ibid., vol.2, B73, 82-83; Zöllner, *Sandro Botticelli*, 248–49; Pons, *Botticelli: Catalogo complete*, entry 113, 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-639)
640. Ronald G. Kecks, *Madonna Und Kind: Das Häusliche Andachtsbild Im Florenz Des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1988), 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-640)
641. Luciano Berti and Umberto Baldini, *Filippino Lippi* (Firenze: Ed. d’Arte il Fiorino, 1991), 179; Patrizia Zambrano and Jonathan Katz Nelson, *Filippino Lippi* (Milan: Electa, 2004), 204, 341–341. [↑](#footnote-ref-641)
642. Jonathan Katz Nelson, “Entry 19,” in *Botticelli E Filippino: L’inquietudine E La Grazia Nella Pittura Fiorentina Del Quattrocento* Exh.Cat., ed. Daniel Arasse, Pierluigi De Vecchi, and Jonathan Katz Nelson (Milan: Skira, 2004), 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-642)
643. Jonathan Nelson, “Entry 9.3,” in *Maestri e botteghe: Pittura a Firenze alla fine del Quattrocento*, ed. Mina Gregori, Antonio Paolucci, and Cristina Acidini Luchinat (Florence: Silvana Editoriale, 1992), 240. [↑](#footnote-ref-643)
644. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-644)
645. Rosary devotion is a form of prayer that uses beads as a device for counting prayers. See ibid., 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-645)
646. Ibid., 103, 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-646)
647. Ibid., 103; Levi D’Ancona, *The Garden of the Renaissance*, 332–37. [↑](#footnote-ref-647)
648. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-648)
649. Timothy J McGee, “Filippino Lippi and Music,” *Renaissance and Reformation* 30, no. 3 (2007): 26, no.43. [↑](#footnote-ref-649)
650. Blackburn’s comment (personal communication to J. K. Nelson) is reported in Nelson, “Entry 19,” 240; see also McGee, “Filippino Lippi and Music,” 11-15 (esp.12). Nelson also reports an oral comment by H. C. Slim, taken from V. Scherliess *Musikalische Noten auf Kunstwerken der Italienischen Renaissance bis zum Anfang des 17. Jahrgunderts*, Hamburg 1972, 104-105, in which the musical composition in the painting is identified with a motet in the late style of Guillaume Dufay. [↑](#footnote-ref-650)
651. On the *Cantasi come* tradition, see especially Blake Wilson, *Singing Poetry in Renaissance Florence: The Cantasi Come Tradition (1375-1550)* (Florence: Fontecolombo Institute, 2009); Nelson, “Entry 19,” 165; McGee, “Filippino Lippi and Music,” 11–15. [↑](#footnote-ref-651)
652. Wilson, *Singing Poetry in Renaissance Florence*, 7–10. [↑](#footnote-ref-652)
653. For the *lauda* *Quanto è grande la bellezza* see Lorenzo de’ Medici, *Laude*, ed. Bernard Toscani (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-653)
654. Nelson, “Entry 19,” 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-654)
655. Zambrano and Nelson, *Filippino Lippi*, 627. [↑](#footnote-ref-655)
656. Jonathan Katz Nelson, “Entry 37,” in *Botticelli E Filippino: L’inquietudine E La Grazia Nella Pittura Fiorentina Del Quattrocento,* Exh.Cat., ed. Daniel Arasse, Pierluigi De Vecchi, and Jonathan Katz Nelson (Milan: Skira, 2004), 228. [↑](#footnote-ref-656)
657. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-657)
658. McGee, “Filippino Lippi and Music,” 16–17; Nelson, “Entry 19,” 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-658)
659. McGee, “Filippino Lippi and Music,” 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-659)
660. “Secundo modo: sonos ac voces tantum emittendo ommissis penitus litteris ac syllabis et dictionibus: quod exercitatus cantor facile prosequitur hoc modo.” Gaffurius, *Practica musicae*; on this practice especially see Timothy J. McGee, “Singing Without Text,” *Performance Practice Review* 6, no. 1:8 (1993): 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-660)
661. Jonathan Katz Nelson, “Filippino Nel Ruolo Di Discepolo, Collaboratore e Concorrente Del Botticelli,” in *Botticelli E Filippino: L’inquietudine E La Grazia Nella Pittura Fiorentina Del Quattrocento* Exh.Cat., ed. Daniel Arasse, Pierluigi De Vecchi, and Jonathan Katz Nelson (Milan: Skira, 2004), 89; Nelson, “Entry 19,” 165; Nelson, “Putting Botticelli and Filippino in Their Place,” 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-661)
662. Amy Gillette, “Depicting the Sound of Silence: Angels’ Music and ‘Angelization’ in Medieval Sacred Art,” *Imago Musicae* XXVII (2015): 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-662)
663. Emanuel Winternitz, “Musical Instruments for the Stage in Paintings by Filippino Lippi, Piero Di Cosimo, and Lorenzo Costa,” in *Musical Instruments and Their Symbolism in Western Art: Studies in Musical Iconology* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979), 213–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-663)
664. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 239, fig. A11. [↑](#footnote-ref-664)
665. Nelson, “Putting Botticelli and Filippino in Their Place,” 59, fig. 75; see also Zambrano and Nelson, *Filippino Lippi*, 341-342 fig. 28.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-665)
666. Patrizia Zambrano, “Catalogo Delle Opere Respinte Già Attribuite a Filippino Lippi,” in *Filippino Lippi* (Milan: Electa, 2004), 388; see also Jonathan Katz Nelson, “Catalogo Delle Opera Respinte Già Attribuite a Filippino Lippi (Entry R.27),” in *Filippino Lippi* (Milan: Electa, 2004), 609; Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli: Life and Work*, vol.2, 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-666)
667. Zambrano, “Catalogo Delle Opere Respinte,” 388; see also Nelson, “Catalogo Delle Opera Respinte,” (Entry R.27), 609. [↑](#footnote-ref-667)
668. “Iesu e il battista ... piccinini insieme coniunti” Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-668)
669. Zambrano, “Catalogo Delle Opere Respinte,” 388. [↑](#footnote-ref-669)
670. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 248: “Christ stands with his right foot on top of a book in a victor-over-vanquished pose, as the fulfilment of the Old Testament, while the placement of his left foot on a transparent cloth stresses the sacramental implications of his fate.” [↑](#footnote-ref-670)
671. A. Covi reads the initials differently as S(uperius), T(enor) and A(lto). See Dario Covi, *The Inscription in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1986), 200; On the music in this painting see also Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 248; Peter Humfrey, *Glasgow Museums: The Italian Paintings* (London: Unicorn, 2012), 51. I thank Dr Tim Shephard for a detailed analysis of the music depicted in the *tondo* attributed to Raffaellino del Garbo kept in Glasgow (pers. comm.). [↑](#footnote-ref-671)
672. Cited in the catalogue of the museum by Peter Humfrey. Dr Elliot’s comment is written in a letter from 18/06/1965 kept in the painting file in the museum. Humfrey suggests that the music might be a hymn to the Virgin, but he states that "the notes do not correspond to performable music". [↑](#footnote-ref-672)
673. Blackburn’s comment (personal communication to R. Olson) is reported in Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 248. [↑](#footnote-ref-673)
674. In a personal communication to the writer, Tim Shephard observed that: the opening consonance is plausible but the counterpoint does not work (the Superius part begins on the note G while both the Tenor and the Contra parts begin on the note C); the mensuration signs are different for the different parts, which is unlikely (the Superius part is in cut-c mensuration and the Contra in circle mensuration, while the Tenor part does not show a mensuration sign); the Tenor part gives flats on E and B, but the Superius gives a flat as an accidental on the note F, which is not possible; it is not possible to identify the pitch because some note heads occupy both a line and a space; some note stems are placed on the wrong side of the note. [↑](#footnote-ref-674)
675. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 248. [↑](#footnote-ref-675)
676. On this topic see Shephard, Ştefănescu, and Sessini, “Music, Silence, and the Senses in a Late Fifteenth-Century Book of Hours,” 474-512. [↑](#footnote-ref-676)
677. “1o Nostra Signora tonda, di sopra, dorata intorno cho’l figliuolo e Santo Giovanni.” Olson, “Lost and Partially Found,” 49, n.126; see also Nelson, “Putting Botticelli and Filippino in Their Place,” 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-677)
678. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 202–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-678)
679. Ibid., A14, 240. [↑](#footnote-ref-679)
680. Gretchen Hirschauer, “Entry 41,” in *Piero di Cosimo 1462-1522: pittore eccentrico fra Rinascimento e Maniera*, ed. Elena Capretti et al., 2015, 294–95; Virginia Brilliant, “Entry 18,” in *Piero di Cosimo: The poetry of painting in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Dennis Geronimus (London: Lund Humphries Pub., 2015), 156–59. [↑](#footnote-ref-680)
681. Luke 2:14, English Standard Version. “Gloria in altissimis Deo et in terra pax in hominibus bonae voluntatis.” Vulgate, Lucas 2:14. [↑](#footnote-ref-681)
682. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, A10, 239. [↑](#footnote-ref-682)
683. Ibid., A89, 268. [↑](#footnote-ref-683)
684. Ibid., 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-684)
685. This painting is discussed in ibid., 205–6, who, however, describes the angels as reading or singing and does not refer to the Gloria. [↑](#footnote-ref-685)
686. “Con giubilante core/ laudiam Jesù del mondo redentore./ Gloria sia nel cielo all’alta maestate,/ in terra sia perfetta e vera pace/ agli uomini di buona volontate/ …./ Glorifichiamo te, rendendo grazie/ per la tua magna ed infinita Gloria/ … / Tu sei re d’ogni gloria/ Onnipotente, eterno creatore.” The entire Rappresentazione della Natività di Cristo is reported in Alessandro d’Ancona, *Sacre Rappresentazioni dei Secoli XIV, XV e XVI*, vol. 1 (Florence: Successori Le Monnier, 1872), vol.1, 191-210; this passage is at page 194. [↑](#footnote-ref-686)
687. “Fece in Fiorenza molti quadri a più cittadini, sparsi per le loro case, che ne ho visto de’ molto buoni.” Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, 577. [↑](#footnote-ref-687)
688. Dennis Geronimus, “Entry 44,” in *Piero Di Cosimo: The Poetry of Painting in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Dennis Geronimus (London: Lund Humphries Pub., 2015), 300–301; Brilliant, “Entry 18,” 156–59. [↑](#footnote-ref-688)
689. Winternitz, “Musical Instruments for the Stage in Paintings by Filippino Lippi, Piero Di Cosimo, and Lorenzo Costa,” 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-689)
690. The painting in the Galleria Borghese is discussed in Dennis Geronimus, *Piero Di Cosimo: Visions, Beautiful and Strange* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2006), 172; Virginia Brilliant, “Entry 32,” in *Piero di Cosimo: The poetry of painting in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Dennis Geronimus (London: Lund Humphries Pub., 2015), 200–201; see also Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, A49, 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-690)
691. Kristina Hermann Fiore, “Entry 20,” in *Botticelli E Filippino: L’inquietudine E La Grazia Nella Pittura Fiorentina Del Quattrocento* Exh.Cat., ed. Daniel Arasse, Pierluigi De Vecchi, and Jonathan Katz Nelson (Milan: Skira, 2004), 168–71. [↑](#footnote-ref-691)
692. Elena Capretti, “Entry 40,” in *Piero di Cosimo 1462-1522: pittore eccentrico fra Rinascimento e Maniera*, ed. Elena Capretti et al., 2015, 292. [↑](#footnote-ref-692)
693. Federico Zeri and Mauro Natale, “I Dipinti Toscani,” in *Dipinti toscani e oggetti d’arte dalla collezione Vittorio Cini*, ed. Federico Zeri, Alessandra Mottola Molfino, and Mauro Natale (Neri Pozza, 1984), 31–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-693)
694. Dennis Geronimus, “Entry 24,” in *Piero Di Cosimo: The Poetry of Painting in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Dennis Geronimus (London: Lund Humphries Pub., 2015), 175–77, esp. 175, 177 n.9. [↑](#footnote-ref-694)
695. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, A58, 255. [↑](#footnote-ref-695)
696. “Uno tondo d’una Nostra Donna, che fu mandato al Re di Spagna, il disegno della qual pittura ritrasse da una d’Andrea [del Verrocchio] suo maestro.” Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, 683; Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-696)
697. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*, A33, 249. [↑](#footnote-ref-697)
698. The story of the musical contest between Apollo and Pan is recounted in Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. A. D. Melville and E. J. Kenney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 11,159-191. [↑](#footnote-ref-698)
699. Tim Shephard and Patrick McMahon, “Foolish Midas: Representing Musical Judgement and Moral Judgement in Italy, c. 1520,” in *Music, Myth and Story in Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, ed. Katherine Butler and Samantha Bassler (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2019), 87–104. [↑](#footnote-ref-699)
700. Rudolf Wittkower, “Transformations of Minerva in Renaissance Imagery,” *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 2, no. 3 (1939): 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-700)
701. Quoted in ibid., 200. [↑](#footnote-ref-701)
702. Ibid., 203–4. [↑](#footnote-ref-702)
703. Ibid., 204. [↑](#footnote-ref-703)
704. Ibid., 200. [↑](#footnote-ref-704)
705. Shephard and McMahon, “Foolish Midas: Representing Musical Judgement and Moral Judgement in Italy, c. 1520,” 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-705)
706. See also ibid., 99. [↑](#footnote-ref-706)
707. The story of the choice of Hercules is recounted in Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*. [↑](#footnote-ref-707)
708. See Chapter 3.2.1 of this thesis. Abigail Brundin, Deborah Howard, and Mary Laven, *The Sacred Home in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-708)
709. Marietta Cambareri, *Della Robbia: Sculpting with Color in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Abigail Hykin and Courtney Leigh Harris (Boston: MFA Publications - Museum of Fine Arts, 2016), 90; Daphne Barbour and Roberta J. M. Olson, “New Methods for Studying Serialization in the Workshop of Andrea Della Robbia: Technical Study and Analysis,” in *Della Robbia: Dieci Anni Di Studi - Dix Ans d’études*, ed. Anne Bouquillon, Marc Bormand, and Alessandro Zucchiatti (Genova: Sagep Editori, 2011), 56–61, esp. 57; Roberta J. M Olson and Daphne Barbour, “Toward a New Method for Studying Glazed Terracottas: Examining a Group of Tondi by Andrea Della Robbia,” *Apollo.*, 2001, 44–52, esp. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-709)
710. Cooper, “Devotion,” 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-710)
711. Jacqueline Marie Musacchio, “The Madonna and Child, a Host of Saints and Domestic Devotion,” in *Revaluing Renaissance Art*, ed. Gabriele Neher and Rupert Shepherd (Aldershot; Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 2000), 154; Cooper, “Devotion,” 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-711)
712. John Kent Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence” (John Hopkins University, 1987), 64 n.84; Musacchio, “The Madonna and Child,” 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-712)
713. Quoted in Musacchio, “The Madonna and Child,” 154–55, n.106. [↑](#footnote-ref-713)
714. Stephanie R Miller, “Parenting in the Palazzo: Images and Artifacts of Children in the Italian Renaissance Home,” in *The Early Modern Italian Domestic Interior, 1400-1700: Objects, Spaces, Domesticities*, ed. Elizabeth Carroll Consavari, Stephanie R Miller, and Erin J Campbell (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-714)
715. Richard Stapleford, *Lorenzo de’ Medici at Home: The Inventory of the Palazzo Medici in 1492*, ed. and trans. Richard Stapleford (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013), 134. [↑](#footnote-ref-715)
716. Ibid., 12–13, 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-716)
717. “Ma farai uno altaruzzo o due in casa, sotto titolo del Salvatore, del quale è la festa ogni domenica: abbivi tre o quattro dossaluzzi variati, ed egli, o più ne sieno sacrestani; mostrando loro come ogni festa debbano variatamente adornare quella cappelluzza. Alcuna volta saranno occupati in fare grillande di fiori o d’erbe, e incoronare Iesu, adorare la Vergine Maria dipinta, fare candeluzze … cantinvi come sanno, parinsi a dir messa.” Giovanni Dominici, *Regola Del Governo Di Cura Familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi (Florence: Angiolo Garinei Libraio, 1860), 146; Musacchio, “The Madonna and Child,” 155; Cooper, “Devotion,” 202; a slightly different translation can be found in Maya Corry, “Delight in Painted Companions: Shaping the Soul from Birth in Early Modern Italy,” in *Domestic Devotions in Early Modern Italy*, ed. Maya Corry, Marco Faini, and Alessia Meneghin (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018), 319. [↑](#footnote-ref-717)
718. Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual*, 322. [↑](#footnote-ref-718)
719. “Fateve uno altarolo elquale delectateve adornar de belle imagine & devote: cu[m] belli ornamenti o de recami over de staii de vostra man.” Nicolas Jenson, *Decor Puellarum* (ms in Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, 1471), 44r, https://archive.org/details/ita-bnc-in2-00002284-001; English translation from Brundin, Howard, and Laven, *The Sacred Home in Renaissance Italy*, 86; see also Corry, “Delight in Painted Companions,” 319. [↑](#footnote-ref-719)
720. Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, “Piero’s Meditation on the Nativity,” in *Piero Della Francesca and His Legacy*, ed. Marilyn Aronberg Lavin (Washington, D.C.; London; Hanover, N.H.: National Gallery of Art ; Distributed by the University Press of New England, 1995), 127. [↑](#footnote-ref-720)
721. John Drury, *Painting the Word: Christian Pictures and Their Meanings* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 78; James R Banker, *Piero Della Francesca: Artist and Man* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 205. [↑](#footnote-ref-721)
722. Lionello Venturi, *Piero Della Francesca: Biographical and Critical Studies*, trans. James Emmons (Lausanne: Skira, 1955), 107; Lavin, “Piero’s Meditation on the Nativity,” 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-722)
723. Aronberg Lavin, “Piero’s Meditation on the Nativity”, 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-723)
724. Venturi, *Piero Della Francesca*, 104; Lavin, “Piero’s Meditation on the Nativity,” 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-724)
725. Lavin, “Piero’s Meditation on the Nativity,” 127; Banker, *Piero Della Francesca*, 206. [↑](#footnote-ref-725)
726. Lavin, “Piero’s Meditation on the Nativity,” 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-726)
727. Ellen Callmann, “Apollonio Di Giovanni and Painting for the Early Renaissance Room,” *Antichità Viva* XXVII, no. 3–4 (1988): 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-727)
728. Ibid., 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-728)
729. Ibid., 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-729)
730. Ibid.; Callmann had previously doubted that the Toscanelli painting was in Apollonio’s style, see Ellen Callmann, *Apollonio Di Giovanni* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-730)
731. Callmann, “Apollonio Di Giovanni and Painting for the Early Renaissance Room,” 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-731)
732. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-732)
733. Ibid., 15, n.58. [↑](#footnote-ref-733)
734. Ibid., 12, 15 n.58. [↑](#footnote-ref-734)
735. On this topic see Chapter 1.5 and 2.5. On instruments played by amateur musicians, see Victor Coelho and Keith Polk, *Instrumentalists and Renaissance Culture, 1420-1600: Players of Function and Fantasy* (Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 2016), 56–159; see also Timothy J. McGee and Sylvia E. Mittler, “Information on Instruments in Florentine Carnival Songs,” *Early Music* 10, no. 4 (1982): 452–61, esp. 452–54. [↑](#footnote-ref-735)
736. On the domestic use of *terracotta* figures see Giancarlo Gentilini, ed., *I Della Robbia: La Scultura Invetriata nel Rinascimento* (Florence: Cantini, 1992), 32–35; see also Cooper, “Devotion,” 194; Cambareri, *Della Robbia*, 89–103. [↑](#footnote-ref-736)
737. Stapleford, *Lorenzo de’ Medici at Home*, 119, 134; Attilio Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV e XV*, vol. 1 (Florence: G.C. Sansoni, 1908), 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-737)
738. Stapleford, *Lorenzo de’ Medici at Home*, 21; Catherine Kupiec, “The Materiality of Luca Della Robbia’s Glazed Terracotta Sculptures” (Graduate School-New Brunswick Rutgers, 2016), 120; Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance interior: 1400-1600* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991), 268. [↑](#footnote-ref-738)
739. John Pope-Hennessy, *Luca Della Robbia* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1980), 254; see also Kupiec, “The Materiality of Luca Della Robbia’s Glazed Terracotta Sculptures,” 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-739)
740. Gentilini, *I Della Robbia*, 1:170; Kupiec, “The Materiality of Luca Della Robbia’s Glazed Terracotta Sculptures,” 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-740)
741. Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV e XV*, 1:186; Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance interior*, 268; Kupiec, “The Materiality of Luca Della Robbia’s Glazed Terracotta Sculptures,” 120–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-741)
742. Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance interior*, 268; Kupiec, “The Materiality of Luca Della Robbia’s Glazed Terracotta Sculptures,” 120–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-742)
743. Kupiec, “The Materiality of Luca Della Robbia’s Glazed Terracotta Sculptures,” 121; Francis W Kent, “Art Historical Gleanings from the Florentine Archives,” *Australian Journal of Art*, 1980, 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-743)
744. Cambareri, *Della Robbia*, 89–103. [↑](#footnote-ref-744)
745. Cf figs 1.8 and 1.9 [↑](#footnote-ref-745)
746. “Nativity With Gloria In Excelsis,” in *Museum of Fine Art, Boston, Online Catalogue*, accessed February 12, 2019, https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/nativity-with-gloria-in-excelsis-58902. [↑](#footnote-ref-746)
747. Peta Motture and Luke Syson, “Art in the Casa,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 321. See also Chapter 3.1.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-747)
748. Rita Comanducci, “Produzione seriale e mercato d’arte a Firenze tra Quattro e Cinquecento,” in *The art market in Italy 15th - 17th centuries: Il mercato dell’Arte in Italia secc. XV-XVII*, ed. Marcello Fantoni, Louisa C Matthew, and Sara F Matthews-Grieco (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2003), 106; see also Brundin, Howard, and Laven, *The Sacred Home in Renaissance Italy*, 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-748)
749. Comanducci, “Produzione seriale e mercato d’arte a Firenze tra Quattro e Cinquecento,” 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-749)
750. W. L. Hildburgh, “A Marble Relief Attributable to Donatello and Some Associable Stuccos,” *The Art Bulletin* 30, no. 1 (1948): 12–13; Anna Jolly, *Madonnas by Donatello and His Circle* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1998), n.20.3, 110; Gentilini, *I Della Robbia*, 22, 147, n.3. [↑](#footnote-ref-750)
751. Hildburgh, “A Marble Relief Attributable to Donatello and Some Associable Stuccos,” 11–19. [↑](#footnote-ref-751)
752. G. F. Hill, “The Whitcombe Greene Plaquettes,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 30, no. 168 (1917): 104; Douglas Lewis, “The Plaquettes of ‘Moderno’ and His Followers,” *Studies in the History of Art* 22 (1989): 116; “Object Number A.425-1910,” in *V&A Online Catalogue*, accessed March 5, 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-752)
753. David S. Areflord, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe* (Farnham, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-753)
754. Roberto Cobianchi, “The Use of Woodcuts in Fifteenth-century Italy,” *Print Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (March 2006): 50. A hand-coloured woodcut print of the Virgin Nursing the Christ Child, detached from a door in Bassano prior to the demolition of a house, is now in the British Museum (museum number 1895,0122.1187), while another woodcut, still attached to its wooden support, is part of the V&A collection (museum number 321A-1894). [↑](#footnote-ref-754)
755. Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch, “Early Woodcuts and the Reception of the Primitive”, in Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch, with David S. Areford, Richard S. Field, and Peter Schmidt, *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public* (Washington: National Gallery of Art; Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum; New Haven: in association with Yale University Press, 2005), 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-755)
756. Brian Richardson, *Printing, writers and readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-756)
757. Mary Kay Duggan, *Italian Music Incunabula: Printers and Type* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 1, 15. On early printed music books in Italy, see Ibidem, 11-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-757)
758. Iain Fenlon, “Music and Society,” in *The Renaissance: From the 1470s to the end of the 16th century*, ed. Iain Fenlon (Basingstoke and London: The Macmillan Press, 1989), 4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-758)
759. Ibid., 47-48. [↑](#footnote-ref-759)
760. Motture and Syson, “Art in the Casa,” 282. [↑](#footnote-ref-760)
761. Dale Kent, *Cosimo De’ Medici and the Florentine Renaissance: The Patron’s Oeuvre* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 305, 209. [↑](#footnote-ref-761)
762. Ibid., 305, 309. [↑](#footnote-ref-762)
763. Cristina Acidini Luchinat, “The Choirs of Angels,” in *The Chapel of the Magi: Benozzo Gozzoli’s Frescoes in the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi Florence*, ed. Cristina Acidini Luchinat, trans. Eleanor Daunt (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 264–67. [↑](#footnote-ref-763)
764. Kent, *Cosimo De’ Medici and the Florentine Renaissance*, 322. [↑](#footnote-ref-764)
765. The identification of this gesture with the use of the Guidonian hand is discussed in Acidini Luchinat, “The Choirs of Angels,” 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-765)
766. Kent, *Cosimo De’ Medici and the Florentine Renaissance*, 322. [↑](#footnote-ref-766)
767. Acidini Luchinat, “The Choirs of Angels,” 265; Kent, *Cosimo De’ Medici and the Florentine Renaissance*, 322. [↑](#footnote-ref-767)
768. More examples are discussed in Chapters 2.2 and 3.2.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-768)
769. The words “Ave Maria gratia plena dominu[s]” are inscribed in the Virgin’s halo in both the *Altarpiece of the Purification* kept at the National Gallery, London (inv. 283) and in *The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* in the Pinacoteca Comunale, Terni. See Diane Cole-Ahl, *Benozzo Gozzoli: Tradition and Innovation in Renaissance Painting.* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1996), 224,262. [↑](#footnote-ref-769)
770. On the portraits frescoed in the chapel see Cristina Acidini Luchinat, *The Chapel of the Magi: Benozzo Gozzoli’s Frescoes in the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi Florence*, ed. Cristina Acidini Luchinat, trans. Eleanor Daunt (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 363–70; see also Kent, *Cosimo De’ Medici and the Florentine Renaissance*, 305, 315–16. [↑](#footnote-ref-770)
771. Rab Hatfield, “The Compagnia de’ Magi,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-771)
772. Acidini Luchinat, “The Choirs of Angels,” 264–65; see also Kent, *Cosimo De’ Medici and the Florentine Renaissance*, 313, 322; Cristina Acidini Luchnat has recognised that the angels making garlands of flowers in the gardens depicted in Benozzo’s fresco were also inspired by real Florentine children preparing for public events, see Acidini Luchinat, “The Choirs of Angels,” 267. [↑](#footnote-ref-772)
773. Richard C Trexler, *The Journey of the Magi: Meanings in History of a Christian Story: Meanings in History of a Christian Story* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 89, 92; Hatfield, “The Compagnia de’ Magi,” 108, 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-773)
774. Hatfield, “The Compagnia de' Magi”, 108 n.8. The text of the *Rappresentazione della Natività* can be found inAlessandro D’Ancona, Sacre Rappresentazioni dei secoli XIV, XV e XVI (Florence: Le Monnier, 1872), vol.1:191-210. [↑](#footnote-ref-774)
775. The full title of the 1459 poem is *Terze rime in lode di Cosimo de’ Medici e de’ figli e dell’honoranza fatta l’anno 1458 al figlio del Duca di Milano et al Papa nella loro venuta a Firenze*. Cristina Acidini Luchinat, “The Chapel of the Magi,” in *The Chapel of the Magi: Benozzo Gozzoli’s Frescoes in the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi Florence*, ed. Cristina Acidini Luchinat, trans. Eleanor Daunt (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 10. See also Lindow, *The Renaissance Palace*, 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-775)
776. “Nella casa d’un uomo richo sono da essere ricevuti molti forestieri e debbono essere honorati con largità imperochè altrimenti faccendo l’ampla casa sarebbe a disonore del Signore.” English translation from James R. Lindow, *The Renaissance Palace in Florence: Magnificence and Splendour in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 102; original Italian at n.79. [↑](#footnote-ref-776)
777. James R. Lindow, “For Use and Display: Selected Furnishings and Domestic Goods in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Interiors,” *Renaissance Studies* 19, no. 5 (2005): 637. [↑](#footnote-ref-777)
778. On terminology, see Peter Thornton, “Cassoni, Forzieri, Goffani and Cassette: Terminology and Its Problems.,” *Apollo.* CXX, no. 272 (1984): 246–51; Lindow, “For Use and Display,” 634–35; On *cassoni* see Graham Hughes, *Renaissance Cassoni: Masterpieces of Early Italian Art: Painted Marriage Chests 1400-1550* (London: Art Books International, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-778)
779. “Usandosi in que’ tempi per le camera de’ cittadini cassoni grandi di legname … niuno era che i detti cassoni non facesse dipignere … E le storie, che nel corpo si facevano, erano per lo più di favole tolte da Ovidio e da altri poeti, o vero storie raccontate dagli istorici greci o latini.” Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, ed. Maurizio Marini (Rome: Grandi Tascabili Economici Newton, 2005), 282–83 (*Vita di Dello*). [↑](#footnote-ref-779)
780. “E, che è più, si dipignevano in cotal maniera non solamente i cassoni, ma i lettucci, le spalliere, le cornici che ricignevano intorno e altri così fatti ornamenti da camera, che in que’ tempi magnificamente si usavano, come infiniti per tutta la città se ne possono vedere … E che ciò sia vero, si è veduto insino a’ giorni nostri, oltre molti altri, alcuni cassoni, spalliere e cornici nelle camere del Magnifico Lorenzo Vecchio de’ Medici, nei quali era dipinto di mano di … eccellenti maestri, tutte le giostre, torneamenti, cacce, feste et altri spettacoli fatti ne’ tempi suoi, con giudizio, con invenzione e con arte maravigliosa. Delle quali cose se ne veggiono, non solo nel palazzo e nelle case vecchie de’ Medici, ma in tutte le più nobili case di Firenze ancora alcune reliquie.” Ibid., 283 (*Vita di Dello*). [↑](#footnote-ref-780)
781. Ibid. (*Vita di Dello*). [↑](#footnote-ref-781)
782. Lindow, “For Use and Display,” 640–41. The use of cassoni for transportation during this procession was abandoned around mid-fifftenth century, when baskets began to be used for this purpose; see Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, “Le *zane* della sposa. La fiorentina e il suo corredo nel Rinascimento.,” *Memoria* 11–12 (1984): 12–23. [↑](#footnote-ref-782)
783. “Est igitur splendidi hominis non solum curare ut dignam atque elegantem supelectilem habeat domesticisque ornamentis abundet, sed, quod turpe sit imparatum offendi, sive ad private, sive ad publica munera, habebit quidem domi apparatum rerum plurimarum, quae ipsius luculentiam declanrent, ut, si hospes, advenerit, praesto sint ea, quibus opus fuerit ad illum non comiter tantum, verum etiam magnifice accipiendum.” English translation from Lindow, *The Renaissance Palace in Florence*, 2199, original Latin at n.72; see also E Welch, “Public Magnificence and Private Display: Giovanni Pontano’s *De Splendore* (1498) and the Domestic Arts,” *Journal of Design History Journal of Design History* 15, no. 4 (2002): 211–21. [↑](#footnote-ref-783)
784. This attribution is given in the Victoria and Albert Museum’s online catalogue. “Apollonio Di Giovanni: The Meeting of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba,” Victoria and Albert Museum Collection Catalogue, accessed January 25, 2019, http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O109299. [↑](#footnote-ref-784)
785. Yale University Art Gallery, museum number 1871.36. see Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV e XV*, 1:284–85; E. H. Gombrich, “Apollonio Di Giovanni: A Florentine Cassone Workshop Seen through the Eyes of a Humanist Poet,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 18, no. 1/2 (1955): 23 n.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-785)
786. Callmann, *Apollonio Di Giovanni*, 26 n.10. [↑](#footnote-ref-786)
787. Randolph, *Touching Objects*, 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-787)
788. Ibid., 15, 52; Callmann, “Apollonio Di Giovanni and Painting for the Early Renaissance Room,” 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-788)
789. Dillian Gordon, *The Fifteenth Century Italian Paintings* (London: National Gallery Company, 2003), 1:95–97, 100–101 (nn. 7, 9, 11, 14, 15), 102 (nn. 23, 31–33), 103 (n. 52); Evelyn Welch, *Art in Renaissance Italy, 1350-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 16, fig. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-789)
790. Allan Braham, “The Bed of Pierfrancesco Borgherini,” *The Burlington Magazine* 121, no. 921 (1979): 754; Lydecker, “The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,” 49–50. [↑](#footnote-ref-790)
791. Luke Syson, “Representing Domestic Interiors,” in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-791)
792. Ibid., 101 n.74. [↑](#footnote-ref-792)
793. Wolfgang Stechow, “‘The Love of Antiochus with Faire Stratonica’ in Art,” *The Art Bulletin* 27, no. 4 (1945): 224. [↑](#footnote-ref-793)
794. Ross King, *Michelangelo and the Pope’s Ceiling* (London: Pimlico, 2006), 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-794)
795. Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV e XV*, 1:174. [↑](#footnote-ref-795)
796. Lindow, *The Renaissance Palace in Florence*, 164–65. [↑](#footnote-ref-796)
797. This association appears in the *Ammaestramenti degli antichi* (Teachings from the ancients) written by the Dominican Bartolomeo da San Concordio (d. 1347), and in Petrarch’s *Rime*, in which he explains that in his great love, Laura, was a rare sum of beauty (“bellezza”) and honesty (“onestà”), which are usually opponents; see Deborah L. Krohn, “Entry 40,” in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Andrea Bayer (New York, New Haven, Conn.; London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2008), 110–11. On boxes and their association with brides see Randolph, *Touching objects*, 103-137, esp. 111-113. [↑](#footnote-ref-797)
798. Ellen Callmann, *Beyond Nobility: Art for the Private Citizen in the Early Renaissance* (Allentown: Allentown Art Museum, 1980), 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-798)
799. “La prima [regoluzza] si è d’avere dipinture in casa di santi fanciulli o vergini giovanette, nelle quali il tuo figliuolo, ancor nelle fascie, si diletti come simile e dal simile rapito, con atti e segni grati all’infanzia. E come dico di pinture, così dico di scolture”. Giovanni Dominici, *Regola del governo di cura familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi, (Firenze: Angiolo Garinei Libraio,1860), 131–32. [↑](#footnote-ref-799)
800. “Moribus conferret.” Franchinus Gaffurius, *Practica musicae* (Milan: Guillaume Le Signerre, per Giovanni Pietro da Lomazzo, 30 IX, 1496; Madison, Milwaukee and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), f. 3v; English translation from Franchinus Gaffurius, *The Practica Musicae of Franchinus Gafurius*, ed. and trans. Irwin Young (Madison, Milwaukee and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-800)
801. “Ad motus animae sub regula rationeque moderandos.” Pier Paolo Vergerio, “The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-Born Youth,” in *Humanist Educational Treatises*, ed. Craig W. Kallendorf, trans. Craig W Kallendorf (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 51–52. [↑](#footnote-ref-801)