

The Material Culture of Domestic Religion
in Early Modern Florence,
c.1480 – c.1650

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ABSTRACT

The thesis argues the importance that religion, space, and material culture held in shaping the identity of the Catholic domestic sphere and the inhabitants it housed. The significance and value of domestic religious items (such as *acquasantiere* and common devotional texts) and spaces (such as the domestic oratory) have for the most part been ignored by histories that have largely written the Catholic home as secular and art histories whose focus has been confined to a restricted understanding of what constitutes art. This thesis therefore seeks to redress this lack of research by providing a sustained and more empirically based investigation into an aspect of material history whose significance is little understood.

By charting the rising presence of devotional items, furniture, images, relics, texts, and spaces in Florentine homes from the late-fifteenth century to the mid-seventeenth, the thesis questions what it might mean to have religion so ubiquitous at home at a specific historical juncture and analyses shifts in belief through the ways in which Catholicism was consumed. It posits that everyday devotional objects and, for the Florentine elite, the architectural space of the domestic oratory or chapel provided a fundamental role in structuring not just access to the divine, but also wider social and religious relationships. As such, the thesis asserts both the importance of the religious dimension to studies of domestic life and the centrality of the concept of the holy home to early modern Catholicism.

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Acknowledgments

In 1561, Giulio Polverini, an aspirant and rather unfortunate Florentine soldier, wrote in his diary that 'in adversity one will not find friends nor family.' During the tribulations of this thesis, I can only say that I have found the exact opposite to be true. I have received much support from numerous individuals and institutions during this process, made many friends and, not least, a new family member with Felix. I have been especially fortunate with my supervisors, Simon Ditchfield and Amanda Lillie. I would like to thank them, albeit inadequately, for their unfailing and immeasurable intelligence, kindness, generosity, humour, and friendship. I would also like to acknowledge my own family, who have unstintingly and graciously given me not only much more than the ten *soldi* that poor Polverini sought, but also more love than is imaginable. I dedicate this to my mother.

List of Abbreviations

- AAF = Archivio Arcivescovile di Firenze
CCR = Cause Criminale Religiose
IBE = Inventari dei Beni Ecclesiastici
Oratori = Filze degli Oratori
TIN = Tribunale dell'Inquisizione
- AAntF = Archivio Antinori di Firenze
- ACDF = Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede, Rome
Index = Congregazione dell'Indice
SO = Sant'Ufficio
St.St. = Fondo Sant'Ufficio, Stanza Storica
- ACRF = Archivio Capponi Riccio di Firenze
- Acta SS* = *Acta Sanctorum*
- APF = Archivio Pucci di Firenze
- ASI* = *Archivio Storico Italiano*
- ASF = Archivio di Stato di Firenze
AGCS = Archivio Guicciardini Corsi Salviati
AMM = Archivio Marzi-Medici
AQ = Archivio Quaratesi
CR = Carte Riccardi
CSI = Carte Stroziane Serie Prima
CSV = Carte Stroziane Serie Quinta
LCF = Libri di Commercio e Famiglia
MP = Medicea del Principato
MPAP = Magistrato dei Pupilli avanti il Principato
MPP = Magistrato dei Pupilli del Principato
Not.Mod. = Notarile Moderna
Nunz. = Tribunale della Nunziatura di Firenze
- ASV = Archivio Segreto di Vaticano
Riti = Congregazioni dei Riti
SS = Segretari di Stato, Firenze
- Battaglia = Salvatore Battaglia, *Grande dizionario della lingua italiana*.
- Bib.Sanct.* = *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*
- BL = British Library
MC = Medici Collection
- BNCF = Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze
- CE* = *Catholic Encyclopedia*.†
- Florio = John Florio, *Queen Anna's New World of Words*.†

- JWCI* = *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*
- Le Vite* = Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite [...]*, Milanesi edition.
- Le Vite Giuntina* = Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite [...]*, Giuntina edition.†
- Litta = Pompeo Litta, *Famiglie celebri italiane*.
- MKIF* = *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz*
- Moroni = G. Moroni, *Dizionario di erudizione storico-ecclesiastica*.
- Repetti = E. Repetti, *Dizionario geografico, fisico e storico della Toscana*.†
- VAC = *Vocabulario degli Accademia della Crusca*.†
- VTAD = Filippo Baldinucci, *Vocabulario dell'arte del disegno*.†

† All references noted from these sources have been taken from electronic reproductions, checked as of 1 August 2007 (for the printed editions originally consulted please refer to the bibliography). For ease of reference and limitations of space, references have simply been referred to *ad vocem*. The electronic sources consulted were:

Catholic Encyclopedia: <http://newadvent.org/cathen/index.html> (1913 edition).
 Florio: <http://pbm.com/~lindahl/florio/> (1611 edition).
Le Vite Giuntina: <http://biblio.cribecu.sns.it/vasari/consultazione/index.html>
 Repetti: <http://archeogr.unisi.it/repetti> (1963 edition).
 VAC: <http://vocabulario.biblio.cribecu.sns.it/Vocabulario/html/index.html> (1612 edition).
 VTAD: http://baldinucci.biblio.cribecu.sns.it/baldinucci/html/_s_index2.html (1681 edition).

Currency, Weights, and Measures

Sources: Florio 1611; Spini, ed. 1976; Zupko 1981; Cipolla 1987; Origo 1992; Weinstein 2000; Jacks and Caffero 2001; Frick 2002

WEIGHT

libbra = approx. 0.71 of a pound (UK), or 323.5 grams

oncia = 1/12 of a *libbra*, or 30 grams

denaro = 1/24 of an ounce

LENGTH

alla = cloth measurement, approx. 45 cm

braccio (pl. *braccia*) = 2 feet or between 58.4 to 61.3 cm (longer when measuring distances)

canna = 3 – 4 *braccia*

pezza = 12 – 14 *canna*

palma = 1/9 – 1/8 *canna*

DRY MEASURES

Stajo (pl. *staia*) = 0.73 bushels, or 25.92 litres

moggio = 24 bushels

LIQUID MEASURES

metadella = 1/2 of a *fiasco*

fiasco = 1/20 of a *barile* or approx. 1.9 litres

barile = 20 *fiaschi* or approx. 37 litres

cogno = 10 *barili* = 370 litres (approx. 97 gallons)

botte = 1 Florentine *cogno*

orcio = approx. 30 litres or 32 *metadelle*

DISTANCE

canna = 2.92 metres

miglio (pl. *miglia*) = according to Florio, 2,000 paces, although Weinstein estimates one *miglio* as equivalent to 1,480 metres (Weinstein 2000, xviii). However, in the *Oratori* files of the AAF, the

standard distances estimated by priests varied greatly, with, for example, 200 paces or 500 *braccia* often understood as $\frac{1}{2}$ a *miglio* despite the fact that one *miglio fiorentino* technically equalled 2,833.33 *braccia*.

SURFACE AREA

staioro = 0.313 acres (or the amount of land needed to produce one *stai* of wheat)

coltra = 4 *staiori*

MONEY

By the end of the sixteen hundreds, the *scudo* or the *ducato* had replaced the *fiorino* and contained approximately 32 grams of gold or the equivalent in silver.

4 *denari* = 1 *quattrino*

12 *denari* = 1 *soldo*

20 *soldi* = 1 *lira*

7 *lire* = 1 *scudo*

WAGES

Taken from Weinstein 2000, xviii-xix, and reflecting wages at the mid-sixteenth century in Tuscany. All wages are approximate, the average, and on a per annum basis unless otherwise noted. Goldthwaite (1980, 483) estimates that the average daily wage for a skilled labourer was 22.6 *soldi di piccioli* in 1557 & 37.5 in 1590.

Tuscan peasant family = 5-6 *scudi*

Imperial army infantry pikeman = 25 *scudi*

Chaplain of the Church of the Madonna dell'Umiltà = 240 *lire*/ 35 *scudi*

Female domestic servant = 24 *lire* plus two pairs of shoes

Commissioner of Pistoia, salary per semester (six months) = 3,000 *lire*/ 429 *scudi*

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Introduction

In his 1994 *Letter to Families* Pope John Paul II reformulated the notion of the *Redemptor Hominis* into the redeeming family. He wrote of the family as the way of the Church and noted how it was this fundamental unit of society ‘who live out their human and Christian vocation in the communion of the home’.¹ Despite the late Pope’s clear recognition of the very public role that the private sphere had in shaping Catholicism, very little work has examined how domestic customs informed the Catholic faith, or alternatively how the ‘public’ face of religion has informed domestic customs. This lacuna stands in sharp contrast to histories of Protestantism that have emphasized not only the impact that this reformulated faith was to have on the domestic sphere, but also the very domestic quality of Protestantism itself.²

This thesis hopes partly to remedy this gap by going back four hundred or so years before John Paul II’s epistle to provide empirical evidence of how people in early modern Florence lived out their Christian vocation in the communion of their homes through material means. It also aims to help further understand some of the multivalent ways in which spiritual meaning was encoded there. In order to do this, it primarily looks at a range of devotional belongings and spaces that were found in Tuscan homes during a period that encompasses some fifty years preceding the Council of Trent (1545-1563) and extends until around one hundred years after its closure.

The goal is to shed light not only on the importance of the domestic sphere in shaping religious belief and practice, but more specifically to stress the importance of the belongings and spaces housed there in forming confessional identities. As such it stands as a riposte to Marc Forster’s recent assertion that ‘[t]he public and communal nature of baroque Catholicism, together with its churchliness and clericalism, left little space for the kind of domestic devotions and family piety that developed in Protestant regions.’³ Although dealing specifically with German

¹ Letter to families was delivered at St. Peter’s, Rome, 2 February 1994 and can be found via http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_02021994_families_en.html (accessed 5 April 2007).

² Most importantly rethinking the role of Protestantism on households see Lyndal Roper, *The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, and ‘Gender and the Reformation,’ *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 92 (2001): 290-302. For a more traditional understanding of the domestic qualities of Protestantism see Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), and his *The Reformation and the Family* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).

³ Marc R. Forster, ‘Domestic Devotions and Family Piety in German Catholicism,’ in *Piety and Family in*

Catholicism, Forster's remark encapsulates a wider historiographical viewpoint. The basis of this viewpoint is an understanding that the Reformation embraced and enacted a liberating type of Lutheran 'family piety' and the empowerment of private judgement.⁴ In contrast, the Catholic side was perceived to have found religion not at home, but at the confession box instead.⁵ By this logic 'baroque' Catholicism becomes a faith of mediated surfaces and extraneity in which outward performance and conformity are paramount. Such a concept uneasily polarises the public and the private, the religious and the secular, the collective and the individual.⁶ In fact, sitting comfortably alongside the Catholic panoply of faith was a more interiorized form of piety that was fostered by the Church as much as by exigencies of individual spirituality. It should be clear that the Church's imperatives were not always synonymous with private experiences, but neither were they always necessarily antagonistic towards one another. It should also be clear that private experiences could be the basis for more public ones.

Recent work has done much towards emphasising the dynamic and constitutive nature of the domestic sphere as well as dispelling any easy distinctions between private and public spheres or values.⁷ The fact that the home was also a site where broader social currents or values were played out and contested has now long been recognised, and a large array of studies have employed

Early Modern Europe. Essays in Honour of Steven Ozment, ed. Marc R. Forster and Benjamin J. Kaplan, 97-114 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 110. See also Patrice Vert, 'La Dévotion Domestique Luthérienne: Instructions, Images et Pratiques,' *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 217 (2000): 593-606.

⁴ See Philip Benedict's introductory comments in his 'Faith, Fortune and Social Structure,' *Past and Present* 152 (1996): 46-78, 46-50. Noting the tendency of Reformation scholarship to align an emergent subjectivity and liberating private sphere with Protestantism see John M. Headley's critical comments in his 'The Reformation in Historical Thought,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 48 (1987):521-32, esp. pp. 525-6. Roper, *The Holy Household*, has argued against any easy understanding of the Reformation as a progressive force of individualism and modernisation by showing how Protestantism reinforced a conservative doctrine of patriarchy. As a result any empowerment of private judgement must be understood as profoundly gendered.

⁵ For useful summaries of Counter-Reformation historiography see John O'Malley, *Trent and All That. Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000); Simon Ditchfield, 'In Search of Local Knowledge'. *Rewriting Early Modern Italian Religious History*, *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 19 (1998): 255-296; Adriano Proserpi, 'Riforma Cattolica, Crisi Religiosa, Disciplinamento: un Percorso di Ricerca,' *Annali dell'Istituto Storico Italo-germanico in Trento* XIX (1993): 401-415; Jean Boutier and Brigitte Marin, 'Regards sur l'historiographie recente de l'Italie moderne,' *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 45, no. 1 (1998): 7-14, and Eric Cochrane, 'The Transition from Renaissance to Baroque: The Case of Italian Historiography,' *History and Theory* 19 (1980): 21-38.

⁶ A concept already well-established by the beginning of the twentieth century with Emile Durkheim's, Max Weber's, and Gerardus van der Leeuw's writings (which further posited a side of economic modernity): see particularly Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. J. W. Swain (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1915).

⁷ For example see Ronald F.E. Weissman and Susan Zimmerman, eds. *Urban Life in the Renaissance* (Newark, London, & Toronto: University of Delaware Press & Associated University Presses, 1989); Susan Kent ed. *Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space: An Interdisciplinary Cross-Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Beryl Rawson and Paul Weaver, eds. *The Roman Family in Italy: Status, Sentiment and Space* (Canberra and Oxford: Humanities Research Centre and Clarendon Press, 1997), and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, 'Il Pubblico, il Privato, L'intimità: una Introduzione,' *Ricerche storiche* 16 (1986): 451-58. Most recently see Raffaella Sarti, *Europe at Home: Family and Material Culture 1500 - 1800*, trans. Allan Cameron (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), and Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis, eds. *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (London: V & A Publications, 2006).

the Italian domestic sphere and interior as a base on which to explore wider issues such as consumption, kinship patterns, and gender or class relations.⁸ Nonetheless, historiography has tended to secularize the Italian domestic sphere and its consumption of material artefacts.⁹ Art-historiography, with a residual Burckhardtean self-consciousness, has tended to humanize, urbanize, aestheticize and individualize both the home and its belongings, concentrating on elite patrons, specific commissions and a staple network of high-status painters, architects, sculptors and occasionally objects set within varying cultural histories.¹⁰ Although Florentine scholarship has

⁸ Among others see Dennis Romano, *Housecraft and Statecraft: Domestic Service in Renaissance Venice, 1400-1600* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996); James S. Grubb, *Provincial Families of the Renaissance: Private and Public Life in the Veneto*. Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1996; Stuart Woolf, ed. *Domestic Strategies: Work and Family in France and Italy, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Marzio Barbagli, *Sotto lo stesso tetto: mutamenti della famiglia in Italia dal XV al XX secolo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1988); Barbagli and David I. Kertzer, eds. *Family Life in Early Modern Times* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001); Donna Birdwell-Pheasant and Denise Lawrence-Zuniga, eds. *House Life: Space, Place and Family in Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1999). Most importantly in terms of material culture and interiors remain John Kent Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting of the Arts in Renaissance Florence,' (PhD thesis, John Hopkins University, 1987); Patricia Waddy, *Seventeenth-Century Roman Palaces: Use and the Art of the Plan* (New York & Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Architectural History Foundation & MIT Press, 1990); Richard Goldthwaite, 'The Economic and Social World of Italian Renaissance Maiolica,' *Renaissance Quarterly* XLII (1989): 1-32; Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy 1300-1600* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), and Paula Findlen, 'Possessing the Past: The Material World of the Italian Renaissance,' *American Historical Review* 103 (1998): 83-114, who offers a concise and perceptive analysis of Renaissance historiography, its debts to connoisseurship, and the influence of both Warburg's cultural history and Elias 'civilizing process'. In addition see Patricia Fortini-Brown, *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice. Art, Architecture and the Family* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004); Elisabeth S. Cohen and Thomas V. Cohen. 'Open and Shut: The Social Meanings of the Cinquecento Roman House,' *Studies in the Decorative Arts* IX (2001-2002): 61-84; Sandra Cavallo, 'What Did Women Transmit? Ownership Control of Household Goods & Personal Effects in Early Modern Italy,' In *Gender and Material Culture in Historical Perspective*, ed. Moira Donald and Linda Hurcombe, 38-53 (New York and London: Macmillan, 2000); and the wonderful late nineteenth-century study of Italian interiors and domestic life undertaken by Pompeo Molmenti, *Storia di Venezia della vita privata dalle origini alla caduta della Repubblica* 1879, 3 vols. (7th ed, Bergamo: Istituto italiano d'arti grafiche, 1927-29); Lodovico Frati, *La vita privata di Bologna dal secolo XIII al XVII* 1900 (repr., Bologna: Zanichelli, 1928), and Attilio Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina e i suoi arredi nei secoli XIV e XV*, 1900 (repr., Florence: Casa Editrice le lettere, 1983). For a more detailed listing of the literature please refer to the bibliography.

⁹ Patricia Fortini-Brown's *Private Lives in Renaissance Venice* is indicative of current research by giving domestic religious issues short-shrift, whilst Raffaella Sarti devotes less than three pages to 'Religious life and family life' in her summative *Europe at Home*, 28-31 (all of which largely reinforce an uncritical equation of the Protestant home as a 'geniune church' and the Catholic home as of a primarily secular nature). See however Goldthwaite, *Wealth and Demand*, which examines the fundamental role of religious art and artefacts in the domestic sphere, and their wider social role and economic function, as well as nn.9 & 10 below.

¹⁰ Notable exceptions to this tendency are Ronald G. Kecks, *Madonna und Kind. Das Hausliche Andachtsbild in Florenz des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1988); Jacqueline Musacchio, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1999); Roberta J. M. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Geraldine A. Johnson, 'Beautiful Brides and Model Mothers: The Devotional and Talismanic Functions of Early Modern Marian Reliefs,' in *The Material Culture of Sex, Procreation, and Marriage in Premodern Europe*, ed. Anne L. McClanan and Karen Rosoff Encarnación, 135-162 (New York: Palgrave, 2002); and 'Family Values: Sculpture and the Family in Fifteenth-Century Florence,' in *Art, Memory, and Family in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Giovanni Ciappelli and Patricia Lee Rubin, 215-233 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety. Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250-1400* (Florence: Centro Di,

begun to investigate the continued importance of religious ritual in structuring quotidian meanings and in shaping social networks and cultural relations, it has usually done so through the lens of confraternities and charitable institutions or, as in Richard Trexler's study, through public ritual.¹¹ No study has as yet examined together the extensive array of miscellaneous and generally nondescript devotional objects and aids that were found in Florentine homes, nor fully questioned what it might mean to have religion so ubiquitous at home at a specific historical juncture.¹² For this reason the five chapters that comprise this thesis have instead taken the home as a starting point from which to examine religion, and conversely, religion as a starting point to examine the home.

Peering from the inside at all the religious 'merchandise' that increasingly inundated Florentine homes from the late-fifteenth century to the mid-seventeenth century, the thesis draws on the supposition that religious household objects and ornaments functioned instrumentally, and at times quite publicly, as physical mnemonics for private practice. It also posits that the personal space and expenditure that was increasingly given over to these items indicates that not only were they valued by the home's inhabitants, but that they also helped construct structures of belief, identity and environment.¹³ Taken together, the devotional furniture, images, texts, relics, and other accoutrements listed within inventories, formed a system of objects that functioned both to display and engender religiosity within the interior of the home and in the behaviour of its inhabitants. This group of objects leads to a more complex understanding of material culture by providing an everyday framework where complex intersections and relationships between spirituality, ownership, space and psychologies of collecting were fostered and contested within wider social currents.

As well as providing a more nuanced understanding of the domestic itself, an investigation into the religious contents and spaces of lay homes may well help to interrogate the success of the Post-Tridentine Church in its attempts to reform and eradicate popular superstitions and practices.

2005). Despite widening the remit of traditional investigation, Luke Syson and Dora Thornton, *Objects of Virtue* (London: British Museum Press, 2001) for example, concentrates unabashedly on high-status and generally secular domestic objects.

¹¹ Rare exceptions to this trend are *La religione domestica, medioevo – età moderna* (Verona: Cierre Edizioni, 2001) and the issue of *Quaderni Storici* 3 (2001) which examined domestic religion. For Trexler's definitive study see Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), while on confraternities see for example Christopher F. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Konrad Eisenbichler, *The Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A Youth Confraternity in Florence 1411-1785* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); Nicholas Terpstra, ed. *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), and Charles de la Roncière, 'La place des confréries dans l'encadrement religieux du *contado* Florentin: L'exemple de la Val d'Elsa,' *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome* 85, no. 1 (1973): 31-77.

¹² However, a recent article on the religious material culture of the Venetian *casa* (and unfortunately one which I became aware of too late to take into consideration for this thesis) has argued for the role that pious items had in making the household holy: see Margaret A. Morse, 'Creating sacred space: the religious visual culture of the Renaissance Venetian *Casa*,' *Renaissance Studies* XXX (2007): 1-34.

¹³ See Mary Douglas's comments that a person's belongings can be understood as 'physical, visible statements about the hierarchy of values to which their chooser subscribes.' See Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 5.

Reform was attempted through now well-documented measures that included Schools of Christian Doctrine, a growing emphasis on the sacrament of confession and liturgical conformity, increasingly centralized forms of censorship and the tribunals of the Inquisition. However, Catholic orthodoxy was also an orthodoxy of objects. Catholic faith was mediated quite literally through material culture. For this reason, popular devotional charms and objects (and the prayers attached to them) were increasingly major targets of both Catholic and Protestant reformers alike.¹⁴ If the latter side attempted, rather unsuccessfully, to dispense with them altogether, the Catholics instead asserted their fundamental importance, providing and promoting a large number of ecclesiastically sanctioned 'remedies' for believers in lieu of other 'superstitious' ones.¹⁵ Although the status of rosaries, agnus deis, holy water, blessed candles, relics, and often holy sites and images was diminished if not destroyed in Protestant states, their continued, and as the thesis shows, increased popularity within Catholic boundaries can be attributed to an advantageous intermingling of Church policy and popular tradition.¹⁶ This Catholic position was a prosaic one that recognised people's dependence on objects as well as the fundamental importance of objects and images within established ceremonial rituals. It also ensured that through these remedies, the populace had the means for independent and direct access to the spiritual and supernatural.¹⁷ Such access ensured that even though permitted they were nonetheless policed. The cases against *medicina superstiziosa* that so dominated the trials of the Roman Inquisition from the late cinquecento onwards indicate the increasing attempt by the Church to police laypeople's use of devotional objects and eradicate practices and materials not approved by or conforming to theological tenets.¹⁸ This stance invariably facilitated the 'entrenchment' of the Church by ensuring its own centrality as the mediator through which both objects and practices were to be filtered.¹⁹ Patterns of belief (and misbelief) and patterns of control and response should therefore be able to be read from household devotional objects, provided that the varying significances bestowed upon them by their consumers, as much as the complexity and autonomy of their culture and reactions, are also taken into account.

¹⁴ See Mary Rose O'Neil, 'Discerning Superstition: Popular Errors and Orthodox Response in Late Sixteenth-Century Italy' (DPhil thesis, Stanford University, 1981), particularly pp. 2-10.

¹⁵ Most recently on superstition and religion in Early Modern Europe see Helen Parish and William G. Naphy eds., *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

¹⁶ On the English injunctions against agnus deis, rosaries, and holy candles (among other things) see Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1992), 450-51, and Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* 1971 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 53. On the failure to eradicate the system of sacramentals in Northern Protestant Europe see Robert W. Scribner, 'The Impact of the Reformation on Daily Life,' in *Mensch und Objekt in Mittelalter und der Fruhen Neuzeit: Leben-Alltag-Kultur*, 315-43 (Vienna, 1990).

¹⁷ O'Neil, 'Discerning Superstition', 10.

¹⁸ Ibid, *passim*.

¹⁹ On this see John Bossy, 'Holiness and Society,' *Past and Present* 75 (1977):119-37, 127, and the much quoted ruling from the Council of Malines that 'It is superstitious to expect any effect from anything, when such an effect cannot be produced by natural causes, by divine institution, or by the ordination or approval of the Church.' From Thiers, *Superstitions*, ii, 8, as quoted in Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 49.

As Cissie Fairchild has remarked, in order to be able to form conclusions about consumer behaviour, it seems logical to examine the goods consumed.²⁰ To this we might add, that before drawing conclusions about religious behaviour, it makes sense to look at the goods around which that behaviour was based. The first four chapters of the thesis therefore specifically explore the common devotional artefacts that were found in lay Catholics' homes, and what behaviour was associated with them. In practical terms, the aim was to create a platform for further examination into the social geography of the home and the relationships between the people, material culture and the religion it housed, by asking some basic questions: what types of religious items did people own; how many people owned them; what was their function; where were they placed? As well as addressing these questions, by charting the quantitative presence of these objects over a long period of time (c.1480-c.1650), the text should also enable us to see if patterns of consumption or devotion changed.

The first chapter looks at the pieces of furniture formed specifically for domestic devotion that developed and proliferated during this period, namely the holy water stoup [*acquasantiera*], the prie-dieu [*inginocchiatoio*], and the little household altar [*altarino*]. Chapter One also examines various devotional objects such as paternosters and rosaries, as well as agnus deis, blessed candles and roses, and *brevia*. Chapter Two moves on to examine the images that were kept in Florentine homes. It aims to chart the increasing number of religious images found at home, the shifts in subject matter and tastes, and the relationships that domestic art collections had with wider cultural trends. Chapter Three considers the role of household relics and their containers. Chapter Three also suggests the ways in which material culture actively sustained spiritual (or sanctified) identities in the domestic sphere by investigating the ownership patterns of one of Savonarola's cloaks. Chapter Four concentrates on the devotional literature that households possessed and seeks to contextualise the data from the inventories firmly within the initiatives taken by the Church to control personal reading habits. These four chapters do not pertain to be an exhaustive list of the religious items found in homes, nor a definitive analysis of them. Instead, they provide a survey of those items most frequently found within household inventories of the time, drawing in particular on the inventories of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* found in the State Archive of Florence. Certain items such as birth trays [*deschi da parto*], chests [*cassoni*], *pastiglia* boxes, and ceramic tablewares have not been included even though they may have had religious decoration, thereby entwining secular functions with visible spirituality.²¹ This is largely because these objects have already been

²⁰ Cissie Fairchild, 'Consumption in Early Modern Europe: A Review Article,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 35 (1993): 850-58, 858.

²¹ For example a 'large maiolica plate of the Virgin Mary' was found in Messer Giovanni di Raffaello Concianni's house in 1532, while a 'small case [*cassonciello*] painted with scenes of the old testament' was listed in Tomaso di Piero Lenzi's estate in 1558. See ASF, MPP 2645, f.61r; and MPP 2651, f.275r respectively.

fully explored, and the subject matter of their decoration was not usually noted in inventories.²² Nor are religious medallions or coins considered separately, as the field of numismatology has likewise been amply described.²³

Chapter Five examines the spaces of the house where devotion was centred and where the material culture of religion examined in the first section was placed. In particular, it draws on the *Oratori* files in the Florentine Archiepiscopal Archive to examine domestic chapels in both town and country estates: of which the *Pupilli* inventories recorded a rising number by the beginning of the seicento. If religious objects functioned as valued intermediaries to the supernatural, then religious space did not simply define the boundaries of the supernatural but also helped in determining the behaviour that took place within its parameters. This section shows quite clearly that the architectural space of the domestic oratory or chapel played an active role in structuring not just access to the divine, but also wider social and religious relationships.

It is worthwhile to examine more closely the main sources used for this thesis, and the way that they in turn have structured it and helped define its ambit. Any investigation into domestic life and devotional practices is very much limited by the sources available to us. Inventories present the best source of empirical data regarding devotional objects and spaces. Indeed, as previously noted, the main source for the first four chapters has been the household inventories of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* in the Florentine State Archives. This is a source that has been widely used by Florentine historians and art-historians, as part of a more recent trend towards employing probate inventories in order to shed light on the interiors and contents of houses, their owners and the society that produced them.²⁴ Founded in the late-fourteenth century, the Office of the *Pupilli*, or Wards, acted as the legal custodian for estates either left to minors, or of those who died intestate, up until its

²² See Chapter Two and Appendix B for more detail and the bibliography in regards to the relevant literature.

²³ Among others see Graham Pollard, ed. *Italian Medals: Studies in the History of Art* (Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 1987), and Stephen K. Scher, ed. *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance* (Washington DC and New York: National Gallery of Art and Frick Collection, 1994).

²⁴ Work that has extensively drawn on the files of the *Pupilli* includes Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting'; Musacchio, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth*; Christian Bec, *Les Livres des Florentins (1413-1608)* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1984); Armando F. Verde, 'Libri tra le pareti domestiche: una necessaria appendice a lo Studio fiorentino 1473 – 1503,' *Memorie domenicane XVIII* (1987): 1-225; Paolo Malanima, *Il Lusso dei Contadini: consumi e industrie nelle campagne toscane del Sei e Settecento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990), and Giulia Calvi, *Il Contratto morale: madri e figli nella Toscana moderna*. Rome: Editori Laterza, 1994. The model studies for the use of inventories remain Carole Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), and Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain 1660-1760*, 1988 (repr.; London and New York: Routledge, 1996), but see also the important work of Isabella Palumbo-Fossati, 'L'intérieur de la maison vénétienne dans la deuxième moitié du XVII siècle' (PhD thesis, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1982); Annik Pardailhé-Galabrun, *The Birth of Intimacy*, trans. Jocelyn Phelps (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991); Philip Benedict, 'Towards the Comparative Study of the Popular Market for Art: The Ownership of Paintings in Seventeenth-Century Metz,' *Past and Present* 109 (1985): 100-117, and Renato Ago, 'Collezioni di quadri e collezioni di libri a Roma tra XVI e XVIII secolo,' *Quaderni Storici* 110 (2002): 379 – 404, which have all made extensive use of inventories.

dissolution in the eighteenth century.²⁵ The deceased's possessions, both their *mobili* (i.e. the *masserizie* or household furnishings which excluded essentially 'built-in' fittings such as frescoes, fireplaces and *acquai*), *immobili* (land and buildings), and sometimes their creditors and debtors, were listed in varying degrees of detail by the Magistrate's officials. While not conforming to an overall systematic pattern, nearly every inventory exhaustively lists not just the household objects, but the furniture and room within which they were found.²⁶ In addition, the inventories cut across class divisions by showing possessions from a broad social range that encompasses the Tuscan elite as well as poorer individuals who lacked a family name and owned as little as five objects.²⁷ This comprehensiveness of the *Pupilli* inventories and its historic consistency across more than three centuries constitute perhaps its most valuable resource as they allow entry not only into the households of almost all levels of secular society but also access to both city residences and those located within the Florentine *contado*. As such, the *filze d'inventari* of the *Magistrato dei pupilli* provide a rich archival source that allows the domestic space, furnishings, and possessions owned by a socially diverse range of 'Tuscans' to be diachronically analysed.

This study draws on a core sampling of over eight hundred inventories taken from individual estates dating between c.1480 to c.1650. This sampling was taken at approximately twenty-year intervals, in order to allow a relatively conclusive quantitative analysis that would make changing patterns of consumption (and the distribution of domestic space and objects) evident.²⁸ However, there is a certain degree of overlap. Due to the irregular nature of the files, in

²⁵ On the institutional history of the *Magistrato avanti il Principato* see Caroline W. Fisher, 'The State as Surrogate Father: State Guardianship in Renaissance Florence 1368 - 1532' (PhD thesis, Brandeis University, 2003). The statutes and regulations of the Pupilli during the Republic have been published in Francesca Morandini, 'Statuti e ordinamenti dell'Ufficio dei Pupilli et adulti nel periodo della Repubblica fiorentina (1388-1534),' *ASI CXIII*, no.405 (1955): 520-51; *CXIV*, no.409 (1955): 92-117, while the reformed sixteenth-century statutes of the principate can be found in ASF, *Magistrato dei Pupilli et Adulti avanti il Principato, Statuti et Ordini della Corte et Magistrato delli Offitali de' Pupilli et Adulti della Città di Firenze riformati il XX Agosto 1565, filza 248*.

²⁶ The rooms do not seem to have been listed according to any type of spatial organisation nor sense of hierarchical value within the home. Only rarely were the rooms' inhabitants specifically given, making it difficult to ascertain the house's occupants and boundaries, or the 'ownership' of goods through custom or use. This problem is compounded by the common habit of storing an individual's items throughout the household as well as the custom of sub-dividing larger properties into residences for various discrete branches of the family or their retinue. The small number of bathing rooms or lavatories (*stufe* and *necessari*) listed, suggests the lack of movable objects such rooms contained, rather than the absence of such room types themselves.

²⁷ However, the Pratese equivalent of the *Pupilli* noted regarding Agnolo di Bartolomeo Ciatti di Tobbiana's residence that 'nella capanna habitazione del detto Agnolo non si è trovato beni mobbili, né moventi né masseritie d'alcuna sorte eccetto che un puoco di paglia con uno straccio di copertaccia di nessun valore dove dormivano sopra, con una cassaccia cattiva intarlata di nessun valore buona solamente per abruciare'(!) ASPR, *Commune*, 1969, 2, 14 September 1574, as quoted in Malanima, *Il lusso dei contadini*, 13. Although, as Malanima notes, the houses of *contadini* were invariably more sparsely furnished, even a cursory survey of the *Pupilli* files suggests an increase of *beni mobili* in both rural and urban residences across the board by the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

²⁸ Given the paucity of entries for many years, the sampling was taken from files whose dates fell between the twenty-year intervals, therefore individual inventories do not necessarily strictly correspond to the intervals

which certain years are absent or underrepresented (and which would have rendered the sampling too small to be of any statistical value), as well as the way the files have been subsequently arranged chronologically, it was impossible to be completely numerically consistent and so the sampling has therefore limited itself to those files that encompass the dates rather than strictly adhere to them. Nonetheless, a benefit of the approach necessitated by the archival data has been the subsequent widening of the range of the sample. In addition, this core sampling has been supplemented by approximately three hundred other inventories, drawn not only from other *Pupilli* files, but also from private family archives, and notarial documents, to further ensure the accuracy of the quantitative data gleaned.²⁹

While such a sampling ensures a relatively accurate and comprehensive view of domestic belongings over the *longue durée*, it is a view that is seen from a long distance. This is due to the inherent limitations of inventories and their own specific traditions. Particular to the *Pupilli* inventories, and in contrast to the English probate inventories that formed the basis of Carole Shammas and Lorna Weatherill's exemplary studies, is the fact that the total value of estates were only occasionally calculated, and even more rarely was the worth of individual objects itemized.³⁰ Because of this documentary lack, no attempt has been made to statistically establish how variables such as wealth, occupation, and urban or rural habitation were interrelated or whether they were determinative in ownership patterns.³¹ More generally regarding the constraints of inventories, is the problem that they tend not to divulge what these objects might have looked like, how and when they were acquired, how they were used or who used them.³² They also render the household and its belongings static by fixing the objects in one location, despite the fact that *ricordi, ricordanze,*

themselves. The files used for the main statistical body of the text were ASF, MPAP 186 (1464-1510), 189 (1508-31); MPP 2648 (1538-45), 2651 (1557-62), 2655 (1581-8), 2657 (1598-1602), 2660 (1617-22), 2661 (1644-1653).

²⁹ Smaller samplings were taken from ASF, MPAP 153 (1418-22), 155 (1421-25), 173 (1467-71); MPP 2645 (1531-3), 2663 (1538), 2709 (1569), 2665 (1573-1580), and 2666 (1583-1590). This second sampling while not incorporated into the overall statistics for Chapters Two and Four, has nonetheless formed an important contrast to gauge the accuracy of the main data. Inventories from family archives consulted include those held in the ASF (namely the Strozzi, Della Stufa, and Rondinelli-Vitelli family archives, and those found within the *Libri di commercio e di famiglia*); the British Library (Ms. Medici), and the BNCF, as well as those from the Capponi and Riccio family archive (hereafter ACRF), and the Antinori family archive (whose inventories Brenda Preyer generously allowed me to copy). In addition, inventories found within ASF, *Notarile Moderno* were also consulted. For published sources, please refer to individual citations.

³⁰ Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, and Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*.

³¹ See Shammas's warning to use multivariate techniques when analysing ownership differences from probate records: Shammas, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*, 173. For a more detailed analysis of using inventories as an economic marker see her 'Constructing a Wealth Distribution from Probate Records,' *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 9 (1978): 297-307. However, when dealing with religious material culture, traditional variables may themselves be too restrictive by failing to adequately encompass phenomenal and spiritual values.

³² On approaches to inventories see Appendix 1 'Ways of using probate inventories' in Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*, 201-7, and Rachel P. Gerrard, 'English Probate Inventories and Their Use in Studying the Significance of the Domestic Interior, 1570-1700,' in *Probate Inventories*, ed. Ad van der Woude and Anton Schuurman, 55-82 (Utrecht: H & S Publishers, 1980).

letters and logic would attest to a dynamic model of consumption and a fluid circulation of goods. Household items were lent, begged, borrowed, stolen, recycled, or simply stored outside the home and entrusted into the care of relatives, or placed in monasteries, convents, and churches that had family associations. The *Pupilli* inventories were representations of interiors made by a third party on behalf of the Institution that employed them, and therefore do not necessarily correlate to how the occupiers of that interior experienced it. The space where notaries recorded objects as belonging does not necessarily indicate where they belonged or were used, and therefore who used them or how they were used.

However, because this thesis is not concerned with portraying a snapshot of one individual estate, some of these issues can to a certain extent be avoided or corrected. For example, the dates when specific objects were collected as well as their typical placement within houses become evident through the long timeframe of the survey. Also, by drawing on other sources, namely evidence from the Florentine Inquisition, the Congregation of the Index, Canonization trials, as well as information from testaments, account books, printed and personal texts, visual imagery, and extant objects or spaces, most of these issues can be clarified and ‘fleshed out’.³³ These sources, although themselves limited, can nonetheless provide a direct or mediated dialogue with ordinary people who owned and used devotional objects and spaces in their homes. They thereby allow household belongings to be better situated within social practices and norms, and further enable an analysis of institutional and personal relationships. Some of the problems, however, remain insoluble and invariably throw up other questions such as methods of production and distribution that fall outside the remit of this thesis. A rigorous and comprehensive examination of the *Pupilli* inventories that takes into account incomes and occupations alongside biographies, status, inheritance, family formation, and life-cycle would provide a much needed base for understanding both social structure and material culture within a wider European economic and cultural framework. This more modest and limited thematic study nonetheless provides a stepping-stone for more inclusive ones by accurately charting a significant subset of belongings and the domestic space they were located in.

The focus of Chapter Five on the space of domestic oratories and chapels necessitated its own methodology and sources. In contrast to the preceding chapters, the main source used for this chapter was the *Oratori* files held in the Archbishopric Archive of Florence that date from the late-

³³ On the Inquisition in Florence and its remaining files see particularly Modesto Rastrelli, *Fatti Attententi All'inquisizione e sua storia Generale e Particolare in Toscana* (Florence: Anton-Giuseppe Pagani, e Comp, 1782); G. Biagi, ‘Le carte dell’Inquisizione Fiorentina in Bruxelles.’ *Rivista delle biblioteche e degli archivi* (1908): 161-68; Adriano Prosperi, ‘Vicari dell’Inquisizione fiorentina alla metà del Seicento. Note d’archivio,’ *Annali dell’Istituto Storico Italo-germanico in Trento* 8 (1982): 275-304; John Tedeschi, ‘Florentine Documents for a History of the Index of Prohibited Books,’ In *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Hans Baron*, ed. Anthony Molho and John Tedeschi, 577-605 (Florence: Sansoni, 1971). The other sources are listed in individual chapters and citations.

sixteenth century. These files contain orders of visitations by the archbishop's office to chapels and oratories owned either domestically or by private organisations that existed within the diocese of Florence, and the concessions of licenses to practice Mass in them. More important however, are the visitation descriptions of the oratories contained within the files. Usually written by the representative parish priest, these descriptions of the oratories range from brief and formulaic entries to longer and more sustained reports on the spaces visited. By piecing together the often erratic and haphazard entries, these files can document information pertaining to the patron, location, construction, dedication and furnishing of individual chapels and oratories. They can provide evidence regarding their relationship to the parish church and existing religious practices, the users of the space, the masses and feast days celebrated there, dues paid, officiating celebrants, the architect, as well as details of paintings and decorations. Supplemented with information from the *Pupilli* archives, local synods and pastoral visitations, these files provide the most complete and comprehensive source for Tuscan domestic chapels and oratories. In addition, the very existence of these records attests to a growing bureaucratic efficiency and centralized regulation of regional Church practices, as well as the proliferation of these semi-hermetic spaces.³⁴

All five chapters of this thesis seek to redress the lack of research on devotional household items and spaces. The importance and value of domestic religious objects (such as *aquasantiere* and common devotional texts) and spaces (like that of the domestic oratory) have tended to be ignored by histories that have largely written the Catholic home as secular, and art histories which have concentrated instead on a more narrow understanding of art. The importance of this thesis therefore lies in a sustained and more empirically based investigation into an aspect of material history whose significance is little understood. The focus of this investigation is to assert both the importance of the religious dimension to studies of domestic life, and the centrality of the concept of the holy home to early modern Catholicism. It also crucially entwines the personal ownership of devotional items with the history of religion and places both within the contexts of consumption and confessional beliefs. The thesis therefore opens by examining the consumption of religious goods and charting their histories at home.

³⁴ The organisation of the papal regulation of private altars into comprehensive files largely post-dates the period studied here, but licenses to celebrate mass in domestic oratories as well as special privileges can be found in ASV, Congregazione dei vescovi e regolari, *Oratori Privati*, 1865-1905, 10 vols., and ASV, Altare privilegiatum ad tempus, 1771-1908, 187 vols.

Chapter One

FURNITURE, ACCESSORIES, AND OTHER HOLY ITEMS

INTRODUCTION

A key target within the vituperative propaganda pamphlets issued from Reformation countries or cities, was the strong, almost intercessionary, relationship that Catholicism had with objects and its reliance on them.¹ As shown in an illustration entitled 'Certaine of the *Pope's* Merchandize lately sent over into Englande' from Bernard Garter's book *A neweyeaes gift dedicated to the Pope's Holinesse, and all Catholikes addicted to the Sea of Rome* (fig.1.1), it was all the miscellaneous material stuff associated with that 'popish' religion that was able to alert a good protestant to recognise a Catholic, as much as a mistaken belief in the inflated powers of the Virgin Mary or the belief in the real presence of the Eucharistic Host.² As the print makes clear, all the rosaries, relics, medals, agnus deis and beads provided a material framework for a system of belief. The devotional ornaments form a border that serves to access this system, while the system itself is represented by the central image of St. Nicholas, who, dressed in papal attire, asserts the authority of the church and upholds a heaven dominated by Christ and the Virgin in equal measure.³ The framing power of devotional objects was never stronger than in early modern Italy, with even

¹ On this subject see among others Robert W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation*, rev.ed. (1981; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), Ulinka Rublack, *Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 45-61; Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Carlos M.N. Eire, *War against the Idols. The reformation of worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) and Serguisz Michalski, *The Reformation and the visual arts. The protestant image question in western and eastern Europe* (London & New York: Routledge, 1993). See also Pettegree, Malcom Walsby and Alexander Wilkinson eds, *French vernacular books. Books published in the French language before 1600*, 2 vols. (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2007).

² Bernard Garter, John Stokesley, Barnaby Googe and Tunstall Cuthbert, *A neweyeaes gifte dedicated to the Pope's Holinesse, and all Catholikes addicted to the Sea of Rome* (London: Henry Bynneman, 1579), 57, accessed from Early English Books Online, 1 March 2007. On Garter see Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 178-181.

³ On the ways in which Pope St. Nicholas I (c.820-67), a figure who symbolized the supreme power of the papacy, was changed into a generic holy man or substituted by his other namesake (the fourth century Nicholas of Myra) in Protestant areas, see Robert W. Scribner 'The Impact of the Reformation on Daily Life,' in *Mensch und Objekt in Mittelalter und er Fruhen Neuzeit: Leben-Alttag-Kultur*, ed. Gehard Jaritz, 315-343 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), esp. pp. 320-21.

sympathetic English travellers abroad often taking pains to explain to their audience back home the seemingly infinite array of religious objects they found and the seemingly bewildering religious practices that these objects engendered.⁴ While coming as it did from the other side of the confessional divide and aiming to ridicule Catholicism's reliance on objects and *medicines ecclesiastici*, the print in many respects nonetheless offers a fairly accurate if limited view of the artefacts that might be owned by Italian Catholics during the sixteenth century. Indeed, by the time of its publication in 1579, most of the items sketched in the print, and many more besides, were to be found in varying and sometimes astonishing quantities in most Florentine homes. Squeezed in between the white background, and space permitting, even more objects could have been added to the engraving by the mid-seventeenth century. Indeed, what emerges from an investigation into the objects found within Tuscan houses from the late-quattrocento to the mid-seicento, is a startling increase of devotional objects within the home. The inventories of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* also document the development of several specifically religious furniture types, such as the *inginocchiatoio* and *altarino*. An examination of these objects enables us to look at a domestic culture of consuming that is filtered through religion.

This chapter, 'Furniture, Accessories and Other Holy Items', explores 'merchandise' similar to that found in Garter's print by presenting a summary and description of the religious *beni mobili* (movable goods) found within Tuscan houses during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although not exhaustive, the chapter nonetheless aims to be comprehensive. Drawing on the sources laid out in the introduction, it presents the devotional objects which were most commonly listed in the *Pupilli* files of the Archivio di Stato di Firenze and which were most representative of a household's religious possessions. These are, in order of discussion, holy water and holy water containers; prie-dieux and *altarini*; blessed candles and roses; agnus deis, paternosters, and rosaries; and finally *brevi* (a type of amulet or charm). The definition, form, use, and context of each type of object or collection of instruments will be discussed in order to reveal better these religious belongings that were used daily in homes. They will also be used as important departure points to help further understand the nature of devotion and the home itself.

⁴ For example the lengthy apologia and explanations of miracles and relics interspersed in Gregory Martin's text *Roma Sancta* (published as an extract in 1587 and not published fully until 1969). See Gregory Martin, *Roma Sancta* (1587), ed. George Bruner Parks (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1969), particularly chapters five ('That Reliques and holy monuments are geven unto us of God for great benefites, out of S. Chrisotime') and fourteen ('Certaine scrupulous doubttes about Reliques resolved'), pp.26-7 & 44-7. See also the section 'A shorte discourse of Pilgrimage and Relicks' in his *A Treatise of Chris[tian] Peregrination* (Paris: For R. Verstegan, 1587). In addition, a substantial number of sympathetic treatises were published for English readers to explain the complexities of Catholic objects and the practices based around them, such as, Anon, *An Exposition of the Holy Ornaments and Ceremonies which the Church uses at Mass collected from Several Authors and now publish'd for the common good of all Catholicks, and others* (London: printed for N. T., 1686).

ACQUA SANTA AND ACQUASANTIERE

The *Pupilli* files show an increasing presence of holy water (*acqua santa* or *benedetta*) and holy water containers in the household. While its presence was first recorded in the chapel of the Bartolini palace in 1522, very few instances of *acqua santa* were recorded prior to 1550, and none at all in the household inventories of family residences between 1480 and 1522.⁵ In contrast, even when excluding its presence in domestic chapels and oratories, while holy water never exactly gushed out of the household during the period c.1580 to 1654 (when my survey stopped), it had nonetheless become a significant and established presence within it. By the time an inventory of Brigida Bardi Tuccierelli's property was taken between 1622 and 1640, no less than eight containers for holy water were kept in her household.⁶ This increasing use of holy water at home can also be shown by the nineteen flasks of holy water that were found in the 'camera detta de Cappuccini' of Francesco Bonasi's household in 1580.⁷ The amount of holy water held in these two households suggests its liberal use by the homes' inhabitants, a widespread belief in its powers, and an increased provision of it to the laity. In fact, the presence of holy water in homes increased so dramatically that from 1644 to 1654 almost one third (29%) of all households sampled were listed as including holy water.⁸ This figure is made more remarkable in that 100 years before, holy water was found in less than one percent (0.8%) of homes.⁹ The following text discusses this phenomenon: firstly, by establishing what holy water was, how and when it got to into the home; and then by examining the development and evolution of the specific containers within which it was stored, and the practices associated with *acqua santa*.

Technically a mixture of salt and water blessed by a member of the clergy, *acqua santa* was part of the system of sacramentals that had a long tradition in ecclesiastical rites and an established scriptural and popular basis.¹⁰ Holy water was divided into several subtly different categories contingent on the formula used for its blessing. Although it seems unlikely that any popular distinction would have been made between 'acqua viva,' 'acqua lustra,' 'acqua benedetta' or 'acqua santa', it was only the last two terms that were used interchangeably in the inventories to record the holy water found in homes. Whatever its guise, holy water was, and remains, incorporated into

⁵ For the Bartolini see ASF, MPAP 189, f.146v: '1 tabernacolo da aqua benedetta'.

⁶ ASF, LCF, 366, f.2r: '1 Piletta d'Argento cesellata con piombo'; f.5r: '1 piletta di rame stagnata'; f.7v '4 secchiette di diverse sorte per tenere l'acqua santa'; 18v: '[2] secchiolini del acqua santa di terra verde'; 19r: '1 secchiolina di terra bianca'.

⁷ ASF, MPP, 2664, f.411v: 'Dicinove fiaschi d'aquasanta.'

⁸ Data compiled from 52 estates sampled in ASF, MPP 2661.

⁹ Data compiled from 122 estates sampled in ASF, MPP 2648.

¹⁰ On holy water see CE, s.v. 'Holy Water', 'Holy Water Fonts', and 'Liturgical Use of Holy Water'; Moroni, s.v. 'acqua santa', vol.1, 69-79; Abby Barraud, 'De l'eau bénite et des vases destinés a la contenir,' *Bulletin Monumental* VI (1870): 393-467; Marco Cecchelli and Luigi Samoggia, *In Sacro Domestico. Aquasantiere italiane dal XVI al XIX secolo* (Ferrara: Associazione Imprenditori Centesi per la Cultura & Editori SIACA Arti Grafiche, 1999); Lucia Gussio, *Antiche acquasantiere italiane da capezzale* (Rome: Italy Lithos, 2001); Maria Cecchetti, 'Il diavolo e l'acqua santa. Iconografie e forme delle acquasantiere in ceramica,' *Faenza LXXII* (1986): 17-54.

liturgical ceremonies in various ways, such as being sprinkled with aspersorium onto the altar, the congregation and the clergy immediately preceding the taking of the Eucharist. It was also utilized for para-liturgical acts such as the blessing and exorcising of both places and persons (for example, during the rite of ‘churching’ a woman who had given birth was blessed with holy water on the doorstep of the church before being allowed re-entry).¹¹ Within the confines of the Church however, its most significant role was played in the sacraments of Baptism and Easter, whereby it symbolised the concepts of rebirth, penitence, and initiation into Christian life. Holy water was believed to have between five to ten principal properties, all of which attest to the central notions of rebirth, purification and expiation.¹² Five pertained specifically to holy water’s purificatory role by stressing its efficacy in ridding the soul and body of evil spirits, demons, illusions, disease and sin, with the remaining two properties concerning firstly its ability to engender a disposition that was inclined to prayer, and secondly, its power to bestow earthly fecundity. All of these properties were of course highly desired in personal devotions and affairs, and even the *Summa theologica* (question 87, art.3) allowed the possibility that the sprinkling of holy water was conducive to the remission of venial sins because its use signified both reverence towards God (through the blessing of the clergy) and penance (presumably in recognizing the need for its use).¹³

The church’s first authorization for the blessing of water for domestic use is attributed to Alexander I (c.105 – c.115) and is found in the *Liber Pontificalis*.¹⁴ Later on, Leo IV (847-55) instituted a weekly Sunday blessing and the right that the blessed water could be taken away by the congregation on the eves of Pentecost and Easter Sunday, the only two Sundays when the water was not to be blessed by the priest.¹⁵ This weekly blessing and holy water’s domestic role was, however, only confirmed and standardized as late as 1614 by Paul V’s *Rituale Romanum*, which established the universal paradigm for Roman liturgy in accordance with Tridentine guidelines. The *Rituale Romanum* recommended that holy water was used daily and frequently, securely establishing its role in the household and further encouraging its sprinkling onto beds, invalids,

¹¹ Although Keith Thomas’s view of churching has largely provided the ground for subsequent studies (see Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 38, 59-61), an informed history of the ritual and review of the recent literature regarding churching can be found in David Cressy, ‘Purification, Thanksgiving, and the Churching of Women in Post-Reformation England,’ *Past and Present* 141 (1993): 106-146. For a Florentine example of churching, see Alice E. Sanger, ‘Women of Power: Studies in the Patronage of Medici Grand Duchesses and Regentesses 1565-1650’ (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 2000), 92.

¹² On these principles Moroni, op. cit. Cf. Marco Antonio Marsili Colonna, *Hydragiologia sive De Aqua Benedicta* (Rome: Bartholomaei Bonfadini, 1586), and Robert Bellarmine, *De Controversiis*, vol.2 (Ingolstadt: Davidis Sartoni, 1590), Lib.III, Cap. VII ‘De benedictionibus aque, salis cinerum, cerei &c’, 2145-150.

¹³ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ*, trans. Reginald Masterton & T.C. O’Brien, 60 vols. (London: Blackfriars in conjunction with Eyre & Spottiswoode and McGraw Hill, 1963), 60:108-115.

¹⁴ See Raymond Davis, *The Book of Pontiffs* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989), 4, sec.7.

¹⁵ Barraud, ‘De l’eau bénite’, 411.

vines, and crops.¹⁶ This role had already been suggested by 1586, and at much greater length, in the exhaustive treatise *Hydragiologia sive De Aqua Benedicta* written by the Bishop of Salerno, Marcantonio Marsili Colonna (1542-1589), one of several treatises on *acqua santa* to appear post-Trent.¹⁷ Colonna had similarly prescribed the liberal sprinkling of *acqua santa* onto houses, animals and fields.¹⁸ These were customs so embedded that they transgressed confessional divides and saw Protestants seeking holy water from Catholic priests as late as the nineteenth century in Weichsel.¹⁹ Moreover, in part of the Catholic Church's written response to Protestantism, which also included the treatise *Excellencias de l'acqua benedicta* by Cristoforo Morino and the lengthy section devoted to holy water in Roberto Bellarmino's *De Controversiis*,²⁰ Colonna stressed the Apostolic basis of *acqua santa*, and listed no less than 120 miracles that it had effected through its sanctioned sacramental use.²¹ Colonna's and Morino's works are testaments to a concerted effort by the Church to assert *acqua santa* at home in place of other extra-liturgical items of ritualistic belief, and to confirm theologically its position within Christian practice. The statistics from the inventories of the *Pupilli* suggest that their efforts clearly worked. However, Colonna's keenness to establish its efficacy through the intermediary body of the priest and the church, suggests the desire to reclaim authority through prescribing good practice and Christian limitations on a permissible form of domesticized liturgy. Provided it was used within the guidelines set down by the Church, it was theologically sound and a religious rather than superstitious rite, and thereby part of normative and good Christian practice.

Indeed, the misuse of holy water became a clear indicator of bad, and potentially unchristian practice and beliefs in both Catholic texts and the court of the Inquisition. In the advice

¹⁶ *Rituale Romanum Pauli V. Pont. Max. iussu editum*, 1614 (Antwerp: Ex Officina Plantiniana Balthasaris Moreti, 1635), 142-43. See also the discussion in Cecchelli and Samoggia, *Il Sacro Domestico*, 13-15, & 18.

¹⁷ Marsili Colonna, *Hydragiologia*.

¹⁸ Marsili Colonna, *Hydragiologia*, 456-7: 'Rogamusque vos, ac hortamur per viscera misericordiae Iesu Christi, ut hoc salutari, et facile cunctis exposito remedio ad vestrarum animarum salutem, salutaremque rerum, domorum, agrorum, animantium conservationem, salutariter a Beatissimo hoc Apostolo & Evangelista, cuius incomparabili thesauro corporis, non immerito gloriamini instituto, ita pie, ita religiose, ea animi propensione, eoque aeternae salutis desiderio utamini, ut quod nobis, piaque matri Ecclesiae in optatis est, malis etiam rata est, liberati in caelestem vitam evecti perennis, diuinique illius fontis, participes effecti, perpetuum, aeternumque cum Christo Domino regnetis. Utque laborem hunc a nobis alacri animo vestri causa sulceptum, salutaris fructus is consequatur, ut aliqua ex parte officio nostro fatifecisse videamur, ac vobiscum in coelesti patria sempiterna laetitia perfruamur.'

¹⁹ Scribner, 'Impact of the Reformation', 325.

²⁰ Cristoforo Morino, *Excellencias de l'acqua benedicta* (Valencia, 1589); Bellarmine, *De Controversiis*, 2.vol, Lib.III, Cap. VII, 2145-2150. Cecchelli and Samoggia note a precedent in Cardinal Johannes de Turrecremata's treatise *Dell'opera dedicata all'acqua benedicta* (Rome, c.1474). Turrecremata's *De efficacia aque benedictae contra Petrum Angelicum in Bohemia* appears to have been originally published in 1475 and republished in Rome in 1524 and 1529. A wider catalogue search has also revealed at least five different editions published in Germany between 1476 and c.1520.

²¹ Cap. V ('Miracula, quae ab exordio nascentis Ecclesiae ad annum Christi Octingentesimum, aque benedictae usu accidisse inveniuntur') lists fifty-five miracles, while Cap. VI ('Que item miracula, ad nostrum usque seculum aqua benedicta adhibita acciderent') lists seventy-one: see Marsili Colonna, *Hydragiologia*, 306-311 & 368-422 respectively. See also Cecchelli and Samoggia, *Il Sacro Domestico*, 9 & 18.

on 'How to sentence an Apostate of the Holy Catholic Faith' in Eliseo Masini's *Sacro Arsenale* (the handbook for the good inquisitor), it becomes evident that the mistreatment of holy water ranks as part of a formal denouncement of Catholic systems of belief.²² Masini's text also emphasizes the close relationship holy water held with sacred images in the domestic sphere, as both portrayed and promoted orthodoxy. It is the Apostate '[that] with great injury and disdain should have thrown away *aqua benedetta* from the window of your house, and ripped to shreds irreverently the sacred image of the Holy Cross.'²³ The image of a person scornfully and perniciously throwing holy water out of their home's windows is repeated again and again within the text, and indicates the beginning of a slippery heretical descent whereby important articles of faith will be negated. The image of flinging away holy water from the house's interior works metaphorically, with the house functioning emblematically as the self, and the holy water as Catholic orthodoxy. The window, providing as it does a theatrical space between the inside out and the outside in, and therefore existing on the boundary between self and society, underscores the fact that rejection of the true faith must by necessity be a public act of defiance as interiority is exposed and externalised. This window space was more than metaphorical. Inquisition trials from Venice show how people did in fact transmit heretical ideas from the platform of their house's windows.²⁴ In addition to a more generalized overturning of the stabilising boundaries between inside/outside, private/public, and sacred/profane, Masini's text further suggests a process of inverse cleansing by which the normal purificatory properties of holy water are turned *out* on themselves, leaving the private interior impure in order to underscore analogously what the effect is of casting out Catholicism.

Similarly contingent on the symbolism embedded in the house's openings through windows and doors, was a signed self-denouncement to the Florentine Inquisition in 1650 by Anna Maria Vitali.²⁵ Like Masini's passage, Vitali's denouncement similarly hinges upon the notion of an impure interior. The case, which is worth explaining in detail, sheds light on the integral role that *acqua santa* played as part of a complex repertoire of ritual invoked to cast out evil spirits from households, as well as making evident an intricate system of belief centred around the domestic itself. Led to believe by a seemingly mercenary and well-organised group of unsavoury characters that her house was *guasta* [broken, tainted or damaged] and under a bad spell, the apprehensive Anna Maria recorded how, driven to desperation, she eventually begged for a youth called Michele Nati to come and heal her house and its inhabitants by driving away the malign spirits. Nati's

²² Eliseo Masini, *Sacro Arsenale, ovvero prattica dell'Officio della S. Inquisitione ampliata*, 1621 (Genova: Giuseppe Pavoni, 1625), 241-45.

²³ Masini, *Sacro Arsenale*, 241-2: '[c]he con soma ingiuria, e disprezzo havessi dalla finestra della tua casa gittata via l'acqua benedetta & lacerata empivamente la sacra imagine della Santa Croce.' See also pp. 244 & 245.

²⁴ See for example Susanna Peyronel Rambaldi, 'Donne ed eterodossia nell'Italia del Cinquecento,' *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 92 (2001): 274-289, 279.

²⁵ See Appendix A.

technique was essentially to mimic the devices, gestures and language of an authorised exorcist and thereby invoke a coherent system that was, presumably, plausible to believe. He walked through the house burning incense, intoning words that Anna Maria did not understand (probably a pseudo-latin), reciting the Ave Maria, making the sign of the cross and throwing holy water about as he blessed Anna Maria. He was to repeat this ritual ‘more than a hundred times by the end’, while both Anna Maria and her mother knelt and held lit *candele benedette* in their hands. Recounting how she had to kneel for a quarter of an hour with one hand on the ground, Anna Maria also told the inquisition how she was made to recite extracts from the gospel of San Giovanni given to her by Nati. By the end of this elaborate performance, Nati had convinced Anna Maria that the house was no longer *guasta*, and that he had driven away the particular spirit ‘Suprilla’ who inhabited the doorway of her home. For this service, Anna Maria recorded how Nati took ‘lots of money from my pocket’, advising that, while the house was ‘healed’, Anna Maria and her mother should nonetheless move out. She and her mother stayed on, but shortly afterwards the mother fell sick, and Anna Maria clearly attributed her illness to an ineffectual cure of her haunted house and the misdeeds of the group of five people, of which Nati was part. The episode ended with Anna Maria telling how the Carmelite priest Albertano found Nati and admonished him to stop at once these ‘porcherie’ (dirty tricks) or something bad would happen. It is presumably also Albertano who recommended that Anna Maria come to the Inquisition and ‘unburden [her] conscience’ by telling this story.

An analysis of the document reveals several issues. It highlights the importance of ritual in religious behaviour at home, and significantly reveals that the evil spirits who had made Anna Maria’s *casa guasta* were located in the doorway of the house. Doors, fireplaces, and windows, like those in Masini’s text, inscribed both the limits of the domestic whilst also revealing how fragile and permeable the boundaries between the space of home and the space of the street were. By allowing entries and exits into the interior and the outside, these were clearly the most permeable and vulnerable areas of the house. It is for these reasons that apotropaic objects were hidden under doorways or hearths and ritualistic markings inscribed upon them. Likewise, Florentine inventories record how religious busts, texts, or figurines, were often placed protectively over these same spaces, whilst *portiere* and *usciali* hanging from the doorframes and displaying the *casa*’s coats of arms, would simultaneously restrict entry and assert ownership of the space.²⁶ Both the visual and hidden elements that were attached to doors and windows serve to underscore the symbolic and ceremonial functions that were similarly attached to them, and help explain the use of holy water at the entrance of Anna Maria’s house.

²⁶ The examples are copious but see for example ASF, MPP 2655, f.125v: ‘1 xpo dipinto di terra sopra l’uscio di camera’. Numerous inventories record the widespread habit of placing figures of Christ, the Saints, crosses, or the Virgin Mary over doorways and window frames, while MPAP 189, f.271v, for example, lists ‘2 usciate d’arazzo col arme bartoli & ginori’ and ‘2 usciate d’arazzo col arme bartoli e liono’.

The symbolism embedded in doors and windows makes sense of the belief that evil spirits would be located there, and that the corruption of the house's entrance (the house again like Masini's text functioning metaphorically for the human organism) should have allowed the entry of illness into the mother's body. Moreover, it seems significant that the 'breaking' of Anna Maria's house and the initiation of her woes commenced with her own breaking ('rompesi il collo'), and the entry of malevolent people in and out of her house. The house and Anna Maria constantly elide into one another and exchange object and subject positions. The symbolism of doors and the house furthermore makes sense of the act of one of the protagonists called Caterina la Soldatina (the little soldier), who, upon informing Anna Maria that her house was under a spell, 'took holy water [and] threw it on the house and on the exit'. The throwing of *acqua santa* on the doorway is the exact inverse of the phenomenon of 'house-shaming' that Elizabeth and Thomas Cohen have noted in Rome, whereby doors were smeared with excrement or ink or insulting placards attached to their face as a public act of metaphorical violation to the inhabitants inside.²⁷ By throwing holy water on the exit of the house, presumably where it was also commonly kept, la Soldatina employed a medium whose well-known purificatory properties could be assumed to rid the house of the evil spirits that contaminated it at precisely their point of entry.

It was the same set of assumptions regarding the physical efficacy of holy water that accounts for Nati's deployment of it in his exorcistic ritual, and its place within other households. As the case of Anna Maria Vitali has shown, the use of *acqua santa* brings to the foreground a whole series of cultural understandings surrounding the home and the struggles to control its physical and spiritual boundaries and governance. It also highlights the constant interplay between the spiritual and the social, the private and the public, and individual behaviour and authorized expectations. That the house could have its own malevolent or benign spirits –like O'Monaciello and 'Mbriana who continue to inhabit Neapolitan homes– indicates the fundamental role the home had in forming not only the physical but also the psychic identity of its occupants, and the way in which the domestic shaped life's narratives. The salient point that the domestic sphere could be broken and corrupted by either physical or spiritual beings, and would therefore need to be healed, helps explain the significant presence of holy water that the *Pupilli* files record as being kept at home. The use of it within the healing and purificatory rites of Nati demonstrate just how widespread the use of holy water had become in the popular imagination.

The evidence is scarce for how holy water was brought into the household, and how it was used in daily Christian practices. *Acqua santa* undoubtedly made its way into the domestic sphere as a souvenir lifted from pilgrimages to holy centres or places of local devotion. However,

²⁷ Elizabeth S. Cohen and Thomas V. Cohen, 'Open and Shut: The Social Meanings of the Cinquecento Roman House,' *Studies in the Decorative Arts* XI (2001-2002): 61-84. See also Peter Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on Perception and Communciation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), ch.8, 95-109.

evidence shows that it was more common simply to take it from the local neighbourhood church regardless of whether permission had been given.²⁸ As early as the 1517 Florentine provincial synod, priests had been warned not to give away sacred objects extra-sacramentally, and especially not to leave holy water, chrism or relics exposed as they could be ‘stolen by wizards and other abominable men’.²⁹ Which is to say, men like Nati. While it could be lifted from holy sites for personal and somewhat indiscriminate use, its value was such that it was specifically recommended for helping invalids, as well as being used as a gift to be sent to relatives, friends or important patrons. For example, a letter from Bartolomeo Concini to Andrea Serguidi describes how the Grand ducal couple and the then Cardinal Ferdinando sent to Florence a flask of ‘acqua santa’ from Montepulciano for the ailing Princess Eleonora de’Medici.³⁰ Not only does the letter recall the recommended use of holy water on invalids in both Colonna’s treatise and the *Rituale Romanum*, but the text also shows that not all holy water was created equal. The *acqua santa* the Grand ducal couple sent to their daughter was of a type particularly suited for those suffering from a fever. It was also so precious that the Grand Duke himself advised that the princess was only to take the water once to allow the remainder to be utilized for another illness or invalid. Whatever way it entered the home, it began to be stored in what have subsequently been termed *acquasantiere*, and generally placed in three different locations.

The first location was limited to the elite few, and was unsurprisingly in domestic chapels and oratories. Here, mimicking the structure of a church proper, and in accordance with Borromeo’s guidelines, holy water was often found both in *pila* (or in its diminutive forms of *piluzze* or *pilette*) at the entrance of the oratory as well as forming part of the necessary equipment for mass.³¹ Among the examples of *pila* found in private chapels, many were noted as being made of marble, alabaster, porphyry, maiolica, *pietra bigia*, *pietra serena* or *pietra concia*: materials which suggest a sculptural elaborateness akin to the holy water fonts found in churches. A description of Francesco and Cosimo de’ Medici’s oratory in the parish of San Piero a Sieve shows quite clearly the important function holy water held within domestic chapels whilst demonstrating

²⁸ See AAF, TIN 40.13, doc.1, f.100v, which records the blessing of a house with *acqua benedetta* taken from no less than three Florentine churches: San Lorenzo, the baptistry of San Giovanni and San Piero Maggiore.

²⁹ Richard Trexler, *Synodal Law in Florence and Fiesole 1306-1518* (Vatican City: Città del Vaticano Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1971), 76.

³⁰ ‘[...] Con il ritorno del Cardinale s’è rimandato una fiaschetta d’acqua santa che questi della terra dicono essere saluberrima alla febricitanti, però loro Altezze vogliono che con participatione nondimeno et consiglio del Granduca sene dia bere una volta alla Principessina, dispensando il restante in qualche altro malato...’, letter to Serguidi from Concini, dated 20 September 1570 in ASF, MP 1117, f.386. I would like to thank Alana O’Brian for her help in searching the database of the Medici Archive Project, which has subsequently been made available online as www.medici.org/.

³¹ Carlo Borromeo, *Instructionum Fabricae et Suppellectilis Ecclesiasticae*, 1577 (Milan: Libreria Editrice Vaticana & Axios Group), 146-148. See also cap.XXI ‘De vase aquae sanctae’, 104-5.

the symbiotic and salutary relationship it held with devotional images.³² The visiting priest noted that ‘who[soever] enters from the courtyard door cannot do so unless they have hailed the Madonna with *acqua santa* taken from the *piletta* on the wall.’³³

Similarly, *acqua santa* according to Giovanni Ciarrocchi could be placed at the entrance to the house itself.³⁴ While the evidence from the deposition of Anna Maria Vitali examined above would appear to back this supposition up, no concrete examples of this placement was found in the inventories. However, movable *pila* and *pilette* do appear in loggias and courtyards during this period, and it is possible that the use of the same terminology may indicate a similar type of function. For example, Cavalier Vincenzo di Signor Giovanni Bardi’s courtyard of his *casa grande* in Florence contained a ‘stone *pila* on the ground’, whilst ‘two small gilded silver vases for *acqua santa*’ were noted in the *guardaroba* and a ‘small copper bucket for holding *acqua santa*’ was placed in the domestic chapel.³⁵ The example of Bardi points towards not just a varied spatial distribution for holy water in the household, but also a hierarchy of containers distinguished by the materials from which they were formed, with the small silver vases reserved to ceremonially display the wealth and pious virtue of their owner.

However, the overwhelmingly popular location for *acqua santa* within a wide social range of households was the *camera*. This location clearly separated the holy water from the domestic water supplies found in *sale* or *salette*, kitchens, and courtyards, and thereby helped to demarcate the holy and the secular within households.³⁶ Disregarding mentions of *acqua santa* when the room type is not given, or when it is placed in a domestic chapel, between 1480 to 1655 there were only two examples of holy water being placed in a room other than a *camera*. These exceptions were an *anticamera* (a somewhat smaller equivalent of the *camera*) and, more notably, a *sala* of the Federighi palace (which may or not have been its permanent location).³⁷ Sometimes *acqua santa* was listed within chests or boxes within a *camera* alongside other accoutrements for private devotion, indicating the sense of security and possessiveness that religious paraphernalia

³² On the importance of the correct usage of both holy water and images in order to identify an apostate see Masini, *Sacro Arsenale*, 241-242.

³³ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 4th August 1615: ‘chi entra da porta del cortile non può fare che non saluti la Madonna con pigliare l’acqua santa [dalla] piletta nel muro.’

³⁴ Giovanni Ciarrocchi, ed., *Mostra di acquasantiere domestiche in maiolica e terraglia dal XVI al XIX secolo* (Fermo: Grafiche Fiorini di Casette d’Ete), 12.

³⁵ ASF, MPP, 2661, f.389v: ‘pila di pietra in terra’, ‘due vasettini da acqua santa d’argento dorati’, ‘secchiolina di rame per tenere l’aqua santa’. See also the inventory of Gino Capponi in BL, Ms.Add.48759, Medici, vol. LXIX (April 1642), f.135r, which lists ‘una pila di pietra serena col suo piede nel cristile’ in the loggia.

³⁶ However *acquai* were commonly ‘blessed’ through inscriptions or by association with religious images. For example, in the *sala* of Felice di Bartolomeo Pesci’s villa in the parish of San Marco Vecchio in 1581, there was ‘una testa d’un xpo sopra l’acquaio’, ASF, MPP 2655, f.153v.

³⁷ The 1622 inventory of Francesco di Pablo Fori’s house in via dei Servi contained a ‘pilluzza per acquabenedetta d’ottone’, ASF, MPP 2660, f.680v. The Federighi palace in via dei Greci had in the *sala* ‘i secchiolini di ottone per l’acquai santa’ in a 1532 inventory, ASF, MPAP 2645, f.306v.

necessitated.³⁸ Within the *camera*, holy water is often specifically mentioned as being positioned by the bed or by devotional images, as was the case in the 1620 inventory of Alessandro and Messer Filippo Bacherelli's house. This inventory notes that the *camera prima* contained a 'piluzza next to the bed to hold *acqua santa* with an aspergillum' alongside a brass crucifix and a painting of the 'Madonna del'Oreto' adorned with four wax candles.³⁹ Sometimes the candles may have been attached to the holy water container itself, and were similarly holy or 'benedette'.⁴⁰

The close spatial and theoretical relationship between beds, holy water, and devotional images or objects, is made evident by the inventories that again and again list these items together within the *camera*. The location of the bed not so much as a repository for sanctity, but rather as the place where objects that helped to provide sanctity were required, is confirmed by contemporary paintings which show *acquasantiere* adjacent to the bed, such as Vittorio Carpaccio's often quoted *Dream of Saint Ursula* (the earliest pictorial record of an *acquasantiera* according to Cecchelli and Samoggia), or Lorenzo Lotto's well known drawing of an *Ecclesiastic in his Study* (figs.1.2 & 1.3). The conceptual and physical importance of the bed, which social and furniture historians have long recognized, should not be underestimated. Indeed, Shamma's comment 'that the entire early modern period should be relabelled the Age of the Bed', while unlikely to happen, would be singularly appropriate.⁴¹ The spiritual focus that the bed assumed is hardly surprising given the financial focus it had for the household. Including the bedding and mattresses, the expenditure required for a bed made it the single most expensive item of furniture in the house.⁴² Nonetheless, the bed's role seems to be reconfigured during this period as it acquired an increasing number of religious accessories, like the *acquasantiera* and religious images. This gathering of devotional artefacts around it allowed the bed to quite literally become what Gilles Corrozet in his 'blason du lict' had lauded in 1539 as the 'chaste' and 'saintly' bed.⁴³ Although Corrozet had written that the bed was 'blessed by the hand of the priest', the evidence of holy water in early modern Tuscan homes shows that this priestly role had been quite concretely assumed by its lay occupants. At

³⁸ For example the 1650 inventory of Lelio d'Alessandro Quaratesi lists in the *salone di sopra* among other items for a chapel 'una zanetta entrove più sorte di fiore di seta agiolini et altre statuette di gesso col un San Francesco di carta pesta, una pila d'alabastro da tenere l'acqua benedetta col altre cose fatte da monache.' See ASF, MPP 2661, f.298r.

³⁹ ASF, MPP 2660, 1 June 1622, f.725r: '1 piluzza acanto al letto da tenervi l'aqua santa con l'asperge'.

⁴⁰ ASF, MPP 2655, 8 September 1585, f.590v: '1 piluzza col tre candeled benedette'.

⁴¹ Shamma, *The Pre-industrial Consumer*, 169.

⁴² On the bed and the huge amount of capital that it represented for average Tuscan families see Malanima, *Il lusso dei contadini*, esp. pp. 14-20. Weatherill and Shamma's research for the English context suggests that overall families spent a fifth of their income on beds and beddings regardless of social class: see Shamma, *The Pre-industrial Consumer*, 169, and Weatherill, 159-61. For comparison with the French context see Pardailhé-Galabrun, *The Birth of Intimacy*, 74-83.

⁴³ Gilles Corrozet, *Les Blasons domestiques* (1539) reprinted in Anatole de Montaiglon, *Recueil de Poésies Françaises des XV^e et XVI^e siècles* (Paris: chez P. Jannet, 1857), 246-47: '[...] Lict beneist de la main du prestre/ Lict separé de tout delict;/ O lict pudique, ô chaste lict,/ Oû la femme et le mary cher/ Sont jointz de Dieu en une chair [...]']

times, the bed itself could be painted or carved with biblical imagery thereby aligning this nexus of religion within the furniture's own material make-up. An intricately worked bedstead carved with biblical scenes and kept in the Bagatti Valsecchi Museum makes this evident (figs. 1.4 a & b, see also fig. 1.5), as does a daybed described in Dietsalvi di Niccolò Bondaschi's belongings as a 'lettuccio dipinto Xeria Gloria'.⁴⁴ Similar to its positioning near windows and entranceways, holy water was a sensible device to be placed by the bed. The bed provided a liminal and transitional space that mediated between the states of consciousness and unconsciousness, and thereby potentially left its occupant vulnerable and unprotected. Devotional texts of the late Medieval period aimed at lay audiences often provided quite detailed instructions on how to pray that were centred around the bed, specifically directing the reader to cross themselves with holy water before entering it to ensure pious thoughts whilst sleeping (or during other activities) as well as protection from external forces.⁴⁵ The evidence of household holy water from the *Pupilli* inventories indicates that these *exempla* had been effectively and widely incorporated into quotidian rhythms by the mid-sixteenth century. Placed by the bed in Niccolò di Giovanfrancesco Rilli's *camera* was a 'small oil lamp with a little bucket of holy water' that was adjacent to both a crucifix and an image of the Madonna.⁴⁶ The belongings of Niccolò's bedchamber strongly suggest the use of *acqua santa* as part of a recognizable personal program of piety within a conceptually demarcated devotional space. They also recall the lamp and the *secchiolina* hanging below the painting of the Madonna that appear next to the bed in Carpaccio's *Dream of St. Ursula* (fig. 1.2).

Placed at the entrance of the house, the entrance of the *camera*, or the entrance of the bed, domestic holy water held and extended the significance of similar containers placed at the doorway of churches. It prompted the repetition of the gesture whereby a finger is dipped into the water in order to sign the cross simultaneously as a threshold is passed. As a rite, it holds multivalent meanings, not only symbolizing spiritual purification, but in addition, invoking both aid and protection. As a domestic object it offered a literal rite of passage. By inscribing the divine onto its users' bodies or their possessions, holy water briefly compressed together elements of the spiritual, the corporeal, and the spatial. Blessing yourself at the foot of the bed, or the entrance to the house, seems moreover clearly to indicate a mentality that had by the 1640s established the household and the family as a complimentary and viable route towards the sanctity offered by the Church itself.

⁴⁴ ASF, MPP 2648 (c.1541), f.472r.

⁴⁵ Geneviève Hasenohr, 'La vie quotidienne de la femme vue par l'église: l'enseignement des 'journées chrétiennes' de la fin du Moyen Age', *Frau und spätmittelalterlicher Alltag, Internationaler Kongress Krems an der Donau 2 bis. 5 Oktober 1984* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1986): 19-102, 69. Tessa Storey has noted that the positioning of religious objects and images by the bed was also standard practice in the *camere* of Roman prostitutes: see Tessa Storey, *Carnal Commerce in Counter-Reformation Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming), ch.8 'At Home'. I would like to thank Dr Storey for making this chapter available to me.

⁴⁶ ASF MPP 2660, Niccolò di Giofrancesco Rilli da Poppi (1618), f.287v 'una lucernina con la secchiolina dell'acqua santa'.

In order to bless oneself with holy water, the water had to be kept in something. By the 1640s the containers for *acqua santa* had established themselves into several different types. Their formal difference is born out by the different nomenclature used to describe them. This included the aforementioned variations on *pile*, although *secchioline*, *vasettini*, *aspergoli*, *asprine*, and *fonte* were all common terms. In addition, one ‘tabernacle of blessed water’ was listed early on in 1522, and even more unusually, one silver ‘little bear to hold holy water weighing five ounces’ was noted in the Della Stufa palace in 1650.⁴⁷ In fact during the timeframe of the inventory study conducted, *acquasantiere* emerged as a significant item of domestic material culture. They could be complex and significant decorative art objects made out of precious materials such as silver, marble, glass and alabaster, combining such materials with sculptural elements as in the example of a ‘bronze *piletta* of holy water with an ivory Christ’ listed in the chapel of Caterina Strozzi’s villa Il Boschetto.⁴⁸

Although it is impossible to glean a true sense of what Strozzi’s holy water stoup may have looked like from its truncated description in the inventory, several surviving examples can help us appreciate the workmanship such vessels could involve. Urbano Bartalesi’s late seventeenth-century example can be understood to mark the baroque apogee of the holy water stoup (fig.1.6). Another, bearing miniatures by Jan Brueghel the Elder and Girolamo Marchesini and which belonged to Cardinal Federico Borromeo’s art collection, also exemplifies the staggering artistry that these containers could envelop (fig.1.7).⁴⁹ Bartalesi’s tabernacle-formed sculpture of gilt bronze and silver with its painting of the Annunciation was originally made for Cardinal Leopoldo de’ Medici (1617-1675) but ended up being taken as a gift to Marie-Thèrese, wife of Louis XIV, by the papal nuncio Fabrizio Spada in 1674.⁵⁰ By also providing the functions of a reliquary, an image, and a flower vase, this stoup had the items built-in that were often listed individually in the *Pupilli* inventories as surrounding holy water vessels. While Bartalesi’s stoup demonstrates an emphatically consummate manipulation of precious materials and an iconic image to help induce a sense of the sacred, Borromeo’s water stoup provided a series of religious narratives for the user to

⁴⁷ ASF, MAP, 189 (1508-31), 20 June 1522, f.146v: ‘tabernacolo da aqua benedetta’; ASF, AGCS, *Libri di Amministrazione* 941 (29 November 1650), f.3v: ‘orsacchino da tenere acqua santa peso oncie cinque’. The bear may have referred to the *stemma* of the Orsini family (whom the Della Stufa had dealings with), or the Christian martyr St. Euphemia whose symbol it was.

⁴⁸ ASF, CSV 1430, loose insert of 6 January 1602 entitled ‘Inventario di quello trovai in Cappella et in Camera dove dremo questo veni di casa la Signora Caterina Strozzi’, unpaginated: ‘1 piletta da aqua santa di bronzo con un cristo d’avorio’.

⁴⁹ On the remarkable heights (both in price and artistry) that *acquasantiere* could reach, see Alvar González-Palacios, ‘Giovanni Giardini: New Works and New Documents,’ *The Burlington Magazine* 137 (1995): 367-376.

⁵⁰ Jennifer Montagu, *Gold, Silver and Bronze. Metal Sculpture of the Roman Baroque* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1996), 10.

contemplate when dipping their fingers into the small bowl of *acqua santa* to bless themselves.⁵¹ Although Borromeo had acquired the six miniatures between 1607 and 1618, they were only encased into the silver stoup sometime after 1625. The fact that their new receptacle was specifically commissioned with these images in mind, suggests not only that the images were particularly well-suited as accompaniments to holy water, but also that the quantum value flowing from holy water was equal to the collective preciousness of these jewel-like images and the material used to encase them. Surrounded by garlands as well as angels and *putti* interlaced within foliage, the miniatures depict portraits of Christ and Mary, as well as the scenes of the *Winter Procession of the Blessed Sacrament*, *The Virgin Appearing to the Seafarers*, *Christ and the Pious Women*, and *Mary by the Cross at Calvary*. These stories provided a series of orthodox devotional themes for the viewer to meditate on, and ones that emphasized the sacrament of the Eucharist, the Passion, the Resurrection and Mary's key intercessory role. The story of the Virgin appearing to the Seafarers moreover appears particularly well suited for a water container. While both these holy water stoups were clearly exceptional artworks, their overall form was not.

The ceramic holy water containers that appear to have been produced in Italy in large numbers from the late-sixteenth century onwards shared the same basic shape as the Bartelesi and Borromeo examples. Figures 1.8 – 1.11 show how these cheaper versions were similarly composed of a small vessel in which to store the water that was joined to a decorated back panel. As some of these maiolica and Deruta wares illustrate, this backing panel supported often elaborate and complex decorative schemes. It enabled images, texts, coats of arms, and occasionally, as in the Bartelesi example, relics and candles to accompany the object and the holy water it stored.⁵² According to Maria Cecchetti, the design of this type of *acquasantiera* was based on a simplified cross, thereby writing their function into their form to provide a concrete illustration and prompt for comportment.⁵³ Even if surviving examples with their elaborate and colourful encrustations of ceramic decorations make this proposition difficult to see, the images and text that accompanied *acquasantiere* could certainly offer clear models of comportment and devotional prompts for their users. For example, a beautifully worked enamel holy water stoup dating from the late-sixteenth century and attributed to Pierre Raymond (1513 to c.1585) (fig. 1.12, see also fig.1.13) supplied the prayer to be used when blessing oneself (the beginning words of the Ave Maria were inscribed in a scroll on the container), and an image of prayer to replicate.

⁵¹ On the water stoup, see Pamela M. Jones, *Federico Borromeo and the Ambrosiana: art patronage and reform in seventeenth-century Milan* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 239.

⁵² Among examples displaying *stemma* are fig.131 (Maiolica *acquasantiera*, c.late-sixteenth or early seventeenth century, from Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche, Faenza, inv.10.772) and fig.134 (Maiolica *acquasantiera* dating from the seventeenth century, private collection) as reproduced in Cecchelli and Samoggia, *Il Sacro Domestico*, 186 & 189.

⁵³ Cecchetti, 'Il diavolo e l'acqua santa', 2.

This enamel example and the ceramic *acquasantiere* noted above correspond to the *pila*, *pilline*, *pillette*, or *pilluzze* for holy water found within houses. Indeed, the *pila* listed in the inventories of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* were normally recorded as being made of maiolica or terracotta. Senator Lorenzo Ximene, for instance, kept ‘a maiolica *pila* of blessed water’ in the *prima camera* of his Florentine palace.⁵⁴ Although the inventories were rarely more detailed, the entry of a ‘*pillina* of blessed water with the portrait of St. Mary Magdalene’ in the *camera prima* of Giulio de’ Medici’s residence in Pisa shows how this term would have been used originally to describe the form of the above examples.⁵⁵ In fact, the material and form of these examples meant that they could be easily and cost-effectively produced in large numbers, even while allowing a customisation of decoration that responded quickly to devotional trends and patrons’ demands.⁵⁶

The vast majority of holy water containers, however, were described as *secchioline*. As is evident from Carpaccio and Lorenzo Lotto’s images (figs.1.2 & 1.3) and surviving examples (figs.1.14-1.15), the literal translation of this word as a little bucket perfectly describes their form. These little holy water buckets ranged from humble earthenware examples, to silver *secchioline* such as the one in the *camera prima* of Santi di Lorenzo Pierozzi, or the ‘little pail of blessed water [made] of enamelled bronze’ in Francesco di Pagolo Fori’s *camera sulla sala* of 1620.⁵⁷ Surviving Italian examples, in brass, bronze or silver (see figs.1.16-1.18), show that despite their prosaic shape, these stoups could nonetheless be ornately chased, decorated, and engraved, and incorporate the patron’s coat of arms.⁵⁸ As the above illustrations and Fori’s *secchiolina* attest to, these containers must at times have been specific and prestigious commissions to artisans, perceived of as objects of desire and, given their pious function, objects of conspicuous virtue. In the inventories however, the majority recorded were made of *rame* [copper] or *ottone* [brass], and were accompanied by matching *asperges* used for sprinkling the water (see for example the *secchiello* and *aspergillum* in fig.1.19). Indeed, the seeming ubiquity of copper and brass examples, suggests a form that, even more than their ceramic counterparts, was cheaply and readily available. Not only would the durability of materials such as copper and brass have appealed to homeowners, but so too would the resonance this form had with ecclesiastical versions: it is impossible to distinguish which *secchiolini* would have been used in the domestic sphere or in church. As attested to by the variety

⁵⁴ ASF, MPP 2661, (25 February 1649) f. 266v: ‘una pila dall’acqua benedetta di maiolica’.

⁵⁵ ASF, MPP 2657, (1 January 1598) f. 107r: ‘una pillina dove è il ritrato di S. Maria Madalena dall’acqua benedetta’.

⁵⁶ For a general context of the ceramic trade, see Goldthwaite, ‘The Economic and Social World of Italian Renaissance Maiolica,’ and Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 182-228.

⁵⁷ For example, ASF, MPP 2655, (unnamed inventory of 1585), ff.124r-136v, ‘secchiolina per l’acqua benedetta col’aspergie di terra’; ASF, MPP 2661, inventory of Santi di Lorenzo Pierozzi, f.236v, ‘una secchiolina d’argento da tenere l’acqua benedetta’; ASF, MPP 2660, inventory of Francesco di Pagolo Fori, f.678r: ‘secchiolina da aqua benedetta di bronzo smaltata’.

⁵⁸ See also the ‘secchiolina d’argento da aqua Santa con impresa della lune’ listed in the Strozzi palace inventory of 1646 in ASF, CV 1430, unpaginated.

of materials and forms in which holy water stoups were made, *acquasantiere* were present in the homes of a wide range of social classes. Nonetheless, the fact that their presence was more concentrated in the residences of wealthy Florentines, suggests that happy coincidence for those with temporal wealth to gain material access to spiritual wealth.

Access to how people used holy water in inventories is very rarely given. One interesting example, however, is expressed in the inventory of the *fornaio* Jacopo Picchianti in 1649. Inside the ‘camera di Madonna Maria Maddalena moglie al parte del’Antonio Brachetti’ was an *acquasantiera* described as a ‘secchiolina d’ottone da tenervi l’Acqua Benedetta comperata da d^a Ma^a Mad^a doppo esser restata vedova’.⁵⁹ Upon reaching widowhood and the heavier religious encumbrances that status entailed, Maria Maddalena also purchased paintings of St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Maria Maddalena de’ Pazzi which she kept in her chamber that was already filled with devotional items and images.⁶⁰ An inventory of goods regarding the restitution of the dowry of the widowed Gostanza contained a ‘secchiolina da aqua benedetta’ alongside a bed, a wooden crucifix, an image of St. Bridget, a mirror, a table, and two chests.⁶¹ Both Maria Maddalena’s and Gostanza’s possessions highlight not only the religious gendering of objects, but also, and for the sake of this chapter, the functions that holy water had during death and marriage and the other rites of passage within the home. Other contemporary documents similarly place holy water at the intersection of birth and death: cases from the Roman Inquisition attest to the use of *acqua santa* in hurried domestic baptisms that were occasioned when there was fear of the baby dying before the sacrament had been administered officially.⁶² Its use within the life stages of the household is also borne out by its presence in Francesco d’Antonio Doschi’s household, where a ‘secchiolina da aqua benedetta’ resided protectively in the children’s bedroom.⁶³ The presence of holy water in the Doschi children’s bedroom recalls advice offered to women in an anonymously published household manual printed some fifteen years earlier in 1623. The author, pointing out the susceptibility of children to illness, malign influences, and bewitchment, recommended that aside from not leaving them in the company of infamous women, mothers were everyday, at morning and

⁵⁹ ASF, MPP 2661, (19 November 1649), f. 205r.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 204r.

⁶¹ ASF, MPP 2651, Inventory of Nicolo di Lione Castellani (1557), f. 387.

⁶² See the questioning of Gostanza who describes the formula for baptisms administered by midwives at home if there was threat of infant death: ‘che harebbe pigliato dell’acqua benedetta et dell’ulivo benedetto et gittatognene adosso [il bambino] dicendo “In nome del Padre, Figliuolo et Spirito Santo” et che tal li fu insegnato cosl.’ From the transcript of her 1594 trial as reproduced in Franco Cardini, ed., *Gostanza, la strega di San Miniato* (Rome & Bari: Editori Laterza, 2001), 135.

⁶³ ASF, MPP 2661, Inventory of Francesco d’Antonio Doschi (10 October 1638) f.99v.

night times, to sprinkle the infant with holy water. As the author wrote, holy water was an extraordinarily potent medium against those 'cose diaboliche.'⁶⁴

All these examples, like the aforementioned case of Anna Maria Vitali, show how well integrated holy water had become as a fixture of domestic piety within the home and its inhabitants' life cycles. Even while *acquasantiere* may no longer be common functional fixtures of the contemporary Italian home, a priest with holy water in hand to bless the *casa*, is not an irregular visitor.

INGINOCCHIATOI AND ALTARINI

The *inginocchiatoio* or prie-dieu was, like the *stipo* (what Florio translates as an 'armoire' but is better termed a display cabinet), a development of the Renaissance and early modern period, and intimately linked to new social norms.⁶⁵ If the *stipo* developed during the sixteenth century out of a concern with forms of display arising from the phenomenon of 'collezionismo' (see figs. 1.20 & 1.21), then the domestic *inginocchiatoio* arose out of the increasing emphasis that had been placed on private piety since medieval times. The prie-dieu as a piece of furniture gave personal devotional practices a physical structure. Its morphology can be traced through fifteenth and sixteenth-century depictions of the Annunciation. The separate bookstand and chair found in early Annunciations, like the example painted by Agnolo Gaddi or his workshop at Santa Maria Novella (see fig. 1.22), were gradually replaced during the mid-quattrocento by a single furniture type that combined both functions, such as the bulky and all encompassing prie-dieu in Filippo Lippi's Bardi Annunciation (fig. 1.23) or the more delicate versions to be found in Bernardino Luini's and Vittore Carpaccio's renditions of the same scene (figs. 1.24 & 1.25).⁶⁶ By the sixteenth century the painted *inginocchiatoi* in Jacopo da Empoli's Annunciations or those by Guido Reni correspond closely to contemporary pieces (figs. 1.26 – 1.27). The development of the *inginocchiatoio* moreover, took its cue from the codification of gestures offered by contemporary manuals on how to pray (see for example fig. 1.28a). As William Hood has explored through his analysis of the thirteenth-century Dominican manual *De modo orandi* (see fig. 1.28b), bodily gestures were understood as being able to trigger specific psychological states.⁶⁷ The move from standing with arms open or comfortably

⁶⁴ [Orazio Ferrari], *Fido consigliere ne gli sposalitii, libri tre, avanti le nozze, nelle nozze, doppo le nozze* (Modena: Giulian Cassiani, 1628), 179: '[...] e poi ogni giorno, sera, e mattina si raccomandandi a quello il bambino con l'aspersione della acqua santa, che è potentissima contro le cose diaboliche.'

⁶⁵ Florio, s.v. 'stipo'.

⁶⁶ See also Daniel Arasse, *L'annonciation italienne: une histoire de perspective* (Paris: Hazan, 1999).

⁶⁷ See William Hood, 'Saint Dominic's Manual of Praying: Gestures in Fra Angelico's Cell Frescoes at S. Marco,' *The Art Bulletin* 68 (1986): 195-206; 'Fra Angelico at San Marco: Art and the Liturgy of Cloistered Life,' in *Christianity and the Renaissance: image and religious imagination in the Quattrocento*, eds. Timothy Verdon and John Henderson, 108-131 (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1990). On the

sitting to the more disciplined posture of kneeling that the *inginocchiatoio* enforced, marks an increasing emphasis on bodily humility and submission. Even despite this posture of reverent lowliness that the *inginocchiatoio* required, as a piece of furniture it nonetheless and paradoxically elevated the position of kneeling itself.

On one hand, this elevation of kneeling can be understood through the fact that the *inginocchiatoio* was very much an elite item of furniture. In the inventories of the *Pupilli* that were surveyed for this thesis, only eighteen *inginocchiatoi* were listed between 1460 and 1650, and twelve of these dated from after 1599.⁶⁸ These findings are in stark contrast to John Kent Lydecker's assertion that the *inginocchiatoio* '[...] became commonplace during the course of the sixteenth century'.⁶⁹ While the inventories of the *Pupilli* surveyed here may well distort how widespread *inginocchiatoi* were, and doubtless more would emerge from a complete analysis of the files, it seems questionable that the percentage of individuals who owned them would rise so dramatically as to warrant their classification as popular household items. The reasons for this are twofold. First, is the fact that Lydecker's thesis concentrates on an analysis of elite households who had more furniture types simply because they had more furniture, and who in accounting for a tiny overall fraction of the population, invariably represent the fortunate exception. This supposition is supported by the fact that a third of the *inginocchiatoi* found by this thesis (i.e. six out of eighteen) were placed in domestic chapels and oratories, a space restricted to the wealthy and one explored more fully here in Chapter Five. Indeed the earliest mention of a type of prie-dieu was in the Bartolini's courtyard chapel of their palace in via Porta Rossa in 1522. The description of the Bartolini's prie-dieux as 'le spaliere intorno d'albero co gli inginocchiatoi', suggests a complex custom-built piece of furniture that was more like a suite of wall pews with kneelers than individual *inginocchiatoi*.⁷⁰ While domestic chapels were becoming more common among the upper class during the late-sixteenth century, they were by no means commonplace, and the same can be said of their furnishings. The second caveat is the development of the domestic *altarino* (a furniture type never mentioned in domestic oratories). Judging from the inventories, this item of devotional furniture had become widely popular by the mid-seicento despite only becoming truly noticeable during the last two decades of the cinquecento. The relationship between the *altarino* and the *inginocchiatoio* is explored further on, but suffice to say here that the *altarino*, while appearing to offer an amended and more accessible version of the *inginocchiatoio*, did so only at the tail end of the sixteenth century. Other furniture types could be used for domestic prayer, such as the

meaning of gestures see also Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 1979 (repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 56-71.

⁶⁸ Data taken from ASF, MAP, 186; 189 and MPP 2645; 2648; 2651; 2657; 2660; 2661; 2664; 2666; 2709.

⁶⁹ Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting', 59.

⁷⁰ ASF, MAP 189 (1508-31), 20 June 1522, f.146r. The earliest reference that Lydecker found of an *inginocchiatoio* was in 1517 in ASF, MAP 185, f.92v; Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting', 59.

commission from the Ridolfi household in 1568 to the *legnaiuolo* Batista di Lorenzo detto il Candela for 'a wooden bench a third of a *braccia* long said to be used by Madonna Maddalena for praying' costing two *lira*, or the 'bench for prayer' in the *stanza della Capanucciona* of Micheangelo di Santi di Santi Viviani's 1617 estate.⁷¹ However, the presence of *inginocchiatoi* in the inventories show that the practice of kneeling for prayer at home was only just beginning to be provided with a dedicated furniture type during the sixteenth century, and therefore structured in a far more quantifiable way.

Similar to the findings at home, the *Inventari dei Beni Ecclesiastici* in the Florentine Archiepiscopal Archive suggest that *inginocchiatoi* were still not yet common items within parish churches from the mid to late-sixteenth century.⁷² This fact is perhaps unsurprising given that parish churches at this point were often only just becoming furnished with purpose built seating.⁷³ Their scarcity within the ecclesiastical sphere suggests that it was not a simple question of importing pre-established ecclesiastical forms into the domestic sphere, but rather a more complex negotiation between institutional ideals and personal mores, between expected form and accepted function.

When listed as distinct items of furniture in parish churches or domestic oratories, they seem to have often been placed near the high altar, proclaiming quite visibly the status of the patron for whom they were reserved, and establishing quite overtly a hierarchy of piety through possession and placement.⁷⁴ Within churches or oratories, *inginocchiatoi* also ensured that the patrons were never obliged to turn away from the host, thereby bestowing upon them a sense of direct spiritual access through the continual visual possession of the host. With or without other forms of seating, *inginocchiatoi* always singled out the privileged position of the patron and cast them quite physically (and by analogy *metaphysically*) in front of the others, and into the position of appropriate devotion. A painting attributed to Tiberio Titi depicting the Countess Chiara Albini Petrozzani and her five children praying, in what appears to be their family chapel, demonstrates this clearly (fig.1.29). The wooden *inginocchiatoio* on which the Countess kneels erectly allows her full visual access to the altar and the image of Christ at which she stares intently. It also provides her with an established base from which to teach her offspring to emulate her example, and reinforces the fundamental social role of the mother as the spiritual guardian and instructor of the household who mediates between Church and children. Indeed, one of the Countess's hands

⁷¹ ASF, LCF 4365, *Memoriale di Lorenzo di Piero di Niccolò di Lorenzo Ridolfi*, f.180v: 'una Panchetta d'albero d'asse di $\frac{1}{3}$ lunga braccia 3 disse servi per Madonna Maddalena a la predica'. For the Viviani see ASF, MPP 2660, f.239r: 'una panca per la predica'.

⁷² AAF, IBE 2 (1568-78) & 4 (1589).

⁷³ On church seating and the polemics it provoked see Christopher Marsh, 'Sacred Space in England, 1560-1640: the view from the pew,' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 53 (2002): 286-311; see also Robert Tittler, 'Seats of honor, seats of power: the symbolism of public seating in the English urban community, c.1560-1620,' *Albion* XXIV (1992): 217-22.

⁷⁴ AAF, IBE 4, inventory of San Giovanni in Sugana f.117r.: '1 inginocchiatoio avant'al'altar maggiore.'

hovers protectively over the devotional book placed on the *inginocchiatoio*'s ledge while the other guides the youngest child into the correct posture and Catholic beliefs.

When listed within churches, they also tended to be joined to the confessional box, a conjunction suggesting the analogous physical transference of the concept of penance to the *inginocchiatoio*: a concept that was given posture with the act of kneeling.⁷⁵ While a socially situated and historically based phenomenological reading of furniture types still needs to be done, the connection of kneeling and prayer through the *inginocchiatoio* (and possibly kneeling and the sacrament of penance) seems significant, especially when located within the domestic sphere. The *inginocchiatoio* codified people's positions of prayer at home, requiring as it did a formally articulated kneeling position, and thereby altered people's spiritual relationships by inserting an external device to mediate between the devotee and deity. Similar to the morphology of the form of the confessional box, which began during the latter half of the sixteenth century to embrace grates and curtains, is the emphasis that *inginocchiatoi* placed on privacy.⁷⁶ They made lay devotion an individual and more private phenomenon, by physically separating their user from communal worship and confirming the status of a single supplicant. It also, however, connected other acts and concepts to private prayer.

As the pictures of Annunciations and the portrait of the Countess Albini show, it was an item of furniture intimately connected to the act of reading. The inclusion of a built-in ledge on which to place devotional books, as well as on which to rest the arms, invariably prompted private prayer and supplication to be structured and directed by texts (see Francesco de' Bianchi Ferrari's *Annunciation* figs. 1.30a & 1.30b). The *inginocchiatoio* was in fact a quite prosaic and practical item of furniture that often doubled as a storage repository for books and other household items, as in the 'armadino a uso d'inginocchiatoio' in the Taddei estate of 1659-1676.⁷⁷ An Inquisition case from Rome that deals with a very incurious Lelio Tosti from Spoleto underscores this. Pre-empting an investigation by the Roman Inquisition by going to them first, the thirty-eight year old Tosti confessed in 1667 to having started to read an old copy of one of Machiavelli's prohibited works that he had borrowed from a friend. Tosti explained how he quickly stopped reading as soon as he

⁷⁵ The Reverendo Giovanni di Simone Berti da Firenze had 'fatto far una bella predella da confessar con l'inginocchiatoio ed appoggiatoio' for the newly renovated church of San Giovanni a Camaiore, AAF, IBE 2, 8 May 1571, unpaginated; the inventory of Santa Cresci a Valcava lists '2 seggiola da cofessare col suo inginocchiatoio', *ibid.*, 13 July 1570; while at Santa Maria a Pagnana there was '1 inginocchiatoio spiccato di legno davanta detta confessionale' – the confessional itself recorded as being made in 1575, AAF, IBE 4, f.226v.

⁷⁶ Wietse De Boer, 'Sinews of Discipline: The Uses of the Confession in Counter-Reformation Milan' (PhD diss., University of Rotterdam, 1995), published as *The Conquest of the Soul. Confession, discipline and public order in Counter-Reformation Milan* (Köln: Brill, 2001).

⁷⁷ ASF, LCF 4839, *Giornale, ricordi e inventario di Giantaddeo Taddei*, f.105r.

came across the comment ‘that the coming of Christ into this world was the ruin of Republics.’⁷⁸ Stressing his remorse at having ever seen these words whilst assuring the court of his obedience to the Catholic church and his commitment to the sacrament of penance, Tosti continued stating that after seeing these words ‘I stopped there to read this book, as it seemed to me a heretical statement and I had a remorse of conscience, and I replaced it in an *inginocchiatore* without opening it ever again.’⁷⁹ Tosti’s comments, whilst seeming to demonstrate a type of quite rigorous self-censorship (truthful or otherwise), serve to remind us how the secular and the sacred invariably intermingled at home.

It also highlights that the prie-dieu was an appropriate place to hold items that needed to be stored secretly or securely, and many of the examples listed in the inventories had locks. A wooden *inginocchiatoio*, for example, in Lelio d’Alessandro Quaratesi’s Florentine house at San Niccolò, stored a little red box that contained money and a silver needle-case.⁸⁰ Lines from the Modenese poet Alessandro Tassoni (1565-1635) also attest to the secreting away of money within a prie-dieu, showing how the mercenary and the holy were entwined together.⁸¹ Surviving *inginocchiatoi* show that even the more basic examples often had several discrete storage compartments (see fig. 1.31). The use of prie-dieux as safes or ‘money-boxes’ may seem at first unlikely, but the bonds of personal devotion that linked the owner to this piece of furniture quite possibly also engendered sentiments of trust and ownership that made religious furniture a logical choice to safeguard money and other valuables. In popular hagiographies holy objects were themselves deterrents against thieves by often possessing a type of retributive alarm that guaranteed justice and the eventual safe return of stolen items.⁸²

Like other records of prie-dieux within the inventories, Quaratesi’s one was surrounded by a nexus of religious objects: a painting of the Virgin with St. Francis and St. Jerome, a statue of St. Catherine of Alexandria, and a silver reliquary cross to be worn as a hair broach.⁸³ The example of Quaratesi’s prie-dieu is slightly anomalous however, in that it was not found within a *camera* but in

⁷⁸ ACDF, SO, St.St, 02-m, 5th Feb 1667, f.50r: ‘[c]he la venuta di Christo in questo mondo fù la riuna [rovina?] delle Republiche.’

⁷⁹ Ibid.: ‘qui terminai a legger detto libro parendomi propositione eretica e ne hebbo rimorso di coscienza e lo riposo in un inginocchiatore senza mai più aprirlo’.

⁸⁰ ASF, MPP 2661, 14 May 1650, f.296r: ‘1 inginocchiatoio d’albero entrovi uno scatolino rosso co lire tre e un giulio col agoraio d’argento’.

⁸¹ Tassoni, XII, I, 349: ‘Circa il mandar denari, posso ora aspettare che venghi comodità, perche ne ho empiute [...] degli inginocchiatori,’ as quoted in Battaglia, s.v. ‘inginocchiatoio’. See also Cissie Fairchild, ‘Marketing the Counter-Reformation: Religious Objects and Consumerism in Early Modern France,’ in Christine Adams, Jack R Graham, and Lisa Jane eds., *Visions and Revisions of Eighteenth-Century France*, 31-58 (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 1997), 43, n.31, who notes the early eighteenth-century example of the Toulouse merchant Jean Gaugeal who similarly stored his silver in his prie-dieu.

⁸² See the examples of supernatural remedies to stop theft as quoted in Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 45.

⁸³ ASF, MPP 2661, f.296r-v: ‘1 quadro in asse dipintovi la Vergine Giesu S.Girolamo S.Francesco, 3 quadretti di stampe, 1 statuetta – S. Caterina dalle Ruote [...] 1 zanellini entrovi una crocetta ad uso di Reliquiaria d’argento con Quattro acconciature del capo di piu colori di seta.’

the house's *soffitta* (an attic or mezzanine). When not in a private chapel or oratory, *inginocchiatoi*, like domestic *acquasantiere*, were normally housed in *camere*. As one of the more personal rooms in the house, this location enforced the stress on individual worship that the *inginocchiatio* engendered.⁸⁴ Furthermore, the positioning of *inginocchiatoi* within the *camera* reinforced the relationship with the bed and household devotion that has already been explained in relation to *acquasantiere*. One inventory explicitly noted that the walnut prie-dieu was beside the bed [*accanto a letto*], and indeed, this spatial relationship was also replicated within the courtly sphere, where the etiquette of placement, heavy with symbolism and regulation, governed supreme.⁸⁵ Wherever their placement, however, the spiritual values that *inginocchiatoi* aided, were often matched if not overwhelmed by a temporal value through their costly construction and material wealth.

These could be status seats, often lavishly worked with usually a maximum of two mentioned within a single edifice, whether parish church, domestic chapel or household *camera*. Their high status is also evident in the quality of materials with which they were constructed and their descriptions, such as the two prie-dieux noted in Filippo di Dionigi Carducci's villa chapel as being 'of walnut with four columns gilded with gold'.⁸⁶ Although surviving sixteenth and seventeenth-century *inginocchiatoi* show that they ranged widely in scale and complexity, they could be elaborately carved, intarsiated, or have intricate inlay work (see fig.1.32). They could also bear family coats of arms nestled within this decoration, as is visible in an Italian example dating from the seventeenth century (fig.1.33).⁸⁷ This inclusion of personal or family emblems highlighted not only possession and its relationship with piety, but also rather pointedly reminded their user to include prayers for the *casata*.

Late seventeenth-century examples of *inginocchiatoi*, like one by Andrea Fantoni (1659-1734) (fig.1.34), or another at the Museo Nazionale di Palermo (fig.1.35), show how sculptural, ornate and precious these kneelers could be at the top end of the scale. The kneeler made for Cosimo III's consort in 1687 is an exemplar of the dictum that rulers' goods should be magnificent. Involving no less than eleven men from the Medici Grand-ducal workshops in its construction, the

⁸⁴ On the role and functions of the camera see Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting of the Arts', esp. pp. 61-70; Pascal Dibie, *Storia della camera da letto: il riposo e l'amore nei secoli* (Milan: Rusconi, 1988); Claudio Paolini 'La camera da letto tra Quattro e cinquecento: Arredi e vita privata,' in *Itinerari nella casa fiorentina del Rinascimento*, ed. Elisabetta Nardinocchi, 22-45 (Florence: Fondazione Horne & Banca Toscana, 1994) and his *I luoghi dell'intimità: la camera da letto nella casa fiorentina del Rinascimento* (Florence: Edizioni Polistampa, 2004); Katja Kwastek, 'Camera: gemalter und realer Raum der italienischen Frührenaissance' (zugl. diss. University of Köln, 2000).

⁸⁵ ASF, MPP 2660, Inventory of Francesco di Jacopo Partini, nd., f.733v. On the presence of prie-dieux at the Medici court, Enrico Colle has noted the payment of of Baldassare Seidelmair for an *inginocchiatio* 'per tenere avanti il letto, lavorato tutto in ebano', Enrico Colle, *I Mobili di Palazzo Pitti. Il periodo dei Medici, 1537-1737* (Rome: Centro Di & Umberto Allemandi, 1996), 232.

⁸⁶ ASF, MPP 2660 (1617-22), 16 October 1621, f.655r.

⁸⁷ See also the example in the Palazzo Davanzati (inv.257) noted in Luciano Berti, ed., *Il Museo di Palazzo Davanzati a Firenze* (Venice: Electa Editrice, n.d.), tav.71, cat.28.

piece was commissioned for the Queen's bedchamber and designed by Leonardo van der Vinne (see figs. 1.36 a & 1.36 b).⁸⁸ Wood veneers made of rosewood and ebony form a repeating decorative pattern of volutes whose borders are outlined in fine filigree work and conceal two compartments, one on top, the second at the bottom front of the kneeler. The first compartment lies under the head of a cherub made from gilded bronze, the second rests under a surface decorated with nine individual still life images of *pietre dure*. Between the pilasters listed with lapis lazuli, on the front perpendicular part of the structure are inlays of jasper, carnelian, lapis lazuli and other precious stones with a centrally placed gilded bronze motif of the monogram of Christ (IHS). This costly *inginocchiatoio* ostentatiously equated spiritual with temporal wealth, and provided an appropriately prestigious support for the Grand Duchess's piety and earthly divinity. It also underlines the importance of this furniture type for rulers and the wealthy who, whether in portraits of Catherine de' Medici or those of Antonio del Rio and his family (see figs. 1.37, & 1.38a-b), often chose to be memorialised kneeling upon them.

Another elaborate and sumptuous *inginocchiatoio* made for the Medici court does, however, problematize a simple taxonomic understanding of an *inginocchiatoio* through form and nomenclature. Attributed to Jacopo Ligozzi and GiovanBatista Calandra and labelled an *inginocchiatoio* by modern furniture historians, this piece of furniture, like that by Andrea Fantoni (see fig. 1.34), attached a type of quasi-altar to a kneeler (see figs. 1.39a-b).⁸⁹ This item was originally placed in the Medici villa of Poggio Imperiale where the widowed Maria Maddalena of Austria lived, and indeed both her and her son's initials are carved in *pietre dure* on the frame that surrounds the central image depicting *The Baptism of Christ*. The materials from which this piece was constructed were deliberately chosen to enhance the standing of the person who knelt on it with, for example, the central image's frame made from *pietra di paragone* (touchstone). As touchstone was a material that was symbolically cast as a 'paragon of virtue' it provided a witty conceit in referencing both the kneeler's function as well as the pious qualities of its users.⁹⁰ As Suzanne Butters has demonstrated, the art of *pietre dure* inlay, like that of sculpting porphyry, was intimately connected to the Medicean court, who financed its production and exploited for self-promotion the technical prowess, classical allusions and symbolic qualities that it embodied in a wide range of visual forms.⁹¹ As well as the individual intrinsic qualities of each inlaid stone, the

⁸⁸ See Colle, *I Mobili di Palazzo Pitti*, 94; *Il Seicento Fiorentino. Arte a Firenze da Ferdinando I a Cosimo III*, 3 vols. (Florence: Edizioni Cantini, 1986), 2: 230-232.

⁸⁹ See Kristen Aschengreen Piacenti, 'Osservazioni intorno a un inginocchiatoio del Museo degli Argenti,' *Antichità Viva* XIII (1974): 44-47; Colle, *I Mobili di Palazzo Pitti*, 228-29; *Il Seicento Fiorentino*, 2: 227-230.

⁹⁰ Suzanne Brown Butters, *The Triumph of Vulcan: Sculptors' Tools, Porphyry, and the Prince in Ducal Florence*, 2 vols. (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1996), 1:100-1; Martha McCrory, 'The Symbolism of Stones: Engraved Gems at the Medici Grand-Ducal Court (1537-1609),' in *Engraved gems: survivals and revivals*, ed. Clifford M. Brown, 159-179 (Washington; Hannover: University Press of New England, 1997).

⁹¹ Butters, *The Triumph of Vulcan*; Butters, 'Una pietra eppure non una pietra'. *Pietre dure e botteghe medicee nella Firenze del Cinquecento*, in *La grande storia dell'Artigianato. Il Cinquecento*, eds. Franco

entire piece has the appearance of being carved out of hard stone thereby providing a platform for prayer and a metaphor for the solidity of the Medicean regime to kneel on. Like the wider emblematic exploitation of *pietre dure* by the Medici, their *inginocchiatoio* wittily casts the sacrality of their dynasty in stone.

Made somewhere between 1621 and 1624, it originally housed a painting of the Magdalene by Leonardo da Vinci (replaced at a later date by *The Baptism of Christ*), and displayed a silver reliquary. The image and relic would have together provided the visual and spiritual focal point for its user. Its complex architectonic form effectively frames both this focal point and the flower-filled vase rendered in *pietre dure* below, whilst providing a kneeling-step and a continuous decorative scheme of virtuoso carving and inlay work. An accompanying curtain to cover the image described in an inventory of 1625, makes it clear that this functioned as a very conspicuous and intimate private altar.⁹² Kneeling down, the supplicant's range of vision would have been blinkered and impelled to concentrate continually on the image and saintly remains ahead. The image and the relic thereby became the departing and returning point for prayer and meditation that merges, appropriately, the corporal and the transcendental through physical proximity and spiritual analogy. This object, like the other sixteenth-century furniture type of the *stipo* or cabinet, also clearly demonstrates the way in which furniture itself constructed and carved up space, allowing intimate interior loci that were both actual and imagined, and that in effect provided rooms within a room. While this was a truly elite and idiosyncratic devotional display piece, it nonetheless demonstrates resoundingly the substantial economic and artistic investment in religious furniture that was made by private patrons and the complexity of form it assumed.

This piece also draws attention to the lexical and formal problem of distinguishing an *altarino* from an *inginocchiatoio*, as it combines both functions, both forms, and, as the 1625 inventory makes clear, both names. It was first described in this inventory as '[u]n altarino d'ebano o si vero in ginocchiatoio', although in subsequent inventories it was listed as an 'altaro'.⁹³ A more common confusion between *altarini* and *inginocchiatoi* arises as Battaglia glosses two terms

Franceschi and Gloria Fossi, 133-186 (Florence: Giunti Gruppo Editoriale); Martha McCrory, 'The Symbolism of Stones: Engraved Gems at the Medici Grand-Ducal Court (1537-1609),' in *Engraved gems: survivals and revivals*, ed. Clifford M. Brown, 159-179 (Washington; Hannover: University Press of New England, 1997); Andrew Morrogh, 'The *Magnifici* Tomb: A Key Project in Michelangelo's Architectural Career,' *Art Bulletin* 74 (1992): 567-98.

⁹² The detailed 1625 inventory describes the piece as '...con più scompartimenti aovati e tondi commessovi più sorte di pietre tutto filettato d'argento con due colonnine con un quadretto nel corpo di paragone o marmo nero entrovi un vaso commesso con fiori al naturale e sul piano tutto con uno ottangolo e due tondi con fiori entrovi tutto di pietre commesso al naturale con un quadro in tavola di una Santa Maria Maddalena fino sotto la cintura di mano di Lionardo da Vinci con un adornamento attorno di cornice doppie debano tutto ondata e nel mezzo tra una cornice e l'altra uno scompartimento d'aovati e ottangoli tondi e quadri entrovi pietre di più diverse sorte filettate tutte d'argenti dorato che regge un reliquiario aovato, che in tutto viè nove scompartimenti tutto guarnito d'argento e dorato e sopra un vasettino d'agata con un mazzettino di fiori, con sua sopracoperta di corame rosso.' Transcribed in Colle, *I Mobili di Palazzo Pitti*, 228.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 228; *Il Seicento Fiorentino*, 2: 481.

for an *altarino*. The first is quite literally a 'small altar', the second term refers to it as an 'inginocchiatoio da camera.'⁹⁴ So, were *inginocchiatoi* actually *altarini*, and vice versa? And if so, were *inginocchiatoi* in reality more commonplace during the sixteenth century as Lydecker has suggested, because they were also called *altarini*?

Small private altars or *altarini* have traditionally been thought of as popular items in the medieval or early renaissance Florentine house, with the *exempla* offered to women by religious men being uncritically read as unedited empirical testimony of historical fact. Medieval advice such as that given by Giovanni il Certosino (also known as Giovanni il Dio) in *Decor Puellarum* (published 1471) and, more famously, the counsel Giovanni Dominici offered to Bartolomea Obizzi and Antonio Alberti (written between 1400-1405), has been taken by many scholars as indicative of domestic practice. Certosino directed that young females should pray in front of a small altar decorated with beautiful and holy images [*belle imagini et devote*] and ornaments they had themselves embroidered,⁹⁵ while Dominici, as part of his parenting advice, suggested the erection of at least one 'altaruzzo' at home.⁹⁶ The rhetorical strategies of late medieval devotional writers who developed their models through the deployment of allegories of daily life are often overlooked. The result is that the disjunctions between theory and actual practice are often simply glossed over. Taking Dominici's advice as evidence for example, Chiara Frugoni asserts that in the fourteenth century domestic altars 'acquired a remarkable and unexpected diffusion'.⁹⁷ Such an assertion seems difficult to confirm given the lack of hard physical proof either in the shape of surviving examples of early household altars, or their mention in inventories. The point is important to Frugoni's argument, as the seeming growth and presence of household altars during the later Medieval and early Renaissance period allows her to assert that women's physical movements and religious activities were being even more curtailed and consigned towards the domestic sphere, which in turn was developing increasing associations of intimacy and religiosity.⁹⁸

Several significant issues emerge from this, not least the important question of quite how restricted female movements indeed were. Among one of the issues raised, is how gendered (or for that matter, age specific) were devotional objects, furniture and space at home. Secondly, is

⁹⁴ Battaglia, s.v. 'altarino', 350.

⁹⁵ Hasenohr, 'La vie quotidienne', 67.

⁹⁶ Giovanni Dominici, *Regola del governo di cura familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi (Florence: presso A. Garinei, 1860), 130: 'Ma farai un 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 variamente adornare quella cappelluzza. Alcuna volta saranno occupati in fare grillande di fiori o d'erbe, e incoronare Iesu, adornare la Vergine Maria dipinta, fare candeluzze, accendere e spegnere, incensare, tenere putlito, spazzare, parare gli altari (...) e così variatamente quanto si può sieno occupati con amore circa il divino santuario.'

⁹⁷ Chiara Frugoni, 'Female Mystics, Visions, and Iconography,' in *Women and Religion in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, eds. Daniel Bornstein and Roberto Rusconi, 130-184 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 136.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 136.

whether in fact, domestic piety was necessarily associated with privacy or intimacy, and if so, was this a given, or can the association be located more closely within a specific historical timeframe? These are large issues outside the remit of this section, which instead aims to establish some basic facts to provide a basis for answering the above questions. The questions addressed below are: when did altars make their appearance in the Florentine home; what as specific items of furniture do they tell us about household decoration and devotional practices; and can they be distinguished from *inginocchiatoi*?

Little private domestic and unconsecrated altars seem to have been no more popular than *inginocchiatoi* in Florentine houses for most of the sixteenth century, and indeed no clear reference to them was found within any fifteenth-century inventories sampled.⁹⁹ In the *Pupilli* inventories surveyed for this study, only three were mentioned prior to 1581, when at this date an altarpiece appears in the already mentioned *camera dei cappuccini* of Francesco Bonasi's house, suggesting either an altar below, or an appropriation of a church painting for a similar purpose.¹⁰⁰ In the 1522 inventory of GiovanBattista di Simone del Locaio's estate a Christ child, similar to those written about by Christiane Klapisch Zuber, and described as 'one of those dolls for putting on the altar' was listed in the *chamera*.¹⁰¹ However, no actual altar was recorded in the house. The first unequivocal mention of a little domestic altar appeared in the *chamera in sula sala* of Giovanni di Cenni di Domenico Bardeschi's 1544 estate. Described as of being 'for children', Bardeschi's altar recalls the advice of Dominici to use miniature ecclesiastical objects as a tactic for encouraging the children of the house to play piously.¹⁰² The next mention of an *altarino* was not until 1560 in Bartolomeo Corriere's estate, and nor did the terms 'altarello', 'altaruccio', 'altaruzzo', or even 'altarolo' appear once before this date except in the context of domestic chapels.¹⁰³ After the example found in Corriere's home, only five *altarini* were mentioned in houses up until the sixteenth century. However, by the 1620s *altarini* had become an established domestic furniture type. The sampling for the years 1617 to 1622 shows that a third of all estates (33.8%) owned at least one, while several households contained three or four examples.¹⁰⁴ This percentage continued to rise so that one half of all estates between 1644 and 1653 contained at least one *altarino*.¹⁰⁵ While a few

⁹⁹ Samplings taken from ASF, MPAP 153; MPAP 154; MPAP 155; MPAP 173; and MPAP 186.

¹⁰⁰ ASF, MPP 2664, f.411v: 'tavola da altare col finita cioè la Madonna incoranata'.

¹⁰¹ ASF, MPP 189, f.170r: '1 bambino d quelli per tenghano in sul'altare e con altre fra perle d'oro e pie'. On holy dolls see Christiane Klapisch-Zuber 'Holy Dolls: Play and Piety in Florence in the Quattrocento' in her *Women, Family and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1985), 310-329, and Franco Cardini, 'Le bambole nel Medioevo toscano: Gioco, sentimento dell'infanzia, devozione, magia,' *La Ricerca Folklorica* 16 (1987): 27-29.

¹⁰² ASF, MPP 2648, f.843v: '1 altarino da fanciulli suivi a celonacio e uno mantile'.

¹⁰³ ASF, MPP 2651, f.478r: 'Un crucifixo su uno alterino'.

¹⁰⁴ ASF, MPP 2660 (1617-1622). Twenty-four individual estates had at least one *altare* or *altarino* out of seventy-one estates sampled. Among those with two or more see the inventories of GiovanBattista Mannucci, ff.267r-275v; PierMaria Pazzi, ff.339r-354r; and Francesco Fori, ff.673r-691v.

¹⁰⁵ ASF, MPP, 2661 (1644-1653). Thirty-two *altari* or *altarini* for fifty-eight estates sampled.

listed were clearly first and foremost functional items of furniture used as side tables or cabinets to store miscellaneous items such as socks or music folios, the majority of the small household altars were unquestionably used for devotional purposes.¹⁰⁶

Their devotional function can be confirmed not just by their name but by the fact that a large proportion were described with crucifixes or religious statuettes placed on them, and devotional paintings hung above or adjacent to them. Take for example the 1622 inventory of Alessandro and Messer Filippo Bacharelli's house in Florence. The chamber where Messer Filippo slept [*la camera dove stava Messer Filippo*] contained a small altar with walnut columns and cornices fixed to the wall.¹⁰⁷ Above it hung an image of St. Charles and one of Our Lord, while on top were placed elaborate candlesticks, a wooden cross containing relics of many saints, and 'una tavoletta p dire letanie d^{lla} Madonna co' un paliotto di filendie giallo et sua tovaglia con più certi dipinti intorno a libri quattro circa.' Also recorded were a vase of holy water, two terracotta images of Christ, and an old missal and an older breviary [*brevaccio*]. Moreover, around the altar was a small bench of four *braccia* used as a stepped altar base.¹⁰⁸ These contents of Messer Filippo's room clearly suggest an elaborate structure for personal devotions that allowed for prayer, recitation, and meditation centred around the *altarino*. The contents also clearly suggest how the decoration of an altar in a church was mimicked and replicated at home with a surprising degree of liturgical accuracy: the yellow woven altar-frontal and altar-cloth, the missal, the candles, the crucifix and the *predella*. Another example demonstrates even more clearly how church interiors were incorporated into the domestic sphere without the expense of a specific space or the permission that was necessary for a consecrated altar. Francesco di Pagolo Fori's Florentine house in via dei Servi, contained a large collection of religious paintings and objects as well as four *altarini* placed in various *camere*.¹⁰⁹ The *anticamera di sopra*, however, contained a wooden *altarino* with walnut mouldings, above which hung an image of the Assumption that was specifically used as an altarpiece [*a uso d'una tavola d'altare*]. This altarpiece was crowned by a baldachin with strips of white damask, twelve brass candlesticks, a bronze lantern in the shape of a foot, two carved wooden candlesticks, a small green and red painted wooden vase and a similarly painted small circular box that was presumably also placed on or in the *altarino*.¹¹⁰ The room also contained images of the Madonna and Child, St. Catherine, Christ at the Column, the Annunciation,

¹⁰⁶ ASF, MPP, 2661, ff.81r; 203r; 687f.

¹⁰⁷ ASF, MPP, 2660 (1617-1622), 1st June 1622, f.725v, 'un altarino con colonne et cornice di noce murato'.

¹⁰⁸ 'Quattro braccia di pancetta [sic!] ad uso di predelli attorno all'altarino', *ibid.*, f.726r.

¹⁰⁹ MPP, 2660 (1617-22), 14 May 1622, ff.673r-691v.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, f.688v-689r: '1 altarino d'albero col cornice listrato di noce col gradino d'albero sopra', '1 quadro a uso d'una tavola d'altare entrove la Madonna quando è assunta in cielo sulla carta', '1 baldochino col drappellini di domassco bianco sopra a d° quadro', '12 candellierini d'ottone piccoli a diverse boggie', '1 paio di cesoie da santi', '1 bossolo di legno dipinto di verde e rosso/ 1 scatoletta tonda dipinta simile', '1 scarpa overo piede di bronzo col suo coperchio ch s[i] usa] p una lucerna', '2 candellieri di legno intagliati alti 2/3 di braccio.'

a Pietà, three more Marian images, two terracotta angels, a terracotta crucifix, as well as several terracotta della Robbia figures including two representing Abundance.¹¹¹ While the room was used for both sleep and study, containing as it did a bed, a *studiolino* and a cot [*cuccia*], the presence of a little decorated altar and its altarpiece in addition to the extraordinary concentration of religious images, points clearly once again towards a ritualistic household practice that familiarized church norms and decoration by incorporating them into the home environment.

The close sense of affection and personal bonds that can be linked to the devotional objects of the household altar can be evinced by the testament of Madonna Bartolomea, wife of Battista da Poppi, composed in 1606.¹¹² Madonna Bartolomea was careful to leave to Cammilla di Mariotto Macinelli (a fellow serving woman of the Countess Clarice Ardinghelli), not just her bed and its fittings, but also 'all the little images and other *santini* of little value that are on the little altar'.¹¹³ The gift of the bed was a substantial bequest from one serving woman to another, and one that could have made Cammilla marriageable by providing a dowry. In contrast, the small images and *santini* had little economic value but instead carried a currency of sentiment, affection, and the potential of spiritual solace. This example is also important as it demonstrates that people from a wide range of social spheres owned this furniture type, and that therefore, like brass *acquasantiere*, *altarini* were not necessarily expensive items and could be bought relatively easily second-hand.¹¹⁴ Moreover, as Sandra Cavallo has recently demonstrated and Madonna Bartolomea's testament evinces, the fierce personal attachment to material artefacts, and in particular devotional objects, was a strongly gendered phenomenon: something that an author of a 1628 treatise for married couples noted as being due to the fact that a woman 'in the house [is] a soul much attached to things'.¹¹⁵

The gendering of domestic altars, whose beginnings can indeed be traced back to Giovanni Dominici and Giovanni da Certosino, also became a key prop in portraits by representing an appropriately gendered piety. Concurrent with the rising presence of household altars during the sixteenth century was their presence within female portraits, and in particular, portraits of widows. Pictures of widows represented alongside household altars, such as those by Ludovico Caracci or Jacopo da Empoli (see figs. 1.40, 1.41, & 1.42), demonstrate how this furniture type automatically enabled their sitter's pious and chaste virtues to be understood by the viewer.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, ff.688v-689r.

¹¹² ASF, NM, Protocolli 10477-10488 (Jacopo Pinelli 1604-1650), will of Madonna Bartolomea da Poppi, 5 March 1606, ff.5r-6r.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, f.6r: 'tutte le immaginette, et altri Santini di poco pregio che sono nell'alterino'.

¹¹⁴ For example, see also ASF, CSV 253, *Ricordi di Piero di Palla Strozzi*, f.9v, c.1607, where the 'camera delle serve allato alla sala' contained 'un altarino di albero'.

¹¹⁵ Sandro Cavallo, 'What did women transmit? Ownership and social control of household goods and personal effects in early modern Italy,' in *Gender and Material Culture in Historical Perspective*, ed. Moira Donald and Linda Hurcombe, 38-53 (New York and London: Macmillan, 2000); *Fido consigliere*, 67.

While these images offer pictorial evidence of domestic altars, it is impossible to distinguish clearly how they differed from the *inginocchiatoio* or prie-dieu. The fact that notaries redacting inventories made distinctions between the two items within the same estate would seem to point to two distinct and discrete furniture types.¹¹⁶ So too would the fact that *altarini* were commonly referred to in the inventories as ‘col suo inginocchiatoio’ or ‘senza inginocchiatoio’, descriptions that suggest that a kneeler was an added extra.¹¹⁷ Added to this presumable distinction is the point shown by Madonna Bartolomea’s will, that the *altarino* by the mid-seventeenth century does not seem to have been class specific. The *inginocchiatoio*, in contrast, seems to have remained a highly particularized and not particularly popular furniture type that appealed to the elite, and could therefore be classed as a ‘luxury item’ despite its lack of pretensions to physical comfort.¹¹⁸ These class distinctions of ownership further suggest a typological difference: *inginocchiatoi* did not necessarily function as an altar as they did not always have a flat top on which the accoutrements of an altar could be placed. In addition, although presumably they were normally placed in front of or near a holy image, they might have only been used with a holy book. As their use in domestic chapels and surviving examples attest, they were also freestanding furniture types able to be viewed from both sides. By contrast, *altarini* were probably not usually constructed with a base for kneeling, but always provided a top on which objects such as religious statuettes, crucifixes, and little bells could be placed.¹¹⁹ Nonetheless, although both furniture types and the functions they offered could exist separately and discretely, they were also at times fused through a furniture type that combined a kneeler with a wide flat top. However, the differences are perhaps irrelevant, as *altarini* in essence served similar functions as *inginocchiatoi*. Both were used for prayer and to store items, both were usually recorded as being made of prestige woods (or painted to appear like they were made of woods like walnut and ebony), and both were usually placed in the *camera*. Finally, both were initially products of the sixteenth century, whose usage and currency in the domestic sphere was only firmly established by the seventeenth, marking the successful codification and structuring of an individual ritual of prayer and devotion at home.

¹¹⁶ See for example the estate of Giovanni Palchetti, ASF, MPP 2660, 22 March 1618, ff.289r-291v. In Palchetti’s estate one ‘altarino di noce con una cassetta di noce’ was listed in the *camera a canto al salotto* [f.289v], while one ‘inginocchiatoio d’albero’ is in the *camera terrena a canto al’Orto* [291r].

¹¹⁷ See for example the ‘altarino di albero con suo inginocchiatoio con un quadro di pinto drentovi un crucifisso’ listed in the *anticamera della Camera grande come si entra in sala* in the 1607 ricordi of Piero di Palla Strozzi, CSV 253, f.9v.

¹¹⁸ As such the prie-dieu would circumvent traditional assumptions that the development of new furniture types was intimately related to increasing demands for comfort, see Daniel Roche, *Historie des choses banales: naissance del la consommation XVIIe-XIX siècle* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1997).

¹¹⁹ For example of an array of matching objects situated on top of a little altar see ASF, MPP 2661, f.84v: ‘1 altarino di noce con le sue campanelle d’ottone, 1 lampada, candellieri, e secchiolino simili.’

BLESSED CANDLES, CANDLESTICK HOLDERS, AND BLESSED ROSES

The *candele*, *torchi* or *falcole benedette*, and *rose benedette* noted in the inventories formed part of the same sacramental system and ecclesiastical remedies as holy water. These, however, seem much less popular religious items as they were noted in only a few estates, although the rarity with which they are recorded may simply reflect a difficulty in distinguishing the items from their unblest counterparts.¹²⁰ Blessed candles were present in the earliest inventories, although they originally seem to have been reserved for the upper classes, and were probably dispensed and used rather frugally. Both blessed candles and roses were often noted as being stored alongside other devotional paraphernalia in drawers, boxes or chests in *camere* or occasionally *scrittoi*, while the candles were also commonly listed as adorning sacred images. For example, in the 1471 inventory of the estate of the wealthy merchant and government official Francesco di Baldino Inghirrami, 'four white blessed candles weighing c. 1 *libbra*' were listed stored within a chest alongside other precious objects and clothes in Francesco's own *camera*.¹²¹ Francesco's candles were special not just because they had been blessed, but also and rather prosaically because they were white. In material terms this means that, unlike their more common, cheaper and smelly tallow [*sego* or *sevo*] counterparts, they were made from expensive refined beeswax and therefore in themselves a luxury item.¹²²

Holy candles (*falcola* and *falcolotto* are simply synonyms of *candela* and its diminutive forms *candeluzzo* and *candelotto*) were used in various ways. They could be lit by priests at the homes of their parishioners for rituals of exorcism or healing, attached to holy water containers and images (see for example fig. 1.2), or incorporated into domestic spells and chants.¹²³ In fact, Gostanza di Michele da Firenze, accused of witchcraft, reported rather succinctly during her 1594

¹²⁰ ASF, MPP 2660, 14 April 1622, f.674v: '1 candela benedetta d'oncie 4 incirca'; MMP 2651, 9 January 1561, f.777r: '3 candele benedette e 4 candellotti'; MMP 2657, nd, f.317r: '2 candele di cera benedette dipinte'; MPP 2661, inventory of Baccio di Signor Senatore Hanibale Orlandini, 18 October 1647, f.153r: '2 libbre di candelletti di cera e candelle benedette'; MAP 189, inventory of Giovanni di Luca, 817r: 'torchi di cera bianca'; MPP 2657, inventory of Giulio Medici, f.79v: 'una Candella benedetta messa a oro'.

¹²¹ MPAP 173, ff.265r-273v, f.267r.

¹²² See Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior*, 276.

¹²³ For their use within exorcisms, see for example: ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, Processus 760 (*processo* for Beato Andrea Corsini), 1602, ff.388r-89v, & testimony of Carmelite Arcangelo di Paulo, ff.187v-188r: '...a portarli reliquie del Beato Andrea cioè la catena et anello in casa d'uno M. Antonio de confini manugiaio per uno suo putto che se ritrovava in extremis gionto che fui a casa del detto Antonio feci tutti inginocchiare et accendeva candele benedette et dopi havere letti certe orationi particolare impossi la catena et l'anello del Beato adosso del putto subito il putto si essenti et cominciò a guarire...'; regarding their close association with images and other holy accoutrements, see ASF, MPP 2655, inventory of Giovanni di Santi di Frosino da San Gimignano, 8 September 1585, ff.566r-591v (faulty pagination). The *camera in sula sala* contains '1 piluzza col 3 candele benedette' next to a gesso Madonna and '4 madonnucce di carta col due angiolini', ff.590r-v; for their incorporation into spells, see AFF, TIN 40.17, 23 April 1650, case against Anna Maria Vitali accused of *sortilege*.

trial that holy candles were simply 'una cosa buona' - a statement that cannot be applied to her hearing by the Inquisition.¹²⁴ Dried and *benedette* roses and rose petals were also used in herbal concoctions and incantations aimed at healing as inquisitional files make clear. Like holy water, they were sold from specific sanctuaries and purchased because they were believed to be physically efficacious.¹²⁵

Mediating between authorized sacramental practice and ritual magic, these blessed and ephemeral objects were relied upon to answer the needs and necessities of lay people by protecting them from danger and harm. Used to try and ensure survival in a world plagued by high mortality rates and deadly diseases, the ceremonial application of *candele* and *rose benedette* were invariably accompanied by the sign of the cross and the recitation of prayers such as the Ave Maria and the Paternoster.¹²⁶ The invocation of ecclesiastical language in layperson's ritualistic ceremonies involving household sacramentals was to recognize another efficacious vehicle of power that carried spiritual capital, and one that could be easily and temporarily appropriated. Inquisitorial records demonstrate the extent to which the sacred objects such as holy candles, roses and water that were provided by the Church had permeated rituals of popular magic and superstitious healing, as much as public consciousness. These objects were also used very possessively, as the latent and intrinsic spiritual force (whether good or bad) of these sacred vehicles was released only by the agency of the individual using them through protective or sympathetic magic.¹²⁷ It is important to note this belief: that sacred power did not simply stem from the consecration or authorisation of these objects by the Church but through their correct invocation and usage within a personal system of devotional practice.

Both candles and roses appear to have been blessed and distributed to parishioners at religious feast days, particularly the feast of *Spirito Santo* and Easter morning, making them part of an authorized and respectable system of prophylactic and thaumaturgic objects probably more

¹²⁴ Cardini, ed., *Gostanza la strega*, 135.

¹²⁵ On the present day sale of blessed rose petals and dust at sanctuaries, see Fiorella Giacalone, 'Forme devozionali e kitsch cristiano, simulacri e uso dell'immagine di S. Rita a Cascia,' *La Ricerca Folklorica* 24 (1991): 73-82, 77.

¹²⁶ On the widespread recitation (and corruption) of the Paternoster and Ave Maria, see the entry below, but also AFF, TIN 39.07 (1625-28), doc.8, ff.145v; 147r; 155r; TIN 39.14; TIN 40.17, f.106v; TIN 40.20, 13r.

¹²⁷ See for example the testimony of Cavaliere Niccolò di Alfonso Ridolfi who, accusing Maddalena da Certaldo of witchcraft by causing the ill-health of his child, responded to the question of what flowers Maddalena had applied to his son, by stating 'Lei disse, che erano rose benedette e perchè io li professi dargli delle rose benedette di quell'istessa benedette che diceva essere la sua ella mi disse che volendo che guarisce bisognava che pigliasse delle sue proprie e gliene mettesse lei adosso.' Later on, Priest Sebastiano di Piero de' Vecchi stated that in regard to this, the Cavaliere had his own roses and had offered them to Maddalena but '[...] alla non le volse, dicendo che solo le sue erano buone e che Dio haveva dato la gratia a la sua.' AAF, TIN 54.1, doc.2, *Processo contro Maddalena Serchia da Certaldo e Giovanni Serrantelli*, 1625, f.201r & 213r respectively. Maddalena herself, when questioned as to why she hadn't used Ridolfi's, replied that 'Io havevo quella devotione nella mia, e me lo disse.', f.241v.

widely used than the inventories suggest.¹²⁸ Like Gostanza, Lena di Francesco Martelli was also in the middle of a witch trial, and tried to make known that her use of blessed roses [*rose benedette*] and her belief in their powers simply followed Church guidelines. Lena justified her use of them by telling how the priest who had blessed and distributed them to the parishioners, had himself 'said from the altar that they [the roses] had great virtue and devotion and we should take this into account'.¹²⁹

The unfortunate Gostanza di Michele and Lena di Francesco's testimonies reveal that blessed candles and roses held a special relevance for women and children, who were both particularly vulnerable in health and, according to the prevailing views of the time, spirit. The candles and roses were placed on bodies of pregnant women when giving birth as an aid in effecting a safe delivery, or put on specific areas of infant's bodies, such as the tummy-button, kidneys, or pulse points, to promote healing.¹³⁰ Women, because of their 'levitas', 'fragilitas' and 'imbecillitas', dominated the category that churchmen defined economically as 'i simpliciter et ignorantibus' or the 'pusillis et rudibus'. Because of this perceived credulity, and according to evidence gleaned from Inquisition cases, they also appear as being particularly attached to blessed objects as well as their main users. Although this spiritual materialism dovetails with the findings made in relation to *altarini* above, a gendered disposition towards the ownership of sacramentals can be explained because most healers or midwives were female, and *cose benedette* were simply the stock tools of the trade. The occupations of midwifery and healing were risky ones, with failure as well as success in curing illnesses or aiding a safe delivery liable to put their practitioners in front of the Inquisition. It is partly this reason, in tandem with a change in focus by the Inquisition away from heretical crimes during the late-sixteenth century, that accounts for the numerous and predominantly female cases of *medicines superstiziose* in Inquisitional files. From the 1580s onwards, these cases of superstitious and magical practices formed an increasingly large proportion of trials conducted by the Roman Inquisition with the result that the figure of the female healer, armed with an array of blessed items and common prayers, was strongly targeted.¹³¹ If the trials

¹²⁸ AAF, TIN 54.1, doc.2, *Processo contro Maddalena Serchia da Certaldo e Giovanni Serrantelli*, 1625, ff.201r & 213r-v. Like *acqua santa*, they were also part of the diplomatic nexus of oblations and obligations. For example, the letter from Cardinal Protonotary Alessandro di Ottaviano de' Medici (later Leo XI) from Rome to Antonio Serguidi in Florence records the gift of blessed candles for the grand-ducal family: '[...] Mando a V. S. una cassetta entrovi cinque falcole benedette, che alli di passati domandai in cappella per tutti cotesti nostri serinissimi Signori et Patroni [...]'. ASF, MP 1177, f.479: From The Medici Archive Project, Inc.

¹²⁹ See AAF, TIN 54.1, doc.2, f.241r: 'Il Prete disse all altare che l'anno gran virtu e devotione e che noi ne tenissimo conto.'

¹³⁰ See for example AAF, TIN 54.1, doc.2, ff.201r; 241r; 213r, and n. 133 below.

¹³¹ See Anne Jacobson Schutte, 'I processi dell'Inquisizione veneziana nel Seicento: la femminilizzazione dell'eresia,' in *L'Inquisizione romana in Italia nell'età moderna: Archivi, problemi di metodo e nuove ricerche*, ed. Andrea Del Col and Giovanna Paolin, 159-73 (Rome: Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Ufficio Centrale per i Beni Archivistici, 1991). Cf. the figures for women involved in inquisitorial trials regarding heresy in Peyronel Rambaldi, 'Donne ed eterodossia', 278-9.

reveal a gender bias, they also clearly demonstrate a collective belief shared by elite and ‘popular’ cultures alike regarding their ability to access the supernatural through a system of established practices that reformulated those offered by the Church.¹³²

However, Lena and Gostanza’s testimonies point out the central paradox that they themselves were aware of: their prosecution as abusers of sacramentals despite the fact that they were using them in accordance with the Church’s own recommendations. Post-Trent, the Catholic Inquisition aimed to install a more normative and narrow framework for the use of sacramentals, and discourage their use by individual healers and practitioners of ‘magic’ like Lena and Gostanza. However, there was a deep-seated intransigence towards change, especially when dealing with a system of sacramental and sacred objects that were already widely embedded within daily practice and public beliefs. Indeed, the proliferating material culture that arose around sacramentals, like the *acquasanteire* for holy water, also suggests the ability to use and perceive them within different economic and cultural frameworks that allowed for individual agency and the adaptation of quasi-secular principles.

Like the *inginocchiatoio*, the relationship that devotional objects had with more secular values, can also be seen in the double-function of a Tuscan maiolica votive candlestick-holder and money-box dating from 1565 (fig.1.43). Painted *putti* holding the instruments of the passion are depicted on the base, while the words ‘AVE MARIA MATER DEI’ are emblazoned on top alongside the arms of the Medici. The top has a circular mount for holding holy or votive candles, while the bottom has a cavity, originally lockable, for safekeeping money. This was by no means a quality item, and given the Medici arms, it is tempting to see it as a relatively cheap commemorative object along the lines of coronation mugs today. The candlestick can be read in several ways, as underscoring the fact that salvation and religion do not come cheap, or alternatively, as registering the protective aura that religion extended towards surrounding objects: in this case money. Either way, it shows that investment in devotion was a secure one, whilst suggesting the role the Medici had both to devotion and investments on a much wider level.

¹³² For example the vicar of Fivizzano, Francesco Montichiari, in his comments to the Inquisitor of Florence in 1623 noted that ‘Le superstizioni qui sono anco fra le persone buone et stano anco con qualche pensiero di volerle mantenere perché dicono che’l padre maestro *bonae memoriae* gliele concedeva. Tengano che una candella benedetta alla messa del rosario la prima domenica di ottobre posta sopra il corpo di uno amalato li renda la sanità; *item*, che una delle tre candelle del sabato santo tenuta accesa mentre si dicono pater noster et poi gocciate cinque gocce a honore delle cinque piaghe del Signor sopra il corpo di una parturiente la facci partorire...’, as quoted in Adriano Prosperi, ‘Vicari dell’Inquisizione fiorentina alla metà del Seicento. Note d’archivio,’ in his *L’Inquisizione Romana. Lettere e ricerche* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2003), 179-180. See also AAF, TIN 54.1, doc.2, *Processo contro Maddalena Serchia da Certaldo e Giovanni Serrantelli*, 1625. Regarding the interrelationship between ‘elite’ and ‘popular’ religion in superstitious practices, see David Gentilcore, ‘Methods and approaches in the social history of the Counter-Reformation in Italy: a review essay,’ *Social History* 17 (1992): 73-98.

AGNUS DEIS, PATERNOSTERS AND ROSARIES

Although prestige items since the early Middle Ages, the *Pupilli* inventories show an increasing number of agnus deis in houses, as well as the increasingly elaborate form they assumed. Like *acqua santa* and *candele benedette*, agnus deis were popular sacramentals promoted by the church, that, as Ronald Lightbown has demonstrated, could be worn as pendants, suspended from girdles, or simply kept as devotional objects.¹³³

Circular or oval-shaped wax medallions that were made from either paschal candles or chrism, agnus deis usually bore an impression of the lamb of God carrying the resurrection banner on one side (see fig. 1.44a), with various biblical scenes, saints or Papal arms portrayed on the reverse. The earliest confirmed surviving example dates from the late fourteenth century and Gregory XI's reign, but letters from earlier in the century confirm that they were already established diplomatic gifts from the Papacy. The making of them was first recorded in the tenth century, and the right to their production was gradually transferred from the Roman diocese to the Papacy. The wax medallions were consecrated en masse the first year of a new pontificate and then every seven years afterwards, and were ceremonially distributed by the Pope on the Saturday following Easter Sunday.¹³⁴

These papally blessed agnus deis were both difficult items to obtain and much coveted, as a letter to Johanna von Habsburg-de' Medici from Guglielmo Sangaletti in Rome makes clear.¹³⁵ Indeed, the *Pupilli* inventories show wax agnus deis were only found in the households of the well-to-do or the well-connected. The Knight Vincenzo di Giovanni Bardi had a plain ('senz'ornamento') wax agnus dei in his domestic chapel, while Girolamo Galilei, the maternal uncle of Lelio d'Alessandro Quaratesi's heir, stored a large box containing many agnus deis of blessed wax ('cera Benedetti' [sic]) safely in his house.¹³⁶ Their value can be seen in the way that they were often tenaciously kept within the family estate over many years, or their prominent

¹³³ Ronald W. Lightbown, *Mediaeval European Jewellery* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1992), 228-30.

¹³⁴ On the history of the agnus dei see Lightbown, *ibid.*; Cleto Corrain, 'Oggetti e immaginette sacri. Appunti e notizie,' *Lares* XLIII fasc.I (1981): 55-64; John Cherry, 'Containers for Agnus Deis,' in *Through a Glass Brightly: Studies in Byzantine and Medieval Art and Archaeology presented to David Buckton* ed. Christopher Entwistle, 171-183 (Oxford: Oxford University Press; Moroni, s.v. 'Agnus Dei', v.1; E. Mangenot, 'Agnus Dei' in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, 1, 1^e partie (Paris 1903), 605-13.

¹³⁵ ASF, Mediceo del Principato 5925, f.255, 11th April 1572: '[...] Havendo la Santità di Nostro Signor [Pius V] fatto la solita beneditione et consagracione delli Agnusdei ne mando alchuni a V. Altissima, li quali deve tenere per il sacramento che tenghano come per la persona santissima che li ha fatti chari, et se son pochi in questo principio si tenghano molto stretti per le infinite chieste che ci sono [...]'. Cited in the database of the Documentary Sources for the Arts and Humanities (The Medici Archive Project, Inc.).

¹³⁶ ASF, MPP 266 (1644-1653), f.399r & f.303v respectively.

display in little tabernacle-like structures.¹³⁷ Indeed, at times their value was such that they were used as collateral or currency for business transactions.¹³⁸

The scarcity and desirability of papal agnus deis created a large market in fakes which in turn gave rise to a number of bulls that, from the 1470s onwards, attempted to assert papal rights of production and stem the flood of counterfeits.¹³⁹ As well as attesting to the fifteenth-century craze for these medallions, the papal bulls helpfully listed the properties that agnuses held. They were believed to stimulate religious belief, and held to be efficacious in protecting their wearer against fire, shipwreck, lightening, hail, storms, attacks of the devil, sudden death, as well as promoting an easy delivery in childbirth.¹⁴⁰ This impressive list of qualities explains how wax agnus deis were afforded the status of relics (with which they were often combined, see fig.3.17), while the last function regarding childbirth helps explain their popularity in trousseaus and betrothal gifts. Alamanno Rinuccini, for example, commissioned a gold agnus dei with a sapphire and pendant pearl for his bride in 1504, while two agnus deis were listed within the *corredo* that Madonna Maria di Messer Pandolfo di Messer Luigi della Stufa took to the Tournabuoni family.¹⁴¹

The example of Rinuccini makes it clear that agnus deis were not all papal presents of wax medallions. In fact, the majority of examples contained in Florentine houses were not made of wax, but were instead gold or silver medallions and cases that could be purchased readymade as the 1617 inventory of GiovanBattista Paci's estate makes clear. In his *bottega d'orefice* on the Ponte Vecchio were twenty-nine gold agnus deis with insets of crystal that were listed amongst other jewels and precious vases.¹⁴² The agnus deis ranged in size from large to small and weighed in

¹³⁷ The 'one agnus dei with its ebony stand' listed in Giovambattista Strozzi's estate in 1573 was found within the inventory of Palazzo Strozzi redacted in 1646: ASF, CVI 1430, unpaginated. See also the 'agnus deo con il tabernacolino finito doro' in the *camera acanto alla sala* from ACRF, Filza XVII (A), Inventory of Francesco di Guglielmo del Riccio of 1594, unpaginated.

¹³⁸ ASF, CSV 254, *Libri di ricordi di Piero di Palla Strozzi* (1611-1681), 1627, f.155v.

¹³⁹ See for example Arnold Esch, 'Roman Customs Registers 1470-80: Items of Interest to Historians of Art and Material Culture,' *JWCI* 58 (1995): 72-87, 79. Esch notes how agnus deis, presumably of wax but also perhaps containers, were imported into Rome in large quantities.

¹⁴⁰ See Corrain, 'Oggetti e immaginette', 55-58; Lightbown, *Mediaeval European Jewellery*, 229; Cherry, 'Containers', 171-2; O'Neil, 'Discerning Superstition', 396-7. See also the entry in Giambattista Casale's entry which records the miraculous intervention of God and an agnus dei: '[...] Dio il quale se dignò di aiutarme per il mezzo de la dignità de uno Agnus Dei benedetto de la Santità dil Papa. il quale ion [sic] e misi al quanto dove era il gran pericolo dil foco. et per la dignità del dito Agnus Dei. il fuoco subito cominciò a cesare. et così si smorsò il ditto foco. et così il dio ferito il medegasimo tra noi al meglio che potesemo. et così ancora lui in giorni fu ancora lui de la ditta ferita per gratia di Dio sanato.' From Carlo Marcora ed., 'Il diario di Giambattista Casale,' *Memorie Storiche della Diocesi di Milano* 12 (1965): 205-437, 300.

¹⁴¹ G. Aiazzi, *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini dal 1282 al 1460 colla continuazione di Alamanno e Neri suoi figli* (Florence, 1840) 260, as quoted in Luke Syson and Dora Thornton, *Objects of Virtue* (London: British Museum Press, 2001), 62. For the example of Maria della Stufa's dowry, see ASF, GSC 93.18.18 (12 October 1578), unpaginated: '1 collana di perle con granati co i agnus deo' and '1 corona di granati e bottoni doro con un agnus deo'. See also ASF, MPP 2657, f.171v, for a silver agnus dei and reliquary, described as given to Signora Livia by her husband Giulio de' Medici, and MPP 2660, f.373r, for a small agnus dei made of gold and engraved with an image of the Annunciation on one side and a Pietà on the other, used by Lorenzo di Francesco da Bibbiena's wife Alessandra.

¹⁴² ASF, MPP 2660 (1617-1622), f.163v.

total ten *oncie* and fourteen *denari* (approximately 263 grams).¹⁴³ Paci's workshop inventory, which contained an astounding variety of objects and represents a sizable investment of capital, shows the popularity of ready-to-buy devotionally themed pieces that could be easily customised. Although the silver or gold agnus deis found in the *Pupilli* inventories may have occasionally referred to carry cases for wax medallions, the majority would simply have been pendants or jewellery that bore the motif of the lamb of god, like those listed in Paci's goldsmith's workshop or the piece commissioned by Alamanno Rinuccini.¹⁴⁴

Like the jewel Rinuccini commissioned, any qualities of sheepish meekness or humility that the agnus dei might have held (and that Rinuccini might have desired his wife to possess), were quickly cancelled out by its casting and containment in gold and other costly materials. As items of jewellery able to be worn on the person, agnus deis were objects of parade as much as objects of sentiment in that they functioned both symbolically and socially as much as they did spiritually. Suspended on a belt or dangling on a necklace, they allowed a conspicuous display of wealth upheld by orthodox Christian values. Recorded in the *camera dove dorme la signora di verso il Chiostrò* of Giulio de' Medici's estate in 1598 were the magnificent jewels of the house. Among them were no less than four agnus deis, one of which was described as an 'agnus dei of gold with a crystal [representing] on one side the Nativity of Our Lord, and on the other side a little lamb with small rubies with a pearl [hung] in the middle on fine chains.'¹⁴⁵ The description of this elaborate item of jewellery recalls extant pieces, such as one from the Waddesdon Collection in the British Museum (see fig. 1.44b), which appear to have been particularly popular during the seventeenth century.¹⁴⁶ The weight of Medici's piece was one *oncia* and twenty-one *denari* (approximately twenty-six grams), and its cost ninety *scudi*: a very substantial sum of money.¹⁴⁷

The number of agnus deis listed in Giulio de' Medici's household suggest how they formed a prominent part of personal collections. In fact, agnus deis can be related to the phenomenon of *collezionismo*, through both the quantities in which they were collected as well as in the ways in which they were displayed and viewed. The estate of Michele di Bartolomeo Maffei in the 1580s

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, f.163v.

¹⁴⁴ On Italian agnus dei carry-cases and illustrations of surviving examples see Cherry, 'Containers', 172-3.

¹⁴⁵ ASF, MPP 2657, f.99v: '1 Agnes Deo d'oro con cristallo dentrovi una Nativita di Nostro Signore et dall'altro banda un agnello con rubini tiene uno una perla attaccata in dondo catenelle di sopra adetto agnus Deo di peso denari 1 21 di prezzo scudi 90'.

¹⁴⁶ On this see Hugh Tait, *Catalogue of the Waddesdon Bequest in the British Museum: The Jewels*. Vol. 1. (London: British Museum Publications, 1986), 163.

¹⁴⁷ The Medici agnus dei would have represented approximately twice the average yearly wage of a skilled labourer in 1551 (the closest date for which data is available), or over one fifth of a Commissioner of Pistoia's six-month salary. Wage estimates taken from Richard Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: A Social and Economic History* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1980), 289, 438, and Donald Weinstein, *The Captain's Concubine: Love, Honor, and Violence in Renaissance Tuscany* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2000). On sixteenth-century Florentine currency see Goldthwaite and Giulio Mandich, *Studi sulla moneta fiorentina* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1994) and Carlo Cipolla, *Moneta a Firenze nel Cinquecento* (Bologna: il Mulino, 1987).

records the collection of some twenty-six agnus deis of gold and silver kept amid a collection of twenty small crosses of 'various kinds'.¹⁴⁸ The example of Maffei demonstrates that not only were agnus deis displayed on the person, but that they were also collected like the antique and modern medallions and coins so avariciously amassed during the Renaissance in order to assert the liberality, *politia* and *gentilezza* of their owner.¹⁴⁹ Indeed, Capitano Luigi di Girolamo Tolosami's agnus deis were stored amongst silver coins depicting Duke Alessandro de' Medici and St. Ludovico at his Florentine residence as well as his villa. Tolosami's collection of agnus deis must have been beautiful to examine as they incorporated expensive workmanship and materials such as gold, pearls, crystals, and the intricate workmanship of engraving and enamel-work.¹⁵⁰ Reminiscent of Tolomei's examples, was the silver agnus dei belonging to GiovanBattista di Michele dei Pappaghalli that was kept with other enamelled and metal medals and placed in a locked iron box in the *chamera di sula sala* of his house in Pistoia in 1558.¹⁵¹

Pappaghalli's lockable box shows the preciousness of agnus deis. In the 1584 estate of Raffaello di Giovanni Battista Santa Croce an 'agnus dei of Oriental Crystal with a fine chain and gold fastening and enamel edgework' was found alongside an intricate and bejewelled rosary, also of 'Oriental Crystal', in the *camera grande sula sala* of the house in via de' Gigli.¹⁵² Both pieces were stored inside a *stippetto*, whose description as standing one *palma* high and being covered in tooled leather that was painted with pictures, recalls the containers in two anonymous paintings which also contained jewellery and other precious ornaments (see figs. 1.20 & 1.21).¹⁵³ In fact, no item of furniture could more effectively store, guard, display, and taxonomically order choice items of personal possession like agnus deis than the *stipo*. The examples of both Pappaghalli and Santa Croce show how by the end of the sixteenth century agnus deis were often displayed in either their own custom-made box, or alongside other precious objects in various containers.

However, the example of Santa Croce shows the close relationship that the agnus dei had with other items such as rosaries, making it difficult to quantify either of these items accurately or to chart the increases or decreases in numbers owned over the period studied. This difficulty in providing accurate figures for agnus deis in households is compounded by the various forms that

¹⁴⁸ ASF, MPP 2655, ff.128r-v.

¹⁴⁹ On the general trend of this type of collecting see Fortini-Brown, *Private Lives*, 3-4, and Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 29-33.

¹⁵⁰ ASF, MPP 2655 (1581-88), f.629v-631r & f.645r-v: 'un Agnus Dei co una perla et con smalti Verdi [...] un grosso di san ludovicho d'argento; unAgnus Deo col una perla grossa a pie e col un verchio d'oro [...] uno agnus deo di peso intutto Oncia 1 denari 13 [...] un grosso di San Lodovico & anzi dua & un testone del Duca Alessandro [...] due Agnus Deo con due perle che uno ha la rete detto massiccio l'latro la coperta di christallo che vi è un christo.'

¹⁵¹ ASF, MPP 2651, ff.316r-v

¹⁵² ASF, MPP 2655, ff.541r-v.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, f.541r-v: '1 agnus deo di christallo orientale con una catenuzzia et apiccagnolo detto et borchiette smaltate detto atomo'; '1 corona di christallo orientale con bottoncini detto tramezzante et con sei bottoni d'argenti dorati et una pera d'oro smaltata con granatini et un pendichino detto smaltato con una perla.'

they assumed. Not only was the term used to refer to jewellery or medallions like several fourteenth and fifteenth-century examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum (figs. 1.44c-1.46b), but it also extended to include inscriptions, prayers, embroideries and other types of image.¹⁵⁴ To take the *Pupilli* file for 1581 – 88, for example, fifty-five agnus deis were recorded in seventy-six estates sampled.¹⁵⁵ These were in fact distributed between only eight estates, meaning that only 10.5% of the population represented by this sample had means (or desires) to own an agnus dei, and that when they did, they each owned on average over six examples. A similar pattern emerges from the inventories around seventy years later on.¹⁵⁶ This time agnus deis were found in varying quantities in approximately 10.2% of all households. The numbers therefore demonstrate a stable market for agnus deis. Even though these objects clearly could belong to people of humble means, including *contadini*, a clear pattern nonetheless emerges of how wealth and status were again important determinants for the ownership of religious items.¹⁵⁷ This pattern also demonstrates that people of similar resources often had similar material lives. All fifty agnus deis listed in the file for the 1580s, however, appear to have been items of jewellery that bore a close relationship to paternosters and rosaries, the other items of devotional adornment that shall now be discussed.

Rosaries (normally described as *corone* but occasionally *rosari*) and paternosters (*paternostri* but also, according to the *Vocabulario della Crusca*, called *corone*) at times incorporated agnus deis¹⁵⁸. All three were devotional aides that were easily carried on the person, imported into the house and incorporated into various personal routines. Indeed, the constant presence of these items and the intimacy that they engendered meant that Louis of Granada wrote that the paternoster was to be considered a ‘friend’.¹⁵⁹ Paternoster or rosary beads were also friends to other aides of devotion and were often described as adjoined to books of hours, or even incorporating items such as mirrors.¹⁶⁰ A miniature from Catherine of Cleves’s book of hours (c.1435) that depicts in verisimilitude a coral paternoster (fig. 1.47), shows how these beads offered a material form of devotion that was either complimentary to, or exchangeable with other existing

¹⁵⁴ ASF, MPP 2661, Inventory of Lessandra d’Antonio Gimigani (widow of Alamano Salviati), f.61r. See also O’Neil, ‘Discerning Superstition’, 396.

¹⁵⁵ ASF, MPP 2655.

¹⁵⁶ ASF, MPP 2661.

¹⁵⁷ On gifts of jewellery from shopkeepers and weavers, see Julius Kirschner, ‘“Li emergenti bisogni matrimoniali” in Renaissance Florence,’ in *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence* ed. William J. Connell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 88; regarding those from *contadini* see Serena M. Mazzi and Sergio Raveggi, *Gli uomini e le cose nelle campagne fiorentine* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1983), 107-9.

¹⁵⁸ VAC, s.v. ‘Corona’.

¹⁵⁹ Louis of Granada, *Trattato della confessione, & comunione. Pratica del viver christiano* (Venice: Angelieri, 1597), 10r.

¹⁶⁰ For example ASF, MPP 2709, inventory of Charlo di Oddo di Antonio Ghaetani, 1570, f.49v: ‘1 chorona di ebani tramezzata di otto bottoni d’oro con una spera.’

ones.¹⁶¹ Indeed, the bead and the book were closely and somatically aligned with each other: something demonstrated by the number of portraits in which *Offices* and rosaries are found entwined together (see for example figs.1.40-1.41 & fig.4.31).¹⁶² The miniature also suggests the ways in which rosaries were believed to absorb the sacred and protective qualities of spiritual objects, such as texts or images, that they were placed next to, and thereby impart these talismanic attributes to the person whose hands grasped them.¹⁶³

The earliest inventories examined record the presence of paternoster beads and rosaries in the relatively sparsely furnished homes of the early quattrocento, and a fifteenth-century German illustration of a 'paternoster maker' in the *Hausbuch* of the Mendelschen Zwölfbrüderstiftung in Nuremberg (fig.1.48) shows how these medieval devotional aids had become a well-established and flourishing trade throughout Europe.¹⁶⁴ *Filze di paternostri ambre* were commonly listed among the belongings of quattrocento and early cinquecento estates (see fig.1.49), and Ronald Lightbown has shown that paternoster beads made from this sweet-smelling material had been exported throughout Europe from the Baltic since the fourteenth century.¹⁶⁵ However, reference to amber paternoster beads appears to drop away during the course of the sixteenth century, and by the mid-seicento, the term 'paternostri' was rarely used in the *Pupilli* inventories. During the same timeframe references to rosaries grew exponentially. It is tempting to read this as indicative of an increasing Marian devotion, rather than simply a shift in fashion away from larger amber beads. This supposition is inevitably sustained by the rising number of confraternities dedicated to the Rosary, the increased number of images of the Madonna of the Rosary found in sixteenth-century inventories, and texts such as those by the Jesuit Paul de Barry, whose devotion to the Virgin prompted his suggestion to lay readers that they hold a type of Oktoberfest of the rosary.¹⁶⁶ However, the interchangeability of the term 'corona' to signal both types of devotion makes this hypothesis impossible to confirm, and the beads could be used for both Marian and Christocentric devotions according to the predilection

¹⁶¹ For the materials and decoration of this representation in relation to real beads see Lightbown, *Mediaeval European Jewellery*, 345. For her Hours see John Plummer, ed., *The Hours of Catherine of Cleves* (New York: G. Braziller, 1966), 116.

¹⁶² See for example an entry in 1576 in Giovambattista Casale's diary which described the women as 'tutti havevano li suoi officii in mano o vero le sue corone'. From Marcora ed., 'Il diario di Giambattista Casale', 288.

¹⁶³ On this phenomenon see Anne Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose: the Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 116.

¹⁶⁴ Lightbown, *Mediaeval European Jewellery* 346. There large market can also be discerned in Esch, 'Roman Customs Registers', 77, 83, 84. Esch notes how 'paternostri de smalti' were imported in large numbers, ranging from shipments of 2,000 to 2,800 among the registers in 1480.

¹⁶⁵ Lightbown, *Mediaeval European Jewellery*, 347.

¹⁶⁶ On Italian confraternities of the rosary see Black, *Italian Confraternities*, 38-9 & 103. Paul de Barry's suggestions for October involve dying (!) with the rosary, sleeping on it, and carrying it around for one day in order to recite the Ave Maria continuously: Paul de Barry, *Le Paradis ouvert à Philagie par cent dévotions à la Mère de Dieu, aisée à pratiquer* (Rouen : Corneille Pitresson, 1655), esp. pp. 302-340.

of their owner.¹⁶⁷ Demonstrating this is a sixteenth-century enamelled gold English paternoster (fig.1.50) that was constructed out of six Paternoster beads or gauds, and fifty Ave beads divided into decades of ten.¹⁶⁸ Similar to this piece, was the description of one of the gifts commissioned by Roberto di Pandolfo Pucci for the vestiture of his daughter Anna at the convent of Sant'Agatha. Its description as a '*rosario corona* with the passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ costing four *giuli*' makes it clear that no specific terminological distinction between rosaries and paternosters was made in either the inventories or in common imagination.¹⁶⁹

In contrast to agnus deis, rosaries and paternosters were widespread throughout the sixteenth century for all sections of society. Nonetheless, as with agnus deis, an accurate quantification of their possession is rendered impossible by the ambiguity of how they were described and used in the inventories. Firstly, while a *corona* could be a rosary or paternoster, it could just as easily refer to a crown or garland headdress; and secondly, many necklaces composed of separate 'beads' or 'buttons' were in all probability used as rosaries or paternosters.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, rosaries and paternosters were liable to be separated and remade into other items of jewellery or subsumed into the quasi-devotional but popular paternoster *cintura* (belt or girdle).¹⁷¹ Finally the numbers of rosaries, paternosters, and agnus deis were usually unhelpfully listed as 'many' or 'various' in the inventories.

Ostensibly mnemonic aides for the recitation of the Lord's Prayer or the Madonna's 'crown', rosaries and paternosters were comprised of a varied number of beads to represent the Lord's passion or Mary's mysteries.¹⁷² The fact that they could be made of humble items, like St. Catherine of Siena's rosary of rope, helps explain the broad appeal of this devotion and the presence of beads in a wide social range of homes. However, at times they were very elaborate and expensive items and like books of hours, constructed specifically to represent their owner's own devotional interests and self-image. The 1492 inventory of the Medici palace records how 'twenty-five paternoster [beads] of unicorn (i.e. Narwhal)' valued at one hundred *fiorini* were kept in Piero's *scrittoio*.¹⁷³ While no entry in the *Pupilli* matches such an exotic substance, many were described as

¹⁶⁷ These observations are made from an analysis of the larger estate inventories in MPAP 153; 154; 155 & 172.

¹⁶⁸ On this piece see Lightbown, *Mediaeval European Jewellery*, 526-528.

¹⁶⁹ ASF, Carte Riccardi 639, *Entrata e Uscita di Cassa di Roberto di Pandolfo Pucci* (1596-1598), 6 March 1597, f.178r.

¹⁷⁰ E.g. the 'corona d'osso di balena con sei paternoster di oro' in Neretto Neretti's estate, ASF, MPP 2657, f.5r, or the 'vezzo di bottoni doro numero 19 et uno agnus deo di peso intutto oncia 1 denari 13' in the *camera su sala* of Capitano Luigi di Girolamo Tolosami's estate c.1585, ASF, MPP 2655, f.645v.

¹⁷¹ E.g. ASF, MPP 2655, f.290v: '1 corona rosso di granati con una pera d'oro col paternostri.'

¹⁷² For the history of rosary beads see the article 'Rosaire' by M-M. Gorce in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* (Paris, 1937), XIII, 2^e partie: 2902-11, and Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose*. More specifically on the paternoster see Lightbown, *Mediaeval European Jewellery*, 342-354. See also Roberta Olson, 'The Rosary and its Iconography,' *Arte Cristiana* 56 (1998): 263-276; 334-342.

¹⁷³ Marco Spallanzani and Giovanna Gaeta Bertelà eds., *Libro d'inventario del beni di Lorenzo il Magnifico* (Florence: Associazione Amici del Bargello, 1992), 48: 'Venticinque paternostri d'unicorno.'

being of intricate workmanship or by specific jewellers such as Bernardo Baldini, and fabricated out of costly materials or, like agnus deis, stored in their own custom cases.¹⁷⁴ Rosaries listed in the inventories were made variously from coral, jet, amber, bone (particularly whale bone), serpentine [*pietra verde*], gold, enamel, crystal, silver, lapis lazuli, ebony and other woods¹⁷⁵.

Even though St. Francis of Paola (1416-1508) used wood precisely for its humility, the elaborate carving, engraving, or 'guarnitione' that accompanied wood often assured that it remained anything but humble (see for example fig.1.51).¹⁷⁶ The expense and intricacy that was invested in rosary beads is hardly surprising given that the recitation and repetition of prayers that they encouraged offered a series of collective credits able to be cashed in for salvation. Rosary beads had many immanent values. Like stone, the different values of wood also carried a symbolic or sensory currency. This can be seen in the interesting exchange of correspondence that concerned the making of a rosary of aloe wood ('legnio aloe') and its ebony box by a 'maestro della corona' for Cosimo I in the middle of the sixteenth century.¹⁷⁷ The choice of material for Cosimo's *corona* is fascinating, as it bears testament to an olfactory history that remains largely unexplored. Aloe was described as a 'wood of the most precious smell' and was important for its medicinal purposes.¹⁷⁸ Indeed, there seems to have been a penchant for prestigious perfumed and health-giving rosaries that can be aligned with the fashion for expensive gloves filled with musk.¹⁷⁹ Prompting a slight modification to the adage that cleanliness is next to Godliness, such a fashion

¹⁷⁴ In an unidentified inventory of 1543, the ducal jeweller is described as the maker of a '[...] corona lapis a vasi grossa hauta...scudi 122; 1a corona di plasmata grossa forata hauta dal detto [Baldini], scudi 31; 1a corona di filo doro hauta dal detto Baldini, scudi 32 [...]', see ASF, MP 2, f.531 (from The Medici Archive Project, Inc.). Specific cases for a coral paternoster, and coral and ebony *corone* are listed for the estate of Giovambattista Strozzi in 1573, ASF, MPP 2664, f.5v; while beautiful descriptions of the jewels belonging to Cammilla Buonfiglia de' Medici da Milano can be found in ASF, MPP 2655, ff.359r-362v.

¹⁷⁵ E.g. in the estate of Giovambattista Strozzi of 1573, the following paternosters and rosaries were listed: 'quattro paternoster rossi d'ambra sciolti', 'una corona di coralli tondi rossi col intera peso d 1.20', 'una corona di ebano nera sfilata in una cassetino di legno', 'una coroncina d'ossa bianca', 'una corona d'ebano col i paternozzi d'oro et tramezati d'oro con un fiocco d'oro cioè bottoncini d'oro piccoli', 'una coroncina di agate di n° 63', 'due filze d'ebani et paternostrini d'osso da portare al collo', 'una coroncina d'ebano semplice et tre altre simile', 'certi paternostrini d'oro e dell'ebano', ASF, MPP 2664, ff.5v-7v.

¹⁷⁶ G. M. Perimezzi, *Vita di San Francesco di Paola*, II (Venice, 1727), 175 as quoted in Lightbown, 345. For remaining examples of intricately carved boxwood rosary beads, see the examples in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (inv. 17.190.475), and the Victoria and Albert Museum (inv. 6921-1860, & A.535 & A-1910).

¹⁷⁷ ASF, MP 1170a, f.330; f.340; MP 1176, f.43. (From The Medici Archive Project, Inc.).

¹⁷⁸ *Crusca*, s.v. 'Aloe': 'è legno di preziosissimo odore'.

¹⁷⁹ Winston-Allen notes that some beads contained a filigree pomander able to be filled with perfume paste, Winston-Allen, *Making of the Rosary*, 112. On the gloves and the rosaries filled with musk and ambergris see Mary Hollingsworth, *The Cardinal's Hat* (London: Profile Books, 2004), 169 & 110-11. Giulio de' Medici's inventory contained 'un Agnes Deo d'oro con una Croce da Cavalieri di S. Stefano piena dentro di pasta profumata [...] scudi 20', ASF, MPP 2657, f.101r, and the inventory of Antonio di Messer Michele Strozzi of 1523 interestingly lists a 'tabernaculo da tener muschio doro lavorato sono in tre cassetini [...]', ASF, MAP 189, sf.242v. Along the same lines were the 'goa boxes' whose insides contained musk, ambergris, and ground stones and pearls (which were believed to have prophylactic and medicinal properties) or the musk-infused *pastiglia* boxes written about by P. de Winter, 'A little known creation of Renaissance decorative arts: the white lead *pastiglia* box,' *Saggi e Memorie di Storia dell'Arte* (14 (1984): 7-42.

must have left the owner with sweetly-smelling ‘clean hands’ in the most moral sense, allowing them to be quickly distinguished from the labouring masses or manual workers. Sweet smelling devotional aids evoked the ‘odour of sanctity’ and were marketed to people’s desire to smell how saints, with their incorruptable bodies, did. In addition, the correspondence regarding Cosimo’s *corona* details not only the difficulty of sourcing enough of the precious ‘aloe wood’ (and the difficulty of dealing with ‘these artisans’), but also the importance that the rosary be sufficiently ‘bella’.¹⁸⁰

The idea that objects dedicated to devotion as well as display should be beautiful is familiar, although one usually examined in the context of quattrocento *palazzi* and family chapel construction.¹⁸¹ Humanist rhetorics of magnificence were combined with a certain strand of Franciscan ideology in a view that was much subscribed to by the wealthy in Renaissance and early modern Florence. The resulting theories permitted conspicuous spending and private consumption by ensuring that the display of beauty was understood as not only ‘pleasing to God’, but connected to moral goodness and civic virtue as well.¹⁸² Writers like Sabba da Castiglione and Giovanni Pontano showed this framework to be flexible enough to include domestic furnishings as well as architecture.¹⁸³ Devotional jewellery like agnus deis and rosaries must be understood in relation to this construction of virtuous identity via display. Despite this, however, the sheer ostentation of paternosters and rosaries had led to their inclusion in sumptuary laws by the mid-sixteenth century.¹⁸⁴ These sumptuary restrictions represented a quite different and more negative view of any civic virtue being entwined with display and expenditure, and a view that was formulated in

¹⁸⁰ ASF, MP 1170a, f.340, letter from Tanai de’Nerli in Venice, to Pier Francesco Riccio in Florence, 4 March 1545: ‘[...] Scritti a V.S. allj XXVIII del passato e li dissi per questo apotatore li manderej la chorona e chasseta d’ebano, il che per rispetto della seratura della chasseta che non è finita non la mando questa sera. E domanj tutto sarà in ordine et per il primo che chostì venga gliene manderò. La chorona di legnio aloe è ruscita bella ella [e la] chassetta spero li satisfarà, che il ò fatto fare alchunj lavorj arabeschj. Et V.S. à da sapere che maj questi artiginaj non dichano el vero quando prometano le chose [...]’. From The Medici Archive, Inc.

¹⁸¹ See however Syson and Thornton, *Objects of Virtue*, 24-32.

¹⁸² Most recently on this see chapter two ‘Private Wealth and Public Benefit: The Nasi and Del Pugliese Palaces,’ in Jill Burke, ‘Form and Power: Patronage and the Visual Arts in Florence’ (PhD diss., London: Courtauld University, 1999). I would like to thank Dr Burke for allowing me to read this prior to its publication as *Changing Patrons: social identity and the visual arts in Renaissance Florence* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004).

¹⁸³ On Pontano see Marta Ajmar, ‘Introduction to Special Issue: Approaches to Renaissance Consumption,’ *Journal of Design History* 15 (2002): 207-9; whilst most recently on Sabba da Castiglione see Anna Rosa Gentilini, ed., *Sabba da Castiglione (1480-1554). Dalle corte rinascimentali alla Commenda di Faenza* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2004).

¹⁸⁴ Lorenzo Cantini, *Legislazione toscana raccolta ed illustrata* 32 vols. (Florence: Stampa Alibizziniana per Pietro Fantosini e figlio, 1800-1808): 4: 404-406: ‘Riforma sopra il vestire, abiti, & ornamenti delle Donne, & Huomini della Città di Fiorenza, e altre cose superflue del di 4 Dicembre 1562’. Regarding married women the text notes that ‘[...] Siale anche permesso portare un palo di paternostri di quel che più le piacerà, purchè la valuta insieme con la nappa, & con la fattura non ecceda la soma di scudi 20 [...]’. An unmarried woman was allowed ‘[...] un paio di Pater’nostri d’oro o di granati senza smalto, non passando con la fattura di scudi 6 [...]’, while a ‘donna contadina’ was restricted to ‘[...] una corona di pater nostri, che non passi la valuta d’un mezzo scudo.’

relation to both class and gender.¹⁸⁵ These laws sought to stipulate the maximum cost of these devotional accoutrements worn by the different categories of married, unmarried, and peasant women that they devised. This sumptuary legislation of the Medicean Duchy, which shows both the key function of clothing and ornaments in constructing social categories as well as the instability of these categories themselves, also points towards the indissoluble links between devotion and fashion. Nonetheless, the rich descriptions of bejewelled rosary beads that were listed in inventories suggest that such regulations had little effect. Period portraits prominently display how sumptuous certain paternosters or rosaries were, and how they could be worn hanging from the girdle, and as the sumptuary laws legislated, around the neck or wrist, or attached by a brooch to the breast (see figs.1.52a –c, 1.53).

The importance of paternosters and rosaries as accessories in portraits of both genders was based on their ability to convey piety with ease. As Ottavia Niccoli has shown in portraits such as that of *Portrait of the doctor Francesco Cavallina with a rosary* (see fig.1.54), the exhibition of rosary beads clearly aimed to signal their user to be a good moral Christian.¹⁸⁶ In addition, the different material of the beads depicted or their size could further distinguish certain aspects of their user's moral (or financial) make-up. Francesco Cavallina's small wooden rosary clearly aided in his portrayal as a humble, meek, and devout servant of God. In contrast, a rosary made from large beads of semi-precious hard stone was chosen for the portrait of the wealthy cleric Pandolfo Ricasoli (fig.1.55). Casually draped on a personal altar alongside other signifiers of a cultured Canon, Pandolfo's rosary helped portray their owner as an educated, discerning, and religiously upright member of the cloth (the latter image being quite ruined by his own subsequent behaviour).¹⁸⁷

The profound effect of including rosary or paternoster beads in a painting can be seen distinctly in Jacopo da Empoli's painting of the Annunciation, which prominently included the

¹⁸⁵ On Florentine sumptuary laws and fashion see Diane Owen Hughes, 'Sumptuary law and social relations in Renaissance Italy,' in *Disputes and Settlements: Law and Human Relations in the West* ed. John Bossy, 69-100 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Ronald E. Rainey, 'Sumptuary Legislation in Renaissance Florence' (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1985); Catherine Killerby Kovesi & Ronald E. Rainey, *Sumptuary Law in Italy 1200-1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Marcello Fantoni, 'L'abito, le regole e la trasgressione: usi e simbologie delle livree alla corte medicea,' in *Le trame della moda* eds. Anna Giulia Cavanga & Grazietta Butazzi (Rome: Bulzoni, 1995); Carole Collier Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families, Fortunes, and Fine Clothing* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba medicale: vesti e società dal XIII al XVI secolo* (Bologna: il Mulino, 1999); and Elizabeth Louise Currie, 'The Fashions of the Florentine Court: Wearing, Making and Buying Clothing, 1560-1620,' (PhD diss., University of Sussex, 2004).

¹⁸⁶ Niccoli also quotes a court case from Bologna whereby in asserting the upright nature of the accused, a witness described him by saying 'che quando è stato di fuori l'ha sempre visto con la corona in mano,' see Ottavia Niccoli, *Storie di ogni giorno in una città del Seicento* (Rome-Bari: Editori Laterza, 2000), 38.

¹⁸⁷ For Ricasoli's trial and condemnation by the Roman Inquisition regarding his spiritual direction at the Institute of Santa Dorotea, see AAF, TIN 54.3, doc.2, and ASF, Segretaria di Gabinetto 155, *inserto* 1, no. 3 'Abiura di Pandolfo Ricasoli e della Faustina Mainardi seguita l'anno 1641 nel Refettorio di Santa Croce in Firenze.'

donor who commissioned it and his son (fig.1.56). An altarpiece for the main altar of San Michele in Poggiolo, the painting of the Annunciation by Empoli resolutely set the patron on the same level as St. Francis: a fact not missed by a Pastoral Visit to the church in 1632, which led to the addition of a halo for the saint in order to help the viewer distinguish the correct spiritual hierarchy.¹⁸⁸ Despite the seemingly blaring incongruity of having a modern-day donor and his child, a thirteenth-century Saint, and a twice-appearing Archangel Michael all pressed into the same space under the narrative of the Annunciation, da Empoli's painting has recently been hailed as 'true to the [biblical] story, devout, simple, and natural in accordance with Post-Tridentine Church guidelines'.¹⁸⁹ Yet the painting is more complex than such a description allows. The relationship between St. Francis and the donor that is struck through their mirrored postures either side of the Angel and their portrayal together on the frontal pictorial plane is further stressed by the rosary that the donor, appearing to have just picked it up off the ground, clasps in his left hand. In single portraits of St. Francis of Assisi from the late-cinquecento onwards, the saint is almost always depicted with a rosary in hand or hanging on his belt (see for example figs.1.57 -1.59). So standardised does the visual vocabulary of this devotion become, that it turns into an efficient and economical way to depict piety whilst simultaneously suggesting how to emulate it. The painting therefore allows the patron and the Saint to be connected through the devotion of the rosary. The stigmata on the Saint's hands and the beads in the layperson's, act not just as memorials for Christ's passion and Mary's mysteries, but in a sense for each other, a point that of course is embodied by the painting as a whole. This linked offering of memory and grace to the celestial intercessors in the painting and the viewer examining it is also extended to the child who bears forth a bouquet of roses as a chaplet for Mary and the scales of St. Michael Archangel.¹⁹⁰ The key way in which rosaries attest to memory is also evident in the important role they play as part of the representational stratagem of 'widow paintings', a genre already noted in relation to *altarini* (see figs.1.40-1.42). The fundamental function of 'widow portraits' was commemorative, in that they fashioned not only a type of female eulogy for the widow's husband and Christ, but in accordance with theological texts and popular preaching, a type of female-as-eulogy. The inclusion of mnemonics such as rosaries therefore connoted not simply the piety of the sitter but the function of the picture and status of the sitter themselves.

Their ability to relay qualities such as piety and orthodoxy in a fashionable way explains how they also functioned within the political and polite currency of gifts aimed at establishing or securing patronage and anchoring the links between family, friends and rulers. Mary Hollingsworth

¹⁸⁸ Rosanna Proto Pisani, Antonio Natali, Carlo Sisi, and Elena Testaferrata eds., *Jacopo da Empoli (1551-1640): Pittore d'eleganza e devozione* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004), 78.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 78.

¹⁹⁰ On the links between the rose and the rosary, see Winston-Allen, *Making of the Rosary*, ch.4, 81-110. For the close link between roses and rosaries see also the *Portrait of Pandolfo Ricasoli* (fig.1.55).

has shown how rosaries formed part of the stock trade of gifts that the cardinal-in-waiting Ippolito d'Este bestowed on important individuals and beautiful women at the French court as he inched towards the red hat (and presumably amorous liaisons).¹⁹¹ Correspondence from the diplomatic networks of the Medicean court reveals a similar situation in Florence, and the *beau monde's* widespread desire for the latest type of bead sets. For example, Giulio Battaglini, who was installed in 1598 as a secret correspondent at the Spanish court to promote Ferdinando I to the new sovereign, wrote urgently to the Grand Duke's *maggiordomo* Piero di Francesco Usimbardi to request two particularly beautiful rosaries for the Sovereign couple, as well as a dozen more to distribute to various court members as 'cose maggior', noting how carved and *leonate* rosaries were particularly in vogue there.¹⁹²

While the materials of rosary beads as diplomatic goods and costume accessories were all-important, the chain of recitation that they prompted was equally valued. Inquisitional files show not just how rosary beads were used in spells for love magic, healing, conjuration and divination, but how the recitation of the Ave Maria and the Paternoster that they prompted were the most used and beloved of all prayers.¹⁹³ For example, Giovanni di Lorenzo Serantelli, who was constantly in front of the Florentine Inquisition in the 1620s over his superstitious healing, explained that his remedies were based around only a few prayers. When asked by the court what particular 'devotione' he had, Giovanni responded that he had no devotions other than the Ave Maria, the Paternoster, some lauds, the *Salve Regina* and the *Credo*.¹⁹⁴ Maddalena da Montevarchi who in 1638 found herself in a trial of the Florentine Inquisition for *sortegli*, stated that she had no prayers other than the ones permitted by the Holy Church: the Paternoster, the Ave Maria, and the commandments.¹⁹⁵ In fact, both the physical evidence of the beads in household inventories as well as their recitation as prayers recorded in the Inquisition files, show that the mechanical recitation of

¹⁹¹ Hollingsworth, *The Cardinal's Hat*, 67; 110-1; 121; 263. In addition, Hollingsworth, p.117, notes that the 1535 inventory of Ippolito's belongings records six rosaries of lapis lazuli, agate, and garnets, as well as 181 spare rosary beads.

¹⁹² ASF, MP 5113, f.90, letter to Piero Usimbardi in Florence, from Giulio Battaglini in Madrid, 1 March 1584: '[...] Qui è una gran voglia di quelle corone intagliate leonate et io ne son debitore d'un paio al maiordomo dell'Imperatrice [Maria de Austria] con obligo di fargliele venir col primo corriere. V.S. mi faccia favore di farmi provvedere di queste due subito delle più belle et dappoi con la prima commodità mandare una dozzina che sarà a proposito per regalar certi soggetti schivi di ricever cose maggior [...]'. On Battaglia, see Marcello Del Piaggio, 'Gli ambasciatori toscani del principato,' *Notizie degli Archivi di Stato* XII (1952): 57-106, 89.

¹⁹³ On the use of rosary or paternoster beads in magic see for example AAF, TIN. 39.26, doc.1 (3 December 1639); AAF, TIN. 39.07, doc.8 (1625-1628); AAF, TIN. 39.14 (20 April 1637), unpaginated. See also Ruth Martin, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition in Venice 1550-1650* (Oxford & New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 104, who notes the parallel between conjuration spells and the recitation of the rosary, and p.106 for a description of a spell called 'Corona di Giuda'.

¹⁹⁴ AAF, TIN. 39.26, doc.8, f.154v: 'Io non ho altre devotioni che l'Avemaria et il paternoster e delle laude et la salve regina et il credo.'

¹⁹⁵ AAF, TIN. 39.18, doc.6, f.106r: '[...] io non oratione nesuna se non le consuete di Santa Chiesa come il Pater nr' Ave M.a, e commandamenti.'

the Ave Maria and the Paternoster were the most diffuse devotions in Post-Tridentine Italy for lay people. Given that they were formed through memory and material and thereby dispensed with the need for a text, these two devotions were equally popular for the literate as well as illiterate populace. This popularity ensured that the Ave Maria and the Paternoster were the prayers most likely to be said during healing rites, or reformulated into blasphemous rhymes, like the one the prostitute Margherita di Sebastiano dei Cucchi da Mugello taught to her client in 1639.¹⁹⁶ While Giovanni was himself confused whether it was God or the *corona* that healed his clients, the rosary certainly helped, and its pronouncement invariably, albeit sometimes subversively, carried with it the authority and force of the Church.¹⁹⁷ It is this last point that explains its inclusion within the punishments that the Inquisition ruled. People like Giovanni, Margherita, and Maddalena, were ordered not just to abstain from past superstitious practices, fast on Fridays and take frequent confession, but to recite the rosary (in its unadulterated version) at least once a week for three or more years.

BREVI AND BRIEVICINI

Between four to ten percent of all households sampled between 1480 and 1654 were inventoried as containing *brevi*, *brievi* or *brevicini*, and this figure must be understood as a very conservative one. Florio in his 1611 dictionary glosses these as ‘a warrant, a note, a word, a motto, an emblem, a posie’ and ‘a little marvell, a Pamphlet’.¹⁹⁸ A year later the *Vocabulario degli Accademici della Crusca* defined them more succinctly as writings sewn into little items that are worn tied at the neck for devotion, and connected them etymologically and conceptually to papal *brevi*.¹⁹⁹ The term *breve* can also be understood to refer to the fact that the texts that formed the

¹⁹⁶ On their use within healing rites see for example the 1629 case against Ginevra Gaggiolli da Uzzano for *medicines supersiziose*. In order to cure Constatino di Michele Benedetti da Pescia’s son from a *mal degl’occhi*, Ginevra ‘[...] prese tre mazetti di ruta finocchio e verbeneca con acqua fresca boccandolgi ochi tre volte con ogni mazzetto e mis disse che diceva il pater noster e l’Ave Maria [...]’, AAF, TIN.39.11, doc.1, unpaginated. For the prostitute Margherita di Sebastiano dei Cucchi see, AAF, TIN. 39.26, doc.1, unpaginated: ‘[...] e le parole sono questa, prima si deve vano dire p pr’nr’ e q Avemaria e poi le segnati parole Ave giustitiate per tutto il mondo andate forte levate accompagnate forte impiciate forte squarante poccasti la fune tutte quand vi piedi invizzarete al Cuore del popolo voi andrete se qui me lo merrete tanto bene da me havete e si dovevano tenere le mani di dietro co la Corona in mano e dicendosi e facendosi queste cose si doveva camminare per la Casa e queste cose me le insegno da sola a sola nella detta Casa della sudetta Margherita mentre dormivamo insieme e credo d havrebe fatto da 8 o 10 volte in circa, e perchè mi sono andato a confessore il Confessore mi ha obbligata a comparire avanti questo Santo Offitio come pronta ho eseguito li suoi comandi [...]’.

¹⁹⁷ AAF, TIN. 39.26, doc.8, f.154v: ‘[...] vedoche il dire quella corona fussi bene e non so se è guarito perche io dissi quella corona che non lo so.’

¹⁹⁸ Florio, s.v. ‘breve’ and ‘brevicino’.

¹⁹⁹ VAC, s.v. ‘breve’: ‘piccola scrittura cucita, in che che si sia, che si porta al collo per devozione.’

basis of these charms were usually themselves 'brief'.²⁰⁰ In all probability, these amulets and charms could be stitched together out of heterogeneous materials and anything that had religious or sacred symbols, words or images on it, or was somehow connected to sacral space (such as earth from a churchyard or grass over which the procession of *Corpus Dei* had passed).²⁰¹ *Brevi* could also be comprised of various herbs or any one of the large number of printed or copied prayers sold by peddlers or itinerant travellers around Italy. These miscellaneous artefacts were gathered together in a ritual, and then folded, rolled, sealed or stitched to form an amulet whose contents were not to be revealed.²⁰² The finished product could be worn as a necklace, pinned to the body or stored in a pocket as a protective device to ward off either general misfortune or more specific threats.

Although *brevia* were believed only capable of protecting when they were carried on the person, the fact that they were listed within the day-to-day paraphernalia of households suggests that they could be employed at will for specific purposes and lengths of time. The late fifteenth-century example of Jean Guillemer (an illuminator who was interrogated in 1472 for a plot against Louis XI) shows that many different *brevia* were in fact used at a single time. When Guillemer was arrested, he was found to have numerous *brevia* on him that contained prayers for healing, prayers against sudden death, charms to calm men when fighting, and formulas to obtain the love of a woman.²⁰³ The large number of *brevi* that Guillemer wore corresponded with the often large number listed in the inventories, and indeed some Florentine households contained up to eleven individual *brevi*.²⁰⁴

Although Guillemer's charms show that the remit of maladies that *brevi* encompassed was large, the majority of *brevi* found in homes were connected to children. For instance, the estate of Messer Raffaello di Messer Giulio contained a 'small ivory box with eight *brevi* for children', while a more elaborate 'child's *brieve* of mother of pearl in half gold' was kept in Bartolomeo Corriere's *scrittoio* in 1560.²⁰⁵ Given high infant mortality rates from the medieval to early modern times, it is hardly surprising that *brevi* were often intended for children. These *bustini* of *brevi* or other prophylactic charms must have accompanied children alongside the ubiquitous coral necklaces and

²⁰⁰ On *breve* see Franco Cardini, 'Il "breve" (secoli XIV-XV): tipologia e funzione,' *La Ricerca Folklorica* 5 (1982): 63-73, and also Bozoky, *Charmes et priers*, 74-78.

²⁰¹ Martin, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition*, 131.

²⁰² Boccaccio provides a parody of the ingredients necessary for composing a *breve* (a live bat, virgin paper, three granules of incense, a blessed candle) and its ritualistic fabrication, see Giovanni Boccaccio, *Decameron*, ed. Cesare Segre (Milan: Mursia, 1966), IX:5, 570-71.

²⁰³ Bozoky, *Charmes et priers*, 77-78.

²⁰⁴ See ASF, MPP 2657, f.80v: '11 brevi da bambina'; f.552r: '11 brevi di più sorte', f.372r: '4 brevi in uno scatolino.'

²⁰⁵ ASF MPP, 2668, 90v: 'un cassetino d'avorio con otto brevi da bambini'; ASF, MPP 2651, f.480r: 'un brieve da bambino di madre perle messo oro'. For other notices of 'brevi da bambini' see MPP 2651, f.241r; 242v: '2 brevi da bambini'; MPP 2660, f.12r: '1 altra scatola entrovi più brevi da bambini'; MPP 2648, f.337r: '1 altro scatolino con 2 brevi da bambini'; MPP 2648, f.337r '1 altro scatolino con 2 brevi da bambini'.

bracelets (coral was believed to have thaumaturgic properties) that were also worn to ward-off sicknesses and malevolent curses such as the *malocchio* (see figs. 1.60-1.62).²⁰⁶ Sometimes the *brevi* were themselves composed of coral, or included coral alongside other religious and secular bits and bobs, like the ‘three *brevi* with two [pieces of] coral and three silver *grossi* of the Virgin Mary and a silver cross’ that were kept in Benedetto di Bartolomeo Malgotti’s *camera* in 1539.²⁰⁷ The description of Malgotti’s amulets is remarkably similar to the charms in Bernardino Detti’s *Madonna della Pergola* (1532) that St. John the Baptist profers to the infant Christ, whom he presciently realised would be needing as much protection as he could get (fig.1.63). As Christiane Klapisch-Zuber first noted, the talisman that St. John passes to the Christ child is comprised of a coral branch, an agnus dei container or reliquary inscribed with the words ‘Ecce Agnus Dei’, a wolf’s tooth, and a cross.²⁰⁸ This selection of heterogeneous objects aimed to armour the infant against impending evils, as well as providing the double function of a teething toy.

The inventories show how *brevi* were placed in lockets or similarly combined with, for example, agnus deis, crucifixes, pearls, religious coins, and animal teeth, to form elaborate and prophylactic items of jewellery. For example, a gold *brieve* and cross attached to a gold loop-chain was listed in the sculptor Benevenuto Cellini’s estate, while a ‘bunch of six gold chains twisted in the Neapolitan style with a *brieve* containing an image of Christ, weighing 4 2/3 *oncie*’ was found in Francesco d’Andrea Rucellai’s estate of 1559.²⁰⁹ The inventories also show how *brevi* could be stitched into little bags of velvet, silk, or *raso* (a silk cloth of a satin weave), in order to be worn at the neck or girdle, while relics could further boast the talismanic functions of these devices.²¹⁰

Although the charms that St. John gives to the infant Christ in Detti’s picture do not include a little bundle of words, the scroll of text that unfurls from the Baptist’s left hand (from John 1:29) acts as a reminder to the importance that the word had to these talismans. The linguistic component to *brevia* was in fact essential and made them part of what Franco Cardini has termed the

²⁰⁶ On the properties of coral see Danièle Alexandre-Bidon, ‘La dent e le corail ou la parure prophylactique de l’enfance à la fin du Moyen Age,’ *Razo (Cahiers du Centres d’Etudes Médiévales de Nice)* 7 (1987): 5-35. For the Italian custom, established in the fourteenth-century, of giving newborn infants a piece of coral to wear around their necks see John Cherry, ‘Healing through faith: the continuation of medieval attitudes to jewellery into the Renaissance,’ *Renaissance Studies* 15 (2001): 154-171, 155.

²⁰⁷ ASF, MPP 2648, f.219v: ‘3 brevi col 2 coralli e 3 grossi dargento dlla VM i[n] una crocetta dargento.’ See also ASF, MPP 2648, f.485r: ‘1 vezo di coralli con 2 brevi involtini una peza.’

²⁰⁸ Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family and Ritual*, 149.

²⁰⁹ For Cellini see ASF MPP 2661, f.57r: ‘uno breuve tutto doro una croce per letter col una chatenuzza doro arotelline;’ for Rucellai MPP 2651, f.355r: ‘1 mazo di catene doro arotelline alla napoletana di 6 fila col uno brieve dentrovi la immagine di cristo, oncie 4 2/3.’

²¹⁰ E.g. ASF, MPP 2660, f.44r: ‘1 brevi di velluto rosso;’ f.592v: ‘2 brevi coperti raso verde;’ MPP 2651, f.319: ‘2 brevi di seta;’ MAP 189, f.175v: ‘2 brievi in uno bustono di raso rosso’. Regarding relics, see the testimony of the Pratese painter Stefano d’Antonio Parenti describing how he had made the relics of ‘certa particella di interiori’ of St. Caterina de’ Ricci into four ‘brevi e cert’altre particelle, che ho in una scatola [...]’: ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, Processus 794, f.8v

'superstition of the written', a category which included various apotropaic prayers or spells.²¹¹ In contrast to other types of prayers also to be worn on the body, the contents of *brevi* were to remain forever undisclosed and secret.²¹² Indeed, in direct contrast to other charms and prayers whose power came through their invocation, the power of *brevia* resided not in the utterance or reading of the text that they contained but in the materiality of the text and its silence. Although the inventories never in fact reveal the text of the *brevi* that they recorded, the texts from Guillemar's collection or rare surviving examples of *brevia* show that they were usually quotations from (or parodies of and allusions to) the Sacred Scriptures combined with often-bizarre admixtures of divine names or symbols.²¹³

The widespread use of these *brevi* and the words that they contained came increasingly under scrutiny. Mary Rose O'Neil has shown how Diocesan synods in the second-half of the sixteenth century aimed at reducing popular dependence on magical techniques, with the 1577 synod of Bologna instructing local clergy to '[...] collect all those incantations, superstitions and *brevi da portar adosso* bearing superstitious words, unapproved names and similar abuses. Even if the words do not appear to be evil, they should give us notice of these superstitions, for we plan to compile a *libretto* warning about such matters.'²¹⁴ Similar decrees were issued in both Venice and Milan, and the Roman Inquisition sent widespread warnings against superstitious letters and prayers to Bishops' offices throughout Italy.²¹⁵ We do not know whether or not the book planned by the Archbishop's office in Bologna was ever realised, but the direction to priests to act as ethnographic hunters of their parishioners, certainly marks a growing attention towards and policing of popular religious practices by the Church authorities. The Catholic Church, whose hand was forced by Protestantism, had become more sensitive in attempting to define the difference between religion

²¹¹ Cardini, 'Il "breve",' 63.

²¹² *Ibid.*, esp. pp.63-4.

²¹³ For surviving examples see Cardini, 'Il "breve",' 72, and Bozoky, *Charmes et priers*, 75.

²¹⁴ O'Neil, 'Discerning Superstition,' 6.

²¹⁵ Ruth Martin notes a similar Venetian decree of 1573 which advised the clergy to find out 'what prayers they [the masses] know, what devotions they have, what books they use, what Agnus Dei they possess, how they are joined in matrimony, what signs and rituals they use in signing themselves, in genuflecting, in saying their devotions, and such like, so that you may be able to find out their errors and correct them, and warn them to bring forward their superstitious books and Agnus Dei and prohibited prayers, so that superstitious religion may die out and the holy [religion] may thrive and flourish': see Martin, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition*, 247. During the fourth diocesan synod of Milan in 1576, Carlo Borromeo ordered parish priests to compile a list of all superstitious behaviour to be presented at the next synod: 'Quantam in religione stabilenda atque agenda laboris ponendum est, tantum in superstitione ex hominum mentibus evellanda, curae ac diligentiae est impendendum. Quare Parochi diligenter ei rei inviligent: ac si quod proximam Synodum, tempore quod Episcopus praestituerit, ad illum in scriptis deferant; ut ei malo occorri opportune possit,' as quoted in Ottavio Lurati, 'Superstizioni lombarde (e leventinesi del tempo di San Carlo Borromeo),' *Vox Romanica* 27 (1968): 229-249, 229. Similarly, Cardinal Arrigoni Pompeo wrote to the Florentine Inquisitor recommending that all magical and superstitious things 'che hanno dipendenza da scritte perniciose' be collected and burnt in a public bonfire: see AAF, TIN 6. 34, letter 4, 24 August 1608). Another warning was sent some twenty years later regarding the dissemination of superstitious 'lettere et orationi' throughout the city that were bought 'con credulità de' semplici che sieno buone contro la peste', see Cardinal Antonio Barberini's letter of 28 September 1630, AAF, TIN 7.21, doc. 28, letter no.6.

and superstition. Holy water and other sacramentals were tolerated: *brevia* were to be silenced forever. Nonetheless, the steady percentage of *brevi* found in Tuscan homes up until the mid-seventeenth century, suggests that such superstitious practices, linked to a multifarious array of objects, remained securely embedded in the daily lives of congregations.

A more faithful investigation into the ‘papist’s’ objects drawn in Bernard Garter’s book, could align the pilgrims’ badges, religious jewelry, bells, incense, and confraternity belongings also occasionally listed in inventories, alongside the possessions described here. Nonetheless, this chapter has highlighted and explained the more ubiquitous devotional furniture and accessories found in a wide range of Florentine homes and the ones that became increasingly collected from the end of the sixteenth century. Despite the fact that these belongings (and the practices associated with them) offered a rather wobbly tightrope between sanctity and superstition, their place within lay households was consolidated Post-Trent. The assembled religious belongings described here were used to create a domestic para-liturgical practice believed capable of directly accessing the divine and the protection (or retribution) that it offered. Moreover, these objects materially shaped and structured the religious belief, comportment, and homes of their consumers. The next chapter goes on to discuss the religious image at home: the central object in Garter’s print and often the central object amid the various devotional belongings discussed here.

Chapter Two

RELIGIOUS ART AT HOME

INTRODUCTION

Images provided a focal point for the sacramentals and other types of religious furnishings discussed in the previous chapter. Indeed, the rising number of images in Florentine homes matched the overall increase in goods that took place during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Accompanying this increase was the publication of a substantial number of treatises specifically concerned with the correct roles and figurative strategies of producing, interpreting and owning art, as well as numerous spiritual texts that sought to regulate and encourage specific devotional practices and domestic roles. Both genres of writing showed themselves acutely aware of the 'affects' or *affetti* that viewing art might have and formed a sophisticated and hierarchical classificatory system encompassing not just the viewer and the object viewed, but also the process of viewing itself.¹ Post-Trent, such schemes of visual classification became increasingly politicised. The role of images as an instrument of Christian discipline was consciously exploited to maintain orthodox tenets and retain or assert divisions between the confessional divide, the sacred and the profane, the public and the private, the civic and the familial.² As numerous other scholars have

¹ See for example Gabriele Paleotti's (1522-97) description of viewing and viewers in his *Discorso Intorno alle Imagini Sacre et Profane* (1582), ed. Paolo Prodi (repr., Bologna: Arnaldo Forni Editore, 1990). Paleotti posited three modes of viewing (sensual, rational and spiritual) that correspond to the classes by which he divides society (*idioti, pittori / lettori, spirituali*), which are themselves divided into different levels of viewers (namely, the *sensuali* and the *spirituali*). In order to further explain the modes of viewing relative to the class of viewer, Paleotti discerned four principal qualities to sacred painting (*confessio, pulchritude, sanctimonia, and magnificentia*) that corresponded to various facets of painting (e.g. *disegno, colore*, subject matter). Paleotti's text is discussed in Pamela M. Jones, 'Art Theory as Ideology: Gabriele Paleotti's Hierarchical Notion of Painting's Universality and Reception,' in *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450-1650*, ed. Claire Farago, 127-139 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

² Among Christian art theories, see Paleotti, *Discorso*; Antonio Possevino, *Tractatio de poesi et pictura, ethnica, humana et sacra* (Bologna, 1593); Johann Molanus, *Traité des saintes images*, 1570, trans. François Boespflug, Olivier Christin and Benoît Tassel (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1996); Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Padova: Pietro Paolo Tozzi, 1611). A large number of sixteenth-century art treatises, including Federico Borromeo's and Paleotti's, are reproduced in Paola Barocchi, ed. *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento fra Manierismo e Controriforma*. Bari: Giuseppe Laterza & Figli, Tipografi-Editori-Librari, 1960. A substantial bibliography on Tridentine image theory can be found in Pamela M. Jones, *Federico Borromeo and the Ambrosiana* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993):114-26. The intersection between art theory and Christianity has been investigated by Paolo Prodi, 'Sulla Teorica delle arti figurative nella riforma cattolica,' *Archivio Italiano per la storia della Pietà* 4 (1965): 121-212; Sydney Freedberg, 'Molanus on Provocative

noted, the writings of S. Bernardino of Siena, Giovanni Dominici and Savonarola acknowledged this point early-on, demonstrating how religious art was widely perceived to have a plurality of useful (and dubious) functions for all life-stages.³ By operating simultaneously as both a sacred object and a pedagogical 'visual' text (whether for the illiterate in general, or the education of children and females in particular), religious images communicated appropriate and gender-specific models of sanctity that the viewer could aspire towards, even as they helped to inculcate and preserve Christian values. Believed capable of quite literally forming behaviour and understanding, images became easily appropriated as banners of social and religious orthodoxy.⁴ The Church's position that the disfigurement or striking of a sacred image was a heretical crime analogous in gravity to the sin of polygamy clearly recognised the power of images.⁵ So did the third and final sitting of the Council of Trent. Even though mindful of the potentially corruptive powers that images possessed and the need for bishops to ensure their regulation, the twenty-fifth session of Trent explicitly affirmed the key role sacred images had in establishing faith, maintaining the cult of

Paintings,' *JWCI* 34 (1971): 229-36; Valeria de Laurentiis, 'Immagini ed arte in Bellarmino,' in *Bellarmino e la Controriforma*, ed. Romeo De Maio, 581-608 (Sora: Centro Studi Sorani Patriarca, 1990); Giuseppe Scavizzi, 'La teologia cattolica e le immagini durante il XVI secolo,' *Storia dell'Arte* 21(1974): 171-213; Scavizzi, 'Storiographia ecclesiastica e arte nel secolo Cinquecento,' *Storia dell'Arte* 59 (1987): 29-46; Scavizzi, 'La controversia sull'arte sacra nel secolo XVI,' *Cristianesimo nella Storia* XIV (1993): 569-593. Regarding texts of spiritual 'economia', see Prodi, 'Sulla teorica delle arti'; Daniela Frigo, *Il Padre di famiglia* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1985); Manuela Doni Garfagnini, 'Autorità maschile e ruoli femminili: le fonti classiche degli 'Economici', in *Donna, Disciplina, Creanza Cristiana dal XV al XVII secolo*, ed. Gabriella Zarri, 237-251 (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1996); Maria Fubini Leuzzi, 'Vita coniugale e vita familiare nei trattati italiani fra XVI e XVII secolo,' in *Donna, Disciplina, Creanza*, 253-267.

³ Giovanni Dominici, *Regola del Governo di Cura Familiare*, ed. Donato Salvi (Florence, 1860), 131-2. On Dominici see (among others) Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family and Ritual*, 310-29; Daniel Bornstein, 'Spiritual Kinship and Domestic Devotions,' in *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. Judith C. Brown and Robert C. Davis, 173-192 (London & New York: Longman, 1998), 188-9; Shulamith Shahar, *Childhood in the Middle Ages* (London & New York: Routledge, 1990), 116; Richard Trexler, *Public Life*, 88 & 377. On Bernardino see Trexler, *Public Life*, 55 & 71, and Daniel Arasse, 'Entre devotion et culture: fonctions de l'image religieuse au X^{ve} siècle,' in *Faire Croire*, 131-46 (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1981), 137. On Savonarola see Gustave Gruyer, *Les Illustrations des écrits de Jérôme Savonarole et les paroles de Savonarole sur l'art* (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot, 1879), 60-84, and Grubb, *Provincial Families*, 192. On the role of the image in Savonarola's *Ars bene moriendi* and in death rituals see Samuel Y. Edgerton, *Pictures and Punishment: Art and Criminal Prosecution During the Florentine Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), chap.5, while for a similar standpoint on the role of pictorial representations, see Pier Paolo Vergerio the Elder's (1370-c.1445) comments reproduced in John M. McManamon, 'Pier Paolo Vergerio (the Elder) and the Beginnings of the Humanist Cult of Jerome,' *Catholic Historical Review* 81 (1985): 353-71, 361.

⁴ Regarding the advice given by Maffeo Vegio (1406-1458) in his opus *De educatione liberorum et eorum claris moribus* to keep an appropriate picture in view during conception so as not to implant a deformed foetus, see Grubb, *Provincial Families*, 191-92.

⁵ Cardinal Antonio Barberini's letter to the Florentine Inquisitor of 26 June 1632, discusses the '[...] cognizione delle cause de' percussori e deturpatori dell'sacre imagine spetta privatamente al santo off^o per contenere questo delitto il fatto hereticale [...]', AAF, TIN 7.21, doc.28, letter no. 18. The severe punishment given to Antonio Rinaldeschi (ostensibly for throwing horse manure at a picture of the Virgin Mary in Florence) helps provide a contextualisation of the broad social values placed on religious images, see William J. Connell and Giles Constable, *Sacrilege and Redemption in Renaissance Florence: The Case of Antonio Rinaldeschi* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2005).

saints, and providing a strong exemplary, educational and commemorative function for the lay populace.⁶

These roles of images need to be read against a range of issues typically understood as secular. Thus, the roles of religious art should be interpreted in the light of the proliferating presence of artworks in the home and the entrenchment of a social practice of *collezionismo* which helped to create Giulio Mancini's (1558-1630) concept of the 'uomo di gusto' ('gentleman of taste').⁷ Just as the expanding interior of the fifteenth-century private *palazzo* helped to create specific art forms, such as small table-top bronzes, the *tondo* or painted *cassoni*, so too did the domestic interior offer an alternative exhibition space to the traditional ones of church and *piazza*.⁸ For example, Francesco Bocchi's late sixteenth-century guidebook of Florence offered the visitor a topography not only studded with the pious and civic places of interest, but additionally a plan to the private art collections held within palaces and upon which, in part, rested the *bellezza* of the city.⁹ The growing importance that domestic art collections acquired meant that new models of viewing religious images were self-consciously constructed around social and aesthetic ideals, and not just traditional tripartite Christian 'theologies' of vision.¹⁰

This chapter seeks to provide a foundation on which these differing intersections could be further examined. By interrogating archival and primary sources, the chapter provides a statistical

⁶ Tanner, ed. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:775-6.

⁷ Giulio Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, c.1630. 2 vols., ed. Adriana Marucchi (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1956). On Mancini see Robert Klein, 'Judgement and Taste in Cinquecento Art Theory,' in *Form and Meaning. Essays on Renaissance and Modern Art*, 161-69 (New York: Viking Press, 1979).

⁸ On Florentine sculpture see Anthea Brook, 'Sculptors in Florence During the Reign of Grand Duke Ferdinando II of Tuscany (1621-1670): Ferdinando Tacca and His Circle' (PhD thesis, Courtauld Institute, 1986), and John T. Paoletti, 'Familiar Objects: Sculptural Types in the Collections of the Early Medici,' in *Looking at Italian Renaissance Sculpture*, ed. Sarah Blake McHam, 79-110 (1998; repr.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). For the *tondo* as a domestic art form see Roberta J. M. Olson, *The Florentine Tondo* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). On *cassoni* see Paul Schubring, *Cassoni, Truhen, and Truhen Bilder der Italienischen Fru Hrenaissance*. 2 vols (2nd edn., Leipzig, 1923); Ernst H. Gombrich, 'Apollonio di Giovanni: A Florentine Cassone Workshop Seen through the Eyes of a Humanist Poet,' *JWCI* 18 (1955): 16-34; Ellen Callman, *Apollonio di Giovanni* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974); Paul Watson, *The Garden of Love in Tuscan Art of the Early Renaissance* (Philadelphia: The Art Alliance Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1979); Graham Hughes, *Renaissance Cassoni, Masterpieces of Early Italian Art: Painted Marriage Chests 1400-1550* (London: Art Books International, 1997); Cristelle Louise Baskins, *Cassone Painting, Humanism and Gender in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁹ Francesco Bocchi, *Le Bellezze della Città di Fiorenza* (Florence: n.p., 1591); Francesco Bocchi and Giovanni Cinelli, *Le Bellezze della Città di Firenze* (1677, repr., Bologna: Forni, 1973). Later guidebooks similarly offer itineraries of private *palazzi* see, for example, Jacopo Carlieri, *Ristretto delle cose più notabili della città di Firenze* (Florence: Eredi di Francesco Onofri, 1689); Ferdinando Leopoldo Del Migliore, *Firenze città Nobilissima Illustrata*. 3 vols. (1684, repr., Arnaldo Forni Editore, 1976).

¹⁰ On Christian structures of viewing devotional art see, for example, Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (1965, repr., Beukenlaan: Davaco, 1983), 15-17, and the contributions to this topic in R. S. Nelson, ed., *Visuality before and beyond the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) and J. F. Hamburger & A.-M. Bouché, eds., *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

basis for domestic art collections (see the tables in Appendix B). Implicit in this aim is the need for a more accurate understanding of the ways in which religious art in the early modern period encoded and upheld domestic space, spiritual and social relations and, conversely, how domestic space informed the way in which these images were received, perceived and used. In doing so, the chapter is based on a number of premises.

It relies on the assumption that religious art was not solely decorative, but instead helped form identities of belief within the quotidian realities of the home by providing a concrete point that mediated between the ideal and the real, and compressed the past within the present, and the sacred within the secular. Indeed, the belief that saints and other divine figures would inhabit their representations and thereby guard (or spy) over the home's inhabitants was widespread.¹¹ These notions can be linked to David Morgan's assertion that religious images provide material evidence which helps reveal social relations, as well as offering what Richard Trexler has called, and Giovanni Dominici and Gabriele Paleotti had long since recognized, the 'training ground for [...] larger public effusions'.¹² Indeed, in his suggestions to have many devotional pictures in the house, Cardinal Silvio Antoniano (1540-1603) presented the home as sharing the same function as a church by acting as a repository of the sacred.¹³ He further allowed that domestic religious pictures were able to function as 'spiritual gardens for the recreation of the soul', and thereby stressed the essential importance that devotional images had in constructing a spiritual landscape for the home.¹⁴ Despite Roger Chartier's assertion that 'it was the written word that sustained the more intimate forms of piety', a much higher proportion of Florentines owned devotional images than devotional texts, and their relationship with these images needs to be examined rigorously.¹⁵ Drawing

¹¹ See Gentilcore, *From Bishop to Witch*, 185-87 and Martin, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition*, 102. On the transference of a saint's healing attributes to their images see Gentilcore, 'Contesting Illness in Early Modern Naples: Miracolati, Physicians, and the Congregation of Rites,' *Past and Present* 148 (1995): 117-148, 121.

¹² David Morgan, *Visual Piety. A History and Theory of Religious Images* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1998), 2; Richard Trexler, *Church and Community 1200 – 1600* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1987), 57.

¹³ Silvio Antoniano, *Tre libri dell'educatione christiana dei figliuoli* (Verona: Sebastiano dalle Donne & Girolamo Stringari, 1584), 54v: 'Sarà adunque espediente che il padre di famiglia habbia di molte pitture in casa, le quali movano a divotione et siano, come si è detto memoriali al fanciullo, et a tutti di casa, di rivolger spesso la mente nostra a Dio, et avvezzi il fanciulloa guardarle et a salutarle riverentemente, non solo in casa, et nelle Chiese dove maggiormente dovremo unirli con Dio [...]'.
¹⁴ Antoniano, *Tre libri dell'educatione*, f.54v: 'come per esempio, i quindici misterii del santo Rosario della Madonna, et simili, et si fatti luoghi sono come giardini spirituali, per recreatione dell'anima.'

¹⁵ Roger Chartier, ed. *Passions of the Renaissance, A History of Private Life*, ed. Philippe Ariès and George Duby (Cambridge, Mass. & London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1989), III:18. Chartier's comment also ignores the commonplace function of images as texts for the illiterate, or 'books for the simple'. See, for example, Geiler von Kaisersberg's counsel that 'If you cannot read, then take a picture of paper where Mary and Elizabeth are depicted as they meet each other, you buy it for a penny. Look at it and think how happy they had been, and of good things [...] Thereafter show yourself to them in an outer reveration, kiss the image on the paper, bow in front of the image, kneel before it [...]', from O. Clemen, *Die Volksfrömmigkeit des ausgehenden Mittelalters (Studien zur religiösen Volkskunde, 3)*, Dresden & Leipzig, 1937, 14, as quoted in Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, 29. By the 1620s, at least 77.8% of estates sampled in the

attention to the fundamental position that both books and images held, a priest in the Monza region during Carlo Borromeo's tenure as Bishop wrote how improper pictures 'are not less scandalous than dishonest books' and should be treated accordingly.¹⁶

Aside from the number of images that each household possessed, their central role as a focal point for prayer and devotion is attested to in devotional texts, hagiographies, and diaries.¹⁷ Their pivotal function in constructing both individual and collective identities, memories, genealogies, and status can likewise be discerned from documents and surviving visual evidence. Imparting intercessionary and apotropaic powers to its possessor and viewer, religious art could, as Morelli's diary clearly shows, be the nexus for a highly ritualised set of behaviours that helped constitute identity, and shape worldly and celestial social relations.¹⁸ Drawing on a tradition of spiritual writings, such as pseudo-Bonaventura's *Meditations on the Life of Christ* or Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ* which stressed the necessity of 'imaging', pictures became the 'spiritual props' which provided the privileged starting point for a process of devotional visualization and meditation which would ultimately lead to an introspection that could reveal the divine beyond the visual itself.¹⁹ This role of the image and of the eye in structuring meditation and acting as spiritual prompts was central in sixteenth-century texts such as St. Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* (1548), Passarello's and Regio's *Vite* of St. Francis of Paula (1573 and 1591 respectively), or St. Teresa of Avila's *Life* (completed 1565, published 1588). During the

Pupilli inventories had images compared to the c.50% that owned books, see Chapter Three, and Appendices B (Table 2.1), and D (Table 4.1).

¹⁶ 'In Monza, in una casa nel'aprire di una pusterla si vedono à l'incontro nel muro alcune pitture dishoneste. E d'avertir in queste pitture, et altre che representino la vera historia, et che siano fatte con decoro. Remedio di comandar ai curati che non assolvono quelli che tengano tale pitture prima che siano corrette, emendate ò casse, perchè non sono meno scandalose che i libri dishonesti', Archivio Arcivescovile di Milano, *Archivio Spirituale Sez. XIV*, vol. 67 (c.1575), q.5, f.1r, as quoted in Lurati, 'Pene ai Bestemmiatori', 48.

¹⁷ The role of images in the Lives of St. Catherine of Alexandria and Blessed Umiliana de' Cerchi is discussed in Schmidt, *Painted Piety*, 10-14.

¹⁸ Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1956), 475-488; Richard Trexler, 'In Search of Father: The Experience of Abandonment in the Recollections of Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli,' *History of Childhood Quarterly* 3 (1975): 224-252. Their use within elaborate domestic religious rituals is attested to by F. Marchini, *De Belli divini, sive Pestilentis temporis accurate et luculenta speculatio theological, canonica, civilis, politica, historica, philosophica* (Florence: Sermartelliana, 1633) and Pierre Le Brun, *Histoire critique des pratiques superstitieuses* (Amsterdam, 1733), as noted by Giulia Calvi, *Histories of a Plague Year. The Social and Imaginary in Baroque Florence*, trans. Dario Biocca and Bryant T. Jnr Ragan (Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1989), 263, n.26.

¹⁹ The term 'spiritual props' comes from Henk van Os, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300 – 1500* (London & Amsterdam: Merrell Holberton & Rijksmuseum, 1994), 99. Regarding the process of devotional visioning or envisioning see Frugoni, 'Female Mystics', 130-31, and most recently Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye. Vision in Early Modern Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), esp. 11-12 and Patricia Lee Rubin, *Images and Identity in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007), ch.6 'Vision and Belief', 177-228. On the 'torrent' of devotional texts like pseudo-Bonaventura's *Meditations on the Life of Christ* and Ludolph of Saxony's *Life of Christ* that emerged after the Trecento and emphasized the role of 'imaging' in prayer see Richard Kieckhefer, *Unquiet souls: Fourteenth-Century Saints and their Religious Milieu* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1984), esp. 100-103.

timeframe this chapter studies, images increasingly assumed the role of a common and orthodox idiom able to be exploited both privately, locally (through, for example, propaganda for beatification and canonization), and, as exemplified by Jesuitical practices, globally.

The corollary to this position is, of course, that the home itself was one of the primary mediums through which Florentines shaped and conveyed both secular and religious identities. Religious imagery dominated the subjects at home up until the late-sixteenth century. Devotional art thereby held a pivotal role as the basis for the emergence of art collections, and the basis for the acculturation of both religious and aesthetic sensibilities.²⁰ In 1609, religious subjects dominated the famed Florentine art collection of Jacopo di Alamanno Salviati in his palace in via del Corso, and even as late as 1686, Valeria Pinchera has calculated that 65% of the art in Duke Salviati's palazzo in via del Palagio (now via Ghibellina) was religious.²¹ As the collections of the Salviati family show, religious art was more than a vehicle for devotion. Especially for the wealthier classes and Mancini's 'huomini di gusto', it had what Hans Belting has called a 'double-face' in that it maintained a dual role as both receptacle of the sacred, and an expression of artistic intentionality and authorship.²² Indeed, for someone like Filippo Baldinucci (1625-1697), who aspired to the heady heights of both pre-eminent art connoisseurship and sanctity during Ferdinando II and Cosimo III Medici's reign (obtaining only the former, and that with a disappointing salary), the spiritual efficacy of images equated, and was perhaps even contingent upon, aesthetic merit.²³ It is important to stress this at the beginning, as a growing perception of images' dual roles as aesthetic and religious repositories is registered in this period, allowing not just a 'double-face' but a 'double-vision', in much the same way that images themselves could play with notions of 'duplicity' or 'doubleness'.

The inventories of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* can supply us with more information relating to this interplay between religious and aesthetic vision by allowing a diachronic glimpse into domestic art collections. Indeed, the descriptions of art within the inventories also enable us, to a certain extent, to gauge how artworks were perceived and used. The primary concern of this

²⁰ See Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 458.

²¹ A. Fazzini, 'Collezionismo privato nella Firenze del Cinquecento. 'L'appartamento nuovo' di Jacopo Salviati,' *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa XXIII*, no. 1: 191-224; Valeria Pinchera, *Lusso e Decoro. Vita Quotidiana e Spese dei Salviati di Firenze nel Sei e Settecento* (Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, 1999), 136.

²² Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 458.

²³ Staying at a villa, Baldinucci followed the advice of a local *fattore* and went to the nearby *chiesetta* renowned by the local populace for its miraculous Marian image. However his description of the image reveals how the formal qualities of a work were intimately linked to its devotional qualities: '[...] la detta imagine cioè una Vergine di rilievo dipinta di color di carne di grandezza di mezzo naturale, un poco più, in atto di sedere e col suo Figliolo sedente sopra il braccio sinistro, ma non già volta verso di me in atto ridente ma in atto di guardare verso il popolo, né molto bella di volto come io l'avevo questa notte conceptia, anzi, per esser di maniera antica col volto e altre parti non molto ben proportionate, poco o niuna sensibile devotione mi ha cagionato [...].' Baldinucci, *Diario Spirituale* (Florence: Casa Editrice le Lettere, 1995), 22.

chapter was therefore to provide empirical data charting the religious art collected in homes and the way in which artworks were described in order to enable both individual collections to be better contextualised and more general collecting trends identified. Due to length, the methodology, terminology, and the parameters for this survey can be found in Appendix B, as can the tabulated statistics upon which the findings for the chapter rests. The chapter thereby begins by presenting several different aspects of religious art that emerged during the survey of the *Pupilli* inventories. The general statistical findings are presented first and then prints, papier-mâché and other mediums of artworks are briefly discussed. The text moves on to explore the display of religious images, their veiling and framing, their numbers and the spaces in which they were found, before finally going on to investigate their subjects in greater depth. In particular, this last section concentrates on the rising angelic presence in houses as well as the images of the Madonna, Christ, the saints, and the Holy Family kept at home. It concludes by examining the image offered by religious mirrors and religious selves.

FINDINGS

The clearest trend the inventories showed was the phenomenal rise in the quantity of images that each household on average owned. Over a period of one hundred and fifty years, the number had risen from 2.7 pieces of art per estate at the end of the quattrocento (*Pupilli* file 186) to more than fifty by the mid-1650s (*Pupilli* file 2661). Parallel to this was the steady growth in the number of estates that contained artworks. Households owning art increased from 67% (file 186) of the sample to 84% (file 2661) and no longer did estates that owned only between one to five images dominate the statistics. Put simply, more households had more art. The figures show how exceptional the art collection that was recorded at the Medici palace of via Larga in 1492 after Lorenzo de' Medici's death truly was.²⁴ With more than one hundred sculptures and paintings, the Medici collection was not comparable to anyone else's in Florence at this date, although other families such as the Tornabuoni and Martelli clearly aspired to such magnificence.²⁵ By the mid-seicento however, magnificence (or at least using art as a privileged form of interior decorating) was much more widespread, with more than 15% of estates sampled owning in excess of one hundred images. A corollary of the larger number of images in a bigger proportion of homes was the growing presence of secular art and the wider range of subject matter recorded. 70% of the sampling for the period c.1640-50 possessed secular images, compared to just 5% of the population 150 years previously, with the proportion of clearly identifiable secular art rising from 3.9% to 41% of household images. Significantly, the number of images owned rose most dramatically and almost threefold in the first decade of the seventeenth century, suggesting a quite specific timeframe

²⁴ See Spallanzani and Bertelà, eds., *Libro d'Inventario*.

²⁵ See Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting', 39.

when material commodities and art objects were both widely available to, and desired by, a widening social demographic.

These figures show quite clearly the impact of an enlarging art market with an increased availability of goods made for an anonymous urban market, whether imported (like the large number of images noted as 'Flemish' in the inventories), or domestically made. The figures also show the tremendous impact that the printing press had in both the range and diffusion of images available and their more accessible prices. They point not only to the accretion of objects over a long period, but also to more sophisticated methods of distribution that ranged from individual commissions to pre-manufactured wares available from workshops, *librai*, market stalls, the *storiari* who sold cheap images and chapbooks on the piazza; or alternatively through second-hand means of supply such as those offered by *rigattieri* and estate auctions like those run by the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* themselves. In addition, the *Pupilli* inventories bear witness to the growing predilection for certain subjects like angels and cherubs, landscape paintings, genre subjects and still-lives, as well as the declining fortunes of certain forms such as the *colmo* and *tondo*.

The overall figures of domestic art possession are remarkably high, especially if we consider that in seventeenth-century Paris the average number of images per household has been calculated at between seven and eight, and the proportion of households possessing images at 66.5%.²⁶ Susan Foister's examination of probate inventories in England c.1480 to c.1580 serves as another example: Foister's research has shown that the average number of images owned was merely one or two, and only around 10% of households had any at all.²⁷ A wider pan-European study is required in order to establish Florence's consumption of art and images in comparison to other Italian or Northern centres. Similarly, an investigation into whether the high figures for Florence were maintained for the second-half of the seventeenth century needs to be undertaken. Such a study would need to take into consideration the changing institutional role of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* itself in order to better understand these ownership patterns. Nonetheless, the privileged position that Florence holds as little less than the birthplace of the Renaissance (with an emphatically capital R) in an art-historiographical route mapped out from Vasari to Burckhardt and onwards, has allowed us to continue to view it as an exceptional location of cultural production during this period.²⁸ What the statistics from the inventories suggest is a view of Florence as an exceptional

²⁶ Pardailhé-Galabrun, *The Birth of Intimacy*, 154. Philip Benedict has calculated that for urban Metz the mean number of paintings owned was 5.5, while paintings hung in approximately 58% of all the city's households between 1645-72: Benedict, 'Towards the Comparative Study of the Popular Market for Art', 105.

²⁷ Susan Foister, 'Paintings and Other Works of Art in Sixteenth-Century English Inventories,' *Burlington Magazine* CXXIII, no. 938 (1981): 273-281, 279. Cf. Palumbo-Fossati, 'L'Interno della casa', 131. Palumbo-Fossati estimates that 90% of Venetian homes during the late-sixteenth century had at least one image, although this high number reflects the archival source and is limited to artisanal houses.

²⁸ See Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860), trans. S. G Middlemore (1929, repr., Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1990); Michael Podro, *The Critical Historians of Art* (New Haven and

location of cultural consumption, well in advance of received ideas about the changing consumer culture that took place in eighteenth-century France and Britain.²⁹

PRINTS

One of the key factors attributable to the phenomenal growth in images at home was the printing press. For example, the sudden explosion in landscape images that appeared in the 1580s (see App. B, Table 2.4) can be explained by Pagolo di Giovambattista Benozzi's collection of prints. Hanging in the *sala nuova* of his villa at San Donato a Brozzi were one hundred and eight printed landscape and fishing or maritime scenes of varying sizes.³⁰

Benozzi's inventory makes it clear that the manner of collecting prints and the methods of display that are more usually associated with the long eighteenth century, whereby large numbers of print series were hung in single rooms, was already clearly established in Italy by the cinquecento. The startlingly large number listed in just one room of Benozzi's villa also demonstrates how important prints were in making images more accessible for domestic consumption. Indeed, Silvio Antoniano's advice in his 1584 treatise to have lots of [devotional] images in one's household prosaically recognised that 'basterà havere delle stampe', stressing that printed images were both affordable *and* beautiful.³¹ However, the first clear reference to prints or 'stampe' in the *Pupilli* inventories only appeared in the 1570 inventory of the sculptor and goldsmith Benvenuto Cellini's estate.³² References to images on paper or of paper ('di carta', 'sulla carta') do occur earlier and with greater frequency in inventories from the second half of the sixteenth century, although, as discussed below, this may simply have meant the works were made of paper mâché or were even possibly drawings. The few rare surviving examples of early Italian woodcuts, like the *Madonna del Fuoco* (made before 1429) (fig.2.1) and the Sion textile (after 1350) (fig.2.2) stand as testaments to the availability of printed technology well in advance of its recognition in the inventories and hint at a much earlier domestic impact.³³ This impact must have been considerable given the substantial

London: Yale University Press, 1982), and Jay Tribby, 'Florence, Cultural Capital of Cultural Capital,' *Eighteenth Century* 35 (1994): 223-40.

²⁹ Ann Bermingham and John Brewer, eds., *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: HarperCollins, 1997); Brewer and Roy Porter, eds. *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); Shammass, *The Pre-Industrial Consumer*; Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour*.

³⁰ ASF, MPP 2655, f. 532r.

³¹ Antoniano, *Tre libri dell'educatione*, 52v: '[...] basterà havere delle stampate, che ve ne sono di bellissime & si hanno per piccolo prezzo'.

³² ASF, MPP 2709, f.56v 'uno quadretto di Archo di stampa'.

³³ For the remarkable history of the *Madonna del Fuoco*, see Elizabeth Miller's section 'Prints,' in Ajmar-Wollheim and Dennis, *At Home*, 321-31; for the *Sion Textile* see Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch. *Origins of European Printmaking. Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public* (Washington, Nurneberg, New Haven & London: National Gallery of Art & Germanisches Nationalmuseum in association with Yale University Press, 2005), 62-8.

number of print runs of the newly established Italian presses in the mid-quattrocento and the way in which the printing press had quickly responded to the exigencies and purses of a market increasingly concerned with collecting.³⁴

Quite why no established notational distinction was made between prints and paintings before the 1570s is unclear, although the lack of distinction between painted, sculpted or printed images in earlier inventories may simply reflect the perceived relative unimportance between the characteristic attributes of each media. It may also reflect the way in which printed images were subsumed into other objects and thereby escaped notaries' eyes. For example, printed images had varying layers of visibility and secrecy. Although they could be framed, they could also be glued or pinned onto walls (see fig.2.3), line drawers and caskets (see for example figs.2.4a-b, 2.5), or be pasted into books. As Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch have noted, the use of cheap and otherwise ephemeral devotional prints in this manner demonstrates the way in which piety was understood as needing both 'constant and incidental attention.'³⁵ However, in terms of both art history and household inventories, prints began to get more consistent and focused attention. The inclusion of a comprehensive section on prints and printmaking in Vasari's second 1568 edition of *Le Vite* signals the increasing importance and presence of print culture and print collecting in the Renaissance, as well as a growing art-historical interest in cultivating clear hierarchic distinctions between media and genre.³⁶ Similarly notarial habits shifted towards the end of the sixteenth century by distinguishing painted images from their printed counterparts and usually expressing more detail about images' materials within inventories.

Nonetheless, it was not until the early seventeenth century that prints were noted as constituting a significant visual presence within houses and one that competed with painterly or sculptural materials. The inventory of Domenico di GiovanMaria Chiosi's estate in 1617 serves as an example. None of the artworks in Chiosi's Florentine house in via de' Serragli were listed as prints, and indeed, the descriptions of several Marian paintings replete with curtains suggest images that must have had a valuable devotional and aesthetic importance.³⁷ However, for his *casa da padrone* in San Martino a Campi, prints appear to have provided, in line with Antoniano's advice, an

³⁴ On the history of the print see Michael Bury, *The Print in Italy 1550 – 1620* (London: British Museum Press, 2001); David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470-1550* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994); Parshall and Schoch, *Origins of European Printmaking*. Regarding the large numbers of images issued, for example, the press run by the Dominican nuns of San Jacopo di Ripoli produced 2,000 one-sided folio images of St. Margaret in December 1481 alone, see Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse, *Cartolai, Illuminators, and Printers in Fifteenth-Century Italy: The Evidence of the Ripoli Press* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1988), 84-5.

³⁵ Parshall and Schoch, *Origins of European Printmaking*, 173.

³⁶ See Bury, *The Print in Italy*, 11. See also David Landau, 'Vasari, Prints and Prejudice,' *Oxford Art Journal* 6 (1983): 3-10.

³⁷ ASF, MPP 2660 (5 August 1617), ff.35v-44r. E.g., f.38r: 'un quadro d'una Madonna col fornimento di noce intagliato co sua cortina di tela turchina'; f.41r: 'un quadro entrovei una Madonna col comicie di noce dorate col sua tela verde'.

affordable way to embellish the villa as all the artworks listed there were noted as printed. Twenty-five were attached unframed to the walls of the downstairs *salotto*, while the five bedrooms were each decorated with a framed image of either Jesus or Mary.³⁸ Although Benozzi's prints were of secular subjects, Chiosi's devotional ones were more representative of domestic art collections. Figures from the inventories show that during the 1600s sampling, prints were recorded as constituting 5.6% of artworks and usually had unspecified topics. However, by the period when Chiosi's estate was redacted (1617-22) prints accounted for at least 14.3% of households' images, and just under a third of these had clearly identifiable devotional themes (mostly noted as images of the Passion or Saints' lives). Contingent as it is on the vagaries of notarial recording, the presence of prints is a very conservative estimate, especially in regard to devotional subjects. Indeed, from the end of the sixteenth century onwards, surviving stock-lists and account books of Italian printers demonstrate the large quantity of prints issued and the steady way in which religious subject matter dominated their portfolios.³⁹ These readily available prints of Christ, Mary and other religious figures, like those in Chiosi's bedchambers, had become what Sara Matthews Grieco has termed a 'social technology' and it was a technology especially suited to the transmission of political, religious and social ideologies to the domestic sphere.⁴⁰ This role, in line with the increasing number recorded in the *Pupilli* files, shows how prints had become a widespread and potentially [im]moral influence. This fact was registered not only by the Catholic Church's tightening of the censorship laws regarding printed images at the end of the sixteenth century, but also by the important role they played within the propaganda of the Reformations as a whole.⁴¹

PAPIER MÂCHÉ AND OTHER MEDIA

Just as prints became more readily identifiable in later inventories so too did home decorations made of *cartapesta* or papier mâché. During the 1600s *cartapesta* was commonly recorded in the inventories as used for angels, cherubs, and the burgeoning number of *presepi* that began appearing in domestic settings during the seicento, although other religious subjects were also recorded.

³⁸ ASF, MPP 2660 (16 August 1617), ff.22r-25v.

³⁹ Bury, *The Print in Italy*, 127.

⁴⁰ See Sara Matthews Grieco, 'Persuasive pictures: didactic prints and the construction of the social identity of women in sixteenth-century Italy,' in *Women in Italian Renaissance Culture and Society*, ed. Letizia Panizza, 285-314 (Oxford: Legenda, 2000), 309. More widely on the representation of women through print see also Matthews Grieco, *Ange o Diabliesse: la Répresentation de la Femme au XVI Siècle* (Paris: Flammarion, c1991), and Matthews Grieco and Sabina Brevaglieri, eds. *Monaca, moglie, serva, cortigiana: vita e immagine delle donne tra rinascimento e controriforma* (Florence: Morgana, 2001).

⁴¹ See for example the way in which Palettoi in his *Episcopale Bonoiensis* (1580) recommended giving schoolchildren an image (presumably printed) as a reward for the correct recitation of the catechism, as noted in Caroline P. Murphy, 'The Market for Pictures in Post-Tridentine Bologna,' in *The Art Market in Italy, Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries*, eds. Sara Matthews Grieco, Louisa C. Mathew, and Marcello Fantoni, 41-53 (Florence: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2003), 43.

There was a veritable abundance of papier mâché devotional objects and images in Cosimo di Domenico di Francesco Cioli's *casa di padrone* near the *pieve* of Sant'Andrea a Cercina, a location which had become renowned in the sixteenth century for a miraculous Marian image.⁴² Cioli's villa housed at least four Madonnas made out of *cartapesta*, as well as a two painted panels of Christ and two angels decorated with tinsel ('d'orpello'). Alongside these were 'fifteen angels painted on papier mâché by nuns' kept in one bedchamber, while in another were 'ten little cherubs of papier mâché half-gold and painted' and 'three little Madonnas of papier-mâché started but not decorated' ('non fornite').⁴³

The particular contents of Cioli's estate and other references in the inventories regarding images made of *cartapesta* point towards both a domestic and female conventual practice of art or ornament production.⁴⁴ Although fabricating devotional items was an appropriately gendered activity for women at home (and one in line with the advice proffered by contemporary household treatises), it would have provided an important source of income for nuns and their charges and one that accessed a pre-existing commercial market.⁴⁵ Indeed, early surviving examples of *cartapesta*, such as an anthropomorphic mirror frame from the workshop of Neroccio (after 1470) (fig.2.6) or several fifteenth-century Marian reliefs (figs.2.7 & 2.8), show how this medium had been widely used from at least the quattrocento to produce in large numbers affordable devotional images for the marketplace.⁴⁶ An eighteenth-century statue of the *Madonna dei Sette Dolori* (fig.2.9) shows that this could be a particularly sophisticated commercialized medium, able to produce elaborate artistic forms that could in turn become the focus of devotional belief.

The commercialised nature of devotional *cartapesta* products was briefly to become the focus of Friar Niccolò Aquisti. In the Inquisitorial files of Florence, Aquisti, a vicar of the Holy Office, wrote to his superiors in 1669 to complain about a certain GioBattista di Domenico Brocchetti who was selling various goods made of papier mâché at the market of Castiglione Fiorentino.⁴⁷ Aquisti was irritated that Brocchetti's licence to sell these goods came not from him but an *arciprete* called Alessandro Honesti. Upon hearing the usurpation of his authority and Brocchetti's 'poco honeste'

⁴² Repetti, 1: 655-657.

⁴³ ASF, MPP 2660, (16 May 1619), ff.57r-60v.

⁴⁴ On the Neroccio mirror see John Pope-Hennessy, 'A Cartapesta Mirror Frame,' *Burlington Magazine* 570 (1950): 288-91. Regarding later examples of *carta pesta* ornaments at home, see for example ASF, MPP 2661, Inventory of *fornaio* Jacopo Picchianti, 19 November 1649, f.204v '8 angelini fatte da monache'; and the inventory of Lessandra Gimignani, wife of Alamano Salviati, 14 June 1647, f.65v '6 scatole et una zanellina entrove diverse figurine e altro da Cappanuccie [...] diversi angeli dipinti in su la carta e altre bazzecole'.

⁴⁵ Regarding advice to women to make household decorations see, for example, Giacomo Lanteri, *Della economia* (Venice: Vincenzo Valgrisi, 1560), 166.

⁴⁶ Jolly notes Marian reliefs of *cartapesta* in Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Skulpturensammlung, Inv.No. 1716; Paris Musée du Louvre, Inv. No.: F.F.589, and Rome, Museo di Palazzo Venezia. Jolly, *Madonnas by Donatello*, 184, 123, & 190 respectively.

⁴⁷ AAF, TIN 6.4, Letter dated 16 February 1669, f.79r.

words and seeing the mixture of devotional and profane objects for sale as a sign of the growing lasciviousness of the *gioventù* of the day, Aquisti promptly confiscated the goods and took them to a secure place whilst imprisoning Brocchetti. The letter shows the common confusion in deciphering where authority and responsibility rested for members of the lay clergy and those specifically employed on behalf of the Roman Inquisition, as much as the confusing two-tiered bureaucratic structure that members of the public had to negotiate.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, Aquisti's letter does demonstrate that the Church's permission to sell and show devotional objects was as necessary as it was indisputable. In addition, attached to the letter is an inventory of Brocchetti's goods that shows the affordable and serial nature of papier-mâché decoration and the diversity of forms it assumed.⁴⁹ Six *Volto Santi* were listed, alongside three large coats of arms (presumably to be customised by the purchaser), six wall supports [*gocciolate*] painted in various colours on which to place an angel-shaped candle holder, eight pairs of small angels, twenty *tondi* of the Madonna and Child painted in various colours, twenty-four bas-reliefs of fruit and still lives, and no less than sixty-one masks of various sorts 'all of *carta pesta*'. The list of Brocchetti's merchandise demonstrates the same type of images that were popular in Florentine homes some fifty years earlier, as well as (barring annoyed vicars) how easily acquirable and affordable these images were.

While media types such as *cartapesta* or prints appear more prominent in later inventories, the *Pupilli* also recorded the wide variety of mediums and forms used to construct images. In the 1580s for example, images of Christ alone were noted as made of paper, gesso, terracotta, *cartapesta*, marble, bronze, copper, wood, canvas, embroidery, gold, and crystal; and were in the form of tabernacles, busts, bas-reliefs, *tondi*, and lunettes.⁵⁰ The increasing diversity in media type and styles that the inventories registered exemplifies a market that catered for varying budgets and varied tastes as well as different forms of art production. However, a predilection for specific forms and media, such as bronze figurines or *pietre dure* pictures, emerged in the inventories at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. Although these latter two types were dominated by secular subjects and appear to have been typically collected in a serial manner, the free standing bronze crucifix, as typified by the work of Giambologna and his school, became commonplace in wealthier estates of the seventeenth century and can be seen to parallel the development of the *altarino* on which it was displayed.

DISPLAY

The growing popularity of forms, such as the small figurine, point in addition to a fundamental change in the display of art and one that was also noted in the inventories. As painted *spalliere* or

⁴⁸ See Prosperi's discussion of the case in Prosperi, 'Vicari dell'Inquisizione fiorentina', 159.

⁴⁹ AAF, TIN 52.15, doc.1, 16 February 1669.

⁵⁰ ASF, MPP 2665 (1581-88).

the *cassoni* attest, early forms of domestic art were often not only incorporated into the architectonic structure of the house, but actually formed the objects that furnished it. During the quattrocento and early to mid-cinquecento the majority of busts (by far the most common sculptural type in early inventories), whether of secular or religious subjects, were recorded as being placed up high, above doorways, windows and mantelpieces (see for example figs.2.10-2.12), or alternatively, integrated into items of furniture.⁵¹ The 1545 inventory of Agnolo di Bernardo Strozzi shows how a *lettuccio* was just as likely to be used to display sculptures as a table or mantelpiece. Above Agnolo's *lettuccio* were 'seven figures attached [to it], that is the seven virtues and a child', and indeed, references to carved statuettes on the headboards or framework of *lettucci* in sixteenth-century inventories were relatively common, although they declined as the century progressed.⁵² This evidence serves not only to demonstrate the importance of this furniture type, but also the different way in which early artworks, incorporated into the fabric or furniture of the house (and therefore often only ever viewed from below), were both displayed and perceived.⁵³ While this continued into the seicento, by the end of the sixteenth century the inventories began to record pedestals (*sgabelloni*) and wall-brackets (such as the *gocciole* noted in Brocchetti's market merchandise) specifically designed for busts and small sculptures and thereby transforming the display of sculpture in the round.⁵⁴ The way in which the display of art was transformed during the timeframe of this study, whether it was by the placement of a bust on a pedestal at eye-level, the placement of a crucifix on an *altarino*, or by a hundred prints onto a wall as Benozzi had done, points to an important shift in what Baxandall had termed the 'period eye'.⁵⁵ The changing fashions of art display would have influenced not only the production of art, but its perception and the understanding of its role. The development of room types ostensibly for the social and polite viewing and display of art collections, such as the picture galleries built into both Palazzo Antinori and Palazzo Salviati (via Ghibellina) by 1700, collected both religious and secular works together, thereby forming a hieratic distinction between art whose primary function was devotional, and art (which may indeed have been of a religious nature) whose primary function was as Art.⁵⁶

⁵¹ On this see Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting', 71-73, as well as Vasari's comments how 'onde si vede in ogni casa di Firenze, sopra i cammini, usci, finestre e cornicioni, infiniti di detti [busts] ritratti [...]', *Le Vite*, III: 373.

⁵² ASF, MPP 2648, f.909r.

⁵³ On the *lettuccio* see Maddalena Trionfi Honorati, 'A Proposito del 'Lettuccio', *Antichità Viva* XX, no. 3 (1981): 39-47; Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting', 56-9; Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior*, 149-53. As Geraldine Johnson has noted, the proportion of fifteenth-century Marian reliefs was configured by an understanding that they would be viewed from below: see Johnson, 'Beautiful Brides and Model Mothers'.

⁵⁴ Images continued to be displayed in the same spaces well into the seventeenth century. See, for example, the 'XPO bambino di gesso' and 'ritratto di Madonna col cornice di noce' were both noted kept above the door of Michelangelo Viviani's downstairs *camera* in 1617, ASF, MPP 2660, f.231r.

⁵⁵ On Baxandall's 'period eye' see Allan Langdale, 'Aspects of the Critical Reception and Intellectual History of Baxandall's Concept of the Period Eye,' *Art History* 21 (1998): 479-97.

⁵⁶ On the two galleries in Palazzo Salviati see Pinchera, *Lusso e decoro*, 119; on the Antinori example see AAntF, *scatola* 20, inventories of 1700 & 1760 (unpaginated).

VEILS AND FRAMES

Fundamental to the display of domestic art, and especially religious art, was how works were veiled or framed. By the early seicento, inventories show how both secular and religious works that were aesthetically valuable were afforded curtains, something that a century earlier seems to have been reserved purely for devotional works.⁵⁷ For example, the estate belonging to the assassinated Francesco di Guglielmo del Riccio (d.1594) shows how curtains for pictures both protected and drew attention to the three most artistically significant paintings of his collection housed in the principal *camera*. The only distinction made between the secular imagery and the large painting of the Madonna, was that the colour of the taffeta curtain for the Virgin Mary was, appropriately enough, 'turchino' (a turquoise blue) while Diana's was red.⁵⁸

Nonetheless, the inventories' evidence that it was mainly devotional art that continued to be adorned with candles, veiled, or provided with shutters well into the sixteen hundreds, shows viewing to be more than optics, and curtains to offer more than just physical protection or an elaborate means of drawing attention to the image they adorned. Described as 'coperte', 'veli', 'tele', 'telai', 'tende', 'sciugatoi', 'cortine', 'mantellini', 'padiglioncini', 'baldocchini', or simply as images 'che si serra' or 'che s'apre', the coverings for devotional art provided a boundary that separated the sacred from the profane and ensured that each viewing was a revelation in its most biblical sense.⁵⁹ Extant examples of domestic images, such as a trecento tabernacle by Jacopo di Cione (fig.2.13a & b) or an early seventeenth-century Spanish portable altarpiece (fig.2.14), show how shutters helped reveal religious narratives to the viewer by providing additional images to meditate on and expanded the space of the image outwards as they engulfed the viewer within it. As has already been noted many times, domestic veils also replicated the public experience whereby miraculous images like the Madonna dell'Impruneta were only ever uncovered at permitted times. The closely guarded right of opening the curtains on publicly famed images was in

⁵⁷ The assumption that erotic paintings were also veiled seems to be born out by the description of a picture of 'una dona ignuda e senza un lenza' in Leonardo di Alessandro Balduccini's *camera sulla quale è il detto scrittoio* in 1573, which would appear to assume that paintings of nudes were generally veiled, see ASF, MPP 2664, f.353r. However, throughout the timeframe of this sample, veils or curtains were never mentioned specifically in relation to nude portraits (a subject itself rarely noted in the inventories, and only after 1550) or portraits of Cleopatra, Faustina, Venus, or Diana (subjects usually represented suggestively dishabille).

⁵⁸ ACRF, Filza XVII (A), 1594, unpaginated: '1 quadro di una Madonna grande con ornamento di noce dua palmizzi attorno a detta Madonna, l coperta d detta Madonna di taffeta turchino, l quadro grande di una Diana con ornamento di noce con coperta di taffeta rosso, l quadro simile a quello di sopra colla medesima coperta'.

⁵⁹ On both the biblical and classical allusions of veiling see Paul Hills, 'Titian's Veils,' *Art History* 29, 5 (2006): 771-795, and Mary Pardo, 'The Subject of Savoldo's Magdalene,' *The Art Bulletin* 71 (1989): 67-91. On 'architectural veiling' see Helen Hills, 'The Veiled Body: Within the Folds of Early Modern Neapolitan Covent Architecture,' *Oxford Art Journal* 27 (2004): 269-90.

order to preserve their power of intercession (and reveal that of the authorising agent), and suggests how images were understood as an animate and potent repository of the sacred.⁶⁰

The complexities inherent in viewing and veiling devotional works are well illustrated in Santi di Tito's *Christ in pietà and two angels* (fig.2.15). The painted curtains within the painting draw attention to the contemporary practice of veiling devotional images (and thereby provide another layer of verisimilitude) and how we look at images by playing on the conceit, most notably mentioned by Alberti who imagined painting as a window.⁶¹ Moreover, the painting plays self-reflexively with notions of revealing and revelations, art and artifice, and the slippage between dimensions of reality, materiality and representations. The *putti* in drawing the curtains aside to reveal the lifeless body of Christ, draw attention to the way that the act of viewing was essentially a theatrical or performative act, and one that involved a panoply of cultural or religious beliefs or assumptions. Other images attest to this theatricality of viewing and the way it served to engender belief not only in the subjects represented, but somewhat iconoclastically, belief in their representations. For example, Andrea Andreani's print (fig.2.16) depicts a woman profoundly absorbed in the contemplation of a skull in front of her domestic altar. To the left, the diminutive image of Christ stares down at the skull and the woman's object of contemplation even as he appears to step down from his cross and out of the curtained pictorial space that contains him and separates him from his viewer. Quite profoundly, the print shows that the object and subject positions of viewer and viewed are never clearly fixed. More prosaically, the print highlights the way in which drapery, as in Tito's painting, was used to frame devotional subjects in the domestic sphere and ensure a type of physical engagement with spiritual images and their understanding as windows of religion (for the drapery of Christological images also see fig.1.41). In terms of Christological and Marian imagery, veils and curtains provided a physical metaphor for Christ's shroud or Mary's veil and cloth of honour respectively. Indeed, both Tito's and Andreani's pictures rely on this associative and mnemonic function of veiling in order to further evoke their works' themes of mortality, resurrection and Eucharistic devotion. Andreani's print additionally demonstrates how other items such as lights were part of this process of viewing religion. In fact, alongside veils or shutters, lights, beads, bells, books and (as Chapter One explored) holy water were all noted in the inventories as attached to devotional pictures. These accessories show how the performance of viewing can be located within a sacramental practice that involved many different sensory elements in order to apprehend the incorporeal through corporeal means.⁶²

⁶⁰ For an interesting example of conflict between local orders and Rome regarding the right to remove 'il velo' from an image of the Madonna di Loreto kept at the Collegio de' Padri Barnabiti at Spoleto in 1635, see ACDF, St.St.H3_a. *Pretesi miracoli: Immagini della vergine in diversi luoghi*, section IV.

⁶¹ Hills, 'Titian's Veils', 771.

⁶² Such an analysis is similar to Robert Scribner's theory of the 'sacramental gaze': Scribner, 'Popular Piety', 459-61. See also David G. Wilkins, 'Opening the Doors to Devotion: Trecento Triptychs and Suggestions

The frames of domestic religious images could also help ensure that not only was the illusionistic entry into the pictorial space stressed, but that the images stored inside were viewed in specific ways. Extant examples of Tuscan frames show how they commonly provided synecdochical textual prompts through the inscription of lines taken from prayers such as the Ave Maria (see figs. 2.17 & 2.18). In doing so the frames themselves not only laid out a devotional system that the owner was to follow, but to paraphrase Ronda Kasl, they also ensured that 'seeing' Mary (or another saintly figure) was a process of visual evocation as much as verbal summoning.⁶³

INVENTORY DESCRIPTIONS

If frames and veils helped create ways of viewing devotional art, the inventories' description of that art helps us understand the way in which art was seen. In fact, the way in which prints and paintings began to be distinguished in inventories by the 1580s appears part of a wider change in notarial habits regarding how artworks were reported. There was a qualitative difference in how religious art was described over the years. By the late-sixteenth century, inventories began to stress the physical aspect of the work rather than its subject matter and in doing so, the descriptions of religious art more closely resembled those of secular works. The way in which the medium or style began to precede the subject and its devotional value may indicate a mental shift in how religious images were perceived. Early inventories, such as those from the 1420s or the 1470s, almost always described paintings with the subject first and usually in very simple terms. For example, the brief descriptions of 'una Vergine Maria', 'una Nostra Donna', and 'una Donna da camera' were typical of early inventories. However, by the 1580s descriptions such as 'a painting of a Madonna with a gilded frame' or 'a painting of a Madonna painted on board measuring one and half *braccia* with a walnut frame partially gilded with its cover of net and four *braccia* worth of white wax candles' were just as common as more truncated examples. These two Marian examples from Bastiano dello Scarpella's and Felice di Bartolomeo Pesci's households respectively show how more weight was starting to be given to the physical form and medium of devotional works.⁶⁴

By the seicento more and more descriptions began to emphasize how a work was 'di buona mano' and therefore to be appreciated aesthetically as much as devotionally.⁶⁵ For example, an

Concerning Images and Domestic Practice in Florence,' *Studies in the History of Art* 61 (2002): 370-393, 376, who emphasises how the importance of touch must be taken into account in order to understand the function of domestic trecento triptychs.

⁶³ Ronda Kasl, 'Holy Households: Art and Devotion in Renaissance Venice,' in *Giovanni Bellini and the Art of Devotion*, ed. Ronda Kasl, 59-89 (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 2004), 69.

⁶⁴ ASF, MPP 2655, f.138r: 'un quadro d'una Madonna con cornice messa d'oro'; f. 154r: 'un quadro d'una Madonna dipinto in asse di braccia una e mezza col cornice di noce un poco dorate col sua coperta di velo e braccia 4 di cera Bianca in falchole'.

⁶⁵ See for example, the descriptions of an 'ovato col suo ornamento di noce toccato d'oro col sua coperta di tela grossa dipintovi in asse un San Bastiano ch si stima di buon mano' and the description of a series of religious paintings that ends with 'ci vedde appariscono di buona mana' in ASF, MPP 2661, f.215r & f.152r

artwork owned by Francesco di Taddeo Rucio in 1644 was described as ‘a large painting of around two and a half *braccia* with a framework of gilded wood depicting a Pietà of Our Lord, the Most Holy Virgin, and St. John the Evangelist on canvas attributed to the hand of Cigoli valued at more than two hundred [*scudi*].’⁶⁶ In contrast to the late-sixteenth-century descriptions of Scarpella’s and Pesci’s Madonnas or fifteenth-century conventions, the subject of Rucio’s artwork no longer takes precedence. By shifting the stress onto the artist of the work, as well as its form, medium, size and monetary worth, the description shows how much the understanding of religious art had changed in the home from a hundred years earlier. It becomes apparent that the evaluation and reception of some images was predicated not only on their subject matter or the artwork’s location, but, as the description of Rucio’s Pietà suggests, by their artistic or aesthetic qualities as well. Indeed, similar to Baldinucci’s comments noted in the Introduction to this chapter, Giovanni Battista Armenini’s (1530-1609) comprehensive treatise on art shows how the religious or spiritual quality of a devotional image was intricately entwined to its aesthetic merits.⁶⁷

SPACES, NUMBERS AND THE SUBJECT MATTER OF WORKS OF ART

Another key way in which an artwork’s meaning was elicited at home was through its placement. The papal doctor Giulio Mancini’s *Alcune considerazioni appartenenti alla pittura come di diletto di un gentiluomo*, written between 1617 and 1621, set in print where domestic images should be decorously placed in his section entitled ‘Regole per collocare le pitture’.⁶⁸ This section reveals the physiological and psychological motivations for the placement of art in the house, and a growing sensitivity to art’s audience as Mancini further divides his suggestions of where artworks should be placed according to the age, sex and status of the viewer. Mancini’s advice tallies with that proffered by Cardinal Silvio Antoniano who also recommended that pictures

respectively. See also the descriptions paintings by Santi di Tito, Giorgione ‘Lombardo’ and others of ‘buonissima mano’ in the estate of Prinivalle della Stufa and his children, which is redacted in ASF, MPP 2661, ff.552r-602v and GCS, *Libri di Amministrazione* 991 (unpaginated).

⁶⁶ ASF, MPP 2661, (17 February 1644), f.7v ‘1 quadro grande d’altezza braccia due e mezzo circa col suo ornamento d legname toccato d’oro entrovi una Pieta di Nostro Signore la Santissima Vergine e San Giovanni Evangelista in tela che si dice sia di mano del Cigoli stimata piu di due cento.’

⁶⁷ E.g. ‘[...] conciosia che io (come s’è detto), havendo praticato per diverse Città, et essendo stato menato per molti palagi, & case, & fino nelle camere secrete, le quali ho trovato splendidissime, & abondevoli d’adobamenti di tapezarie, di Broccati, & d’altre massaritie minute, e tutte ho voduto essere con mirabil’arte fornite, eccetto di pitture delle Sacre Imagini, le quali erano la maggior parte quadretti di certe figure fatte alla Greca, goffissime, dispiacevoli, e tutte affumicate, le quali ad ogni altra cosa parevano esservi state poste, fuori che à muover divotione, overo à fare ornamento à simil luoghi; & nel vero ch’è pure una gran vergogna, poiche essendo tutti noi Christiani, & veri Cattolici, tanto si spenda in pompe cosi varie, & fuori di misura, & nelle camere dove ci riposiamo, e trattenemo la maggior parte del tempo del viver nosto, con dolcissima quiete, non ci sia almeno una pittura di garbo, & ben’intesa; & per dove ci habbiamo noi a voltare ogni giorno, & supplicar il grande Iddio, se non in queste belle imagini?’, GioBattista Armenini, *De’ veri precetti della pittura* (Ravenna: Francesco Tebaldini, 1586), 188.

⁶⁸ Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, 1:330-332. On Mancini and domestic art collections see Patrizia Cavazzini, ‘La Diffusione della pittura nella Roma di Primo Seicento: Collezionisti Ordinari e Mercanti,’ *Quaderni Storici* 116 (2004): 353 - 374.

should be distributed logically, in an orderly manner, and in specific principal places that took into account their subject matter (the 'consequenza delle cose').⁶⁹ The inventories show that the recommendations of Antoniano and Mancini mirrored actual practice. For Mancini 'profane and large' paintings were to be placed in the more public rooms, with 'pictures of civil or political actions' specifically hung in *sale* and rooms where visitors ('forestieri') had access and 'where you want to negotiate or have meetings'.⁷⁰ The notion that images would be used to influence and impress guests makes sense of the placement of historical images, portraits of family members and rulers, and signs of heraldry, all of which tended to be recorded within these more public spaces. Indeed, one of the main differentiations between secular and religious images was that throughout the entire timeframe of the sampling, devotional works nearly always remained in *camere*. For example, disregarding art listed in an unspecified room type, between 1460 – 1510 (*Pupilli* file 186) 84.2% of *all* artworks were listed within bedchambers and 71% between 1538 – 45 (*Pupilli* file 2648) (figures which themselves show the predominance of religious art within early inventories). By the 1650s (*Pupilli* file 2661), even despite the increasing number of room types in houses, 80% of religious art was kept within the *camera* or *anticamera*. As Mancini stated it is 'in the most secret *camere* where serious issues are dealt with and where there is need of divine intervention and so it is there that one should put sacred pictures, as well as in the chambers where one sleeps'.⁷¹

However, certain religious artworks were placed elsewhere. While the highest numbers of Old Testament subjects was in the mid-seventeenth century and totalled just 0.3% of artworks, the size and presumably complex nature of these paintings helped ensure that they were not placed alongside the devotional works in more private chambers but were instead situated in more open and publicly visible spaces. For example, Giovanni di Luca Rinieri's paintings of the *Sacrifice of Isaac* and the *Story of a Saint Martyr*, both noted as around three *braccia* wide by two high (approx. 1750 cm by 1200), were prominently displayed on the ground floor of his *palazzo*.⁷² Similarly, Messer Bartolomeo Bussetti's painting measuring four *braccia* of *Christ before Caiaphas* was placed in the courtyard in 1650, and Santi di Lorenzo Pierozzi's equally big painting of the *Beheading of St. John the Baptist* was hung in the *sala* in 1649.⁷³ Like the way in which images were displayed, the rooms where they were displayed provide a key method for understanding a

⁶⁹ Antoniano, *Tre libri dell'educatione*, 54v.

⁷⁰ Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, 331-2. Baldinucci's definition of the *sala* as '[l]a più spaziosa stanza del palazzo o casa. È chiamata sala, secondo, alcuni, dal saltar che si fa in quella, nell'occasione di celebrare l'allegrezza delle nozze, e conviti' makes clear the fundamental role this room had in hosting guests: VTAD, s.v. 'sala'.

⁷¹ Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura*, 331.

⁷² ASF, MPP 2661, (4 November 1649), f.177r: 'due quadri grandi col loro ornamento toccato d'oro di braccia 3 in circa et largo braccia 2 dipintovi ci uno L'Istoria del Sa Martario, e nell'altro l'Istoria del sacrificio d'Isac di buona mana'.

⁷³ ASF, MPP 2661, ff.276r & 232r respectively.

distinction between, on one hand, a devotional and personal function of religious images, and on the other, a more decorative and public use.

Although the numbers of religious narrative paintings grew in later inventories, the overall proportion of religious art did not. Compared to the rising quantity of secular works, religious art dropped from accounting for 80% of all household art at the beginning of the sampling to just 32% by 1650. However, in real terms the quantity of devotional images per household rose, demonstrating that the figures cannot be read simplistically as a secularisation of the home. For example, between 1460-1510 each household that had artworks contained three images with a religious theme, but by 1644-53 this number had increased to twelve. Moreover, for estates that contained only a few images, they were nearly without fail of a religious subject. The increasingly important role that secular art played reveals not merely changing fashions and tastes or a decreasing sense of private piety. Rather, as Mancini wrote and the display of family arms or Medici portraits within the inventories show, the increase of secular in relation to religious art demonstrates both the suitability of certain subjects for certain spaces in homes and the way in which the house was emblematic of public loyalties. The taste for landscapes and still lives among other subjects also reveals the growing importance of an overall decorative scheme for the household. More prosaically, it reflects the bias of bigger and wealthier estates whose larger and more varied art collections were not representative of most Florentines.

Alongside the increasing amount of art collected, the other most noticeable phenomenon was the increase in the diversity of subject matter represented. This was particularly true regarding religious art. Despite Lydecker's and others' claims to the contrary, religious subjects in early inventories were very limited and, as Table 2.3 (App. B) shows, usually restricted to images of Mary and/ or her son.⁷⁴ However, as the decades progressed a wider range of subjects was noted and in greater quantities. These subjects included not only more mentions of biblical episodes or individual saints, but also a marked transition away from iconic representations towards narrative ones, something that in turn suggests a shift in spiritual aspirations as much as artistic patronage. For example, a growth in pictures depicting aspects of saints' lives becomes apparent by the beginning of the seventeenth century, with print series' of St. Francis's life accounting for over one half of his representations by the 1640s and paintings of 'The Beheading of St. John the Baptist', like Pierozzi's example listed above, becoming fashionable. From 1600 to c.1650 paintings of the 'Miracles of St. Ambrose', the 'Miracle of the Catching of the Fish', the 'Conversion of St. Paul',

⁷⁴Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting', 177. See also Donal Cooper's essay 'Devotion,' in Ajmar-Wollheim and Dennis, eds. *At Home*, 192. While Lydecker notes ownership of a 'variety of religious images', I can only add that I have noticed the exact opposite for the earlier period. Even though a variety of media was employed, for most inventories sampled an image of 'Nostra Donna' or 'Vergine Maria' was standard and only exceptionally do belongings in the earlier period include different subjects, whether religious or secular. Lydecker's findings perhaps reflect a bias towards patrician inventories, which unsurprisingly were larger in both quantity and diversity of goods.

and the 'Stoning of St. Stephen' were all noted within wealthy estates (the latter two subjects particularly popular). As exempla of *conversio* or demonstrations of the miracles that marked the True Church, these subjects have strong Counter-Reformation themes and their collection within the domestic sphere can be as paradigmatic of a new 'Tridentine spirituality'.⁷⁵

ANGELS

Similarly indicative of changing currents in Catholic spirituality and confessional differences was the rising number of angels in homes. Indeed, during the 1620s (*Pupilli* file 2660) the presence of angels had grown by nine hundred percent from twenty years previously to account for 4.5% of all household art (App. B, Table 2.3). This figure means that as many angels were in houses as portraits of those homes' inhabitants and it is a figure that would doubtlessly increase if the innumerable and 'baroque' decorative presence of angels, cherubs or seraphims on mouldings and friezes or as candlesticks and other objects were taken into account (see for example figs.2.19a & b). During the first quarter of the seventeenth century angels were usually noted in the inventories through individual portraits of the Archangels Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, and Tobias. By contrast and as table 2.3 (App. B) demonstrates, very few angels were listed in late-fifteenth or early-sixteenth-century *Pupilli* files and only Archangel Raphael was ever mentioned individually. Alongside the specific images of angels noted in seventeenth-century inventories, such as the picture of 'a *convento* of angels' by Jacopo Vignali (1592-1664) kept in Brigida Bardi Tuccierelli's estate, angels had also assumed more prominent roles in paintings of other subjects by the seicento.⁷⁶ Ligozzi's *Saint Jerome supported by an angel* (1593) (fig.2.20), or Coccapani's *Saint Francis in Ecstasy* (post 1623) (fig.2.21) stand as examples of images where angels took on conspicuous roles despite their absence in traditional hagiographies. Although angels had been championed in the medieval period, their sudden popularity at home during the 1620s suggests a particular link to the Jesuits' vigorous promotion of angels and *angeli custodi*.⁷⁷ In particular, Ignatius of Loyola's emphasis in his *Spiritual Exercises* on the angel's role in the Annunciation appears to have been matched by the images of the Annunciation listed in the inventories, whose

⁷⁵ On the importance of miracles as an identifying mark of the True Church see Simon Ditchfield, *Liturgy, Sanctity and History in Tridentine Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), esp.124, and Gustave Thils, *Les notes de l'église dans l'apologetique catholique depuis la Réforme* (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1937). A key work was the Oratorian Tommaso Bozio's *De signis ecclesiae dei contra omnes haereses* (Rome, 1591), in which miracles functioned as one of the main signs of the legitimacy and superiority of the Roman Catholic Church.

⁷⁶ ASF, LCF 366 (1622-1640), f.6v.

⁷⁷ Although as Trevor Johnson notes, other religious orders such as the Franciscans also actively promoted angel devotion, see Trevor Johnson, 'Guardian angels and the Society of Jesus,' in *Angels in the Early Modern World*, eds. Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham, 191-213 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 209.

descriptions began to stress Gabriel's presence.⁷⁸ Given that angels were the instruments by whom God communicates his will to mankind, they had an obvious appeal to the Society of Jesus (and other religious orders) as a model for the order's self-presentation, and given their ability to embody God's authority as well as act as the guardians of national boundaries, angels took on a peculiarly 'Counter-Reformation flavour'.⁷⁹ The numerous publications issued from the late-sixteenth century onwards that explained the theological and devotional function of angels helped to consolidate the role of these attendants of God's throne in Catholic doctrine and belief, as did the foundations of confraternities dedicated to them.⁸⁰ Indeed, Pope Paul V (1605-21) had instituted a universal feast and office dedicated to the Holy Guardian Angels in 1608, thereby ensuring the official place of angels within the liturgical calendar.⁸¹ If angels were employed fruitfully as advocates for the True Church and its associated bodies post-Trent, the inventories demonstrate that by the early-seventeenth century they had begun to be embraced alongside the *beati moderni* as particular advocates for the domestic sphere and its inhabitants. In 1649 Francesco di Matteo Lomi, for example, kept matching paintings depicting St. Carlo Borromeo and a Guardian Angel as well as one of St. Ignatius of Loyola among other artworks in his bedchamber.⁸² The vast number of domestic paintings of angels surviving from this period that were made by Florentine artists also attests to the esteem in which the inventories show angels were held. For example, the painting of *Christ comforted by angels* attributed to Cecco Bravo (1576-1644) and intended for a private chapel (fig.2.22), Giovanni Bilivert's *The Guardian Angel* (1625) painted for the Signori Bini's *chiesetta* near their palace in the Oltranto (fig.2.23), or *The Guardian Angel* by Carlo Dolci (1616-c.1686) (fig.2.24) all demonstrated the intimate relationships that angels forged between the spiritual and

⁷⁸ On Ignatius of Loyola's advocacy of angels see Johnson, 'Guardian angels', and Antonio Gentili and Mauro Regazzoni, *La spiritualità della riforma cattolica: la spiritualità italiana dal 1500 al 1650* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 1993), 260. Inventories in this file show an emphasis on the role of the angel whether within the same image or as part of a grouping. For example, Cosimo di Domenico Cioli owned several Annunciations and the descriptions of them are representative of this file in general. Those within his Florentine home were noted as 'un quadrettino piccolo entrovi una Nuntiatina col angelo col cornice di noce messo a oro', and 'due nuntiate dipinte sulla tela, due angeli dipinti in tela ch vanno col dette nuntiate, un angeli simile per un'altra nuntiatina'. ASF, MPP 2660, 23 January 1619, f.72r & 73v.

⁷⁹ Regarding the Jesuits and angels see Johnson, 'Guardian angels', passim; Alessandro Zuccari, 'Bellarmino e la prima iconografica gesuitica: la capella degli angeli al Gesù,' in *Bellarmino e la Controriforma*, ed. Romeo De Maio, 611-28 (Sora: Centro Studi Sorani Patriarca, 1990); Osswald, 'Goa and the Jesuit Cult', 163-4; Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 35 & 243.

⁸⁰ The seventeenth-century literature on angels is vast (see Johnson, 'Guardian angels') but Francesco Albertini's *Trattati dell'angelo custode*, first published 1612 and dedicated to Bellarmino, had a particularly wide readership. In addition, see Luigi Gonzaga, *Trattato o meditazione degli angeli, particolarmente degli angeli custodi*, ed. Gualberto Giachi (Rome, 1990), and his *Divozione per gli angeli in comune* (Rome, 1588/9); F. Suárez, *Pars secunda Summae theologiae de Deo rerum omnium Creatore in tres praecipuos tractatus distributa quorum primus De angelis hoc volumine continetur* (Lyon, 1620).

⁸¹ Johnson, 'Guardian angels', 192.

⁸² ASF, MPP 2661, f.125v: '2 quadretto di mezzo braccia tocchi d'oro che in uno un San Carlo et nell'altro l'Angelo Custode'; f.126r: '1 Sant' Ignatius tocco d'oro di braccia uno incirca.'

temporal realms in a correspondingly intimate manner.⁸³ The popularity of angels at home can be attributed not only to their promotion by the religious orders (a promotion, which as Trevor Johnson has shown, laid emphasis on their role as useful domestic helpmates),⁸⁴ but also the appealing way in which images like those by Bilivert or Coccopani portrayed them in accordance with contemporary treatises and standard iconography as offering solace, guidance and consolation. Giovanni di San Giovanni's small and jewel-like painting of *Christ served by angels* (c.1624) (fig.2.25) serves to demonstrate the engaging way in which angels acted as intermediaries that framed the sacred for the viewer and embraced a tutelary position to mediate between the Heavens and the self.

Although biblical histories and images of the Trinity were occasionally noted, most notably during the later period studied, as Table 2.3 (App. B) demonstrates, and with the exception of angels as discussed above, most religious art can be divided into three main categories, pertaining either to Mary, Christ, or the saints. Although the relative proportion they represented shifted over the years, this holy triad dominated household images throughout the entire timeframe and the next section goes on to describe in more detail these 'household members'. It first discusses Marian images and their role in the house generally, before moving on to examine specific types of Mary that came to be collected in households and the way the holy home and the humble home were represented in the domestic sphere. It moves on to note the images of Christ listed in inventories and then examines household saints. Finally, the imaging of the home's own inhabitants is discussed through the category of religious mirrors and saintly selves.

MARY AND HER HOUSE

The inventories demonstrate how images of Mary were the first subject to enter houses almost universally. Even though Marian images showed a proportional decrease in relationship to images of Christ and the Saints from the late sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries (see App. B, Table 2.3), they still rose in the range of her representations and her numbers at home. The individual files demonstrate how each household possessing artworks at the beginning of the cinquecento had on average one Marian image, whereas by the 1620s this figure had risen to five so that a 'Nostra Donna', 'Vergine Maria', 'Beata Maria', 'Madonna', 'Madonnina', or 'Santissima Maria' was to remain the most popular individual represented in the house throughout the entire period sampled. As already noted regarding the greater diversity in religious subject matter generally, later inventories increasingly recorded in Florentine homes more episodes from the Virgin's life. Depictions of the Visitation, the Assumption, the Coronation, all became relatively

⁸³ On the history of the painting and its position in San Sebastiano de' Bini (which became the first seat in Florence for the Oratorians in 1632) see *Il Seicento Fiorentino*, I:224.

⁸⁴ Johnson, 'Guardian angels', 198 & 200.

commonplace, as did the listing of different types of Mary, such as the Madonna of the Rosary. The fact that throughout the timeframe of the survey over 75% of the images listed as being veiled or with shutters, curtains, or candles attached, were Marian, points towards the enduring personal relationship that owners had with her and her privileged place within the spiritual hierarchy, as does the constant references to her image as bejewelled or dressed.⁸⁵ Moreover, out of all the religious and secular imagery noted, Mary was also the most often repeated subject for those who had more than one image. The inventory of Filippo di Diogini Carducci, which stands as a good example for the contents of a wealthy household during the early seventeenth century, lists no less than sixteen individual images of the Madonna plus two Annunciation scenes at his town and country residences in 1621.⁸⁶ These figures show how it is difficult to overestimate the importance that she held for Florentines, or the hold she had over the daily routine of the houses' inhabitants.

It is clear that the Franciscan preacher and controversialist Francesco Panigarola's flourishing cry '[t]hat the angel found Maria at home' is singularly correct.⁸⁷ More specifically, the inventories show that she was normally to be found in the *camera*, just where St. Bernardino da Siena and the *Pupilli* inventories had put her 150 years before Panigarola's sermon.⁸⁸ Even more specifically, the inventories often recorded Marian images positioned above or adjacent to the bed. This was the case for Giovanni Masimilli, where his only image was that of a tiny Madonna placed at the head of his bed.⁸⁹ Images from the period likewise tend to depict her in *camere* and near beds, whether they are pictures depicting Mary (such as Annunciations, see fig.2.26, see also figs.1.22-1.25, 1.56), or simply pictures with other subjects that also depict her portrait within the room (see figs.2.27-28, 2.3, and also fig.1.2).⁹⁰ An anonymous ex-voto commissioned by Lodovico il Moro in gratitude for

⁸⁵ The way in which veiling could function as a method of focusing on the picture in order to increase devotion towards the depicted is explained in relation to Mary in de Barry, *Le Paradis oeuvre*, 85: 'on voyoit une image de la sainte Vierge couverte d'un voile toute la sepmaine, neanmoins le Vendredy sur le tard, on voyoit ce voile osté, & comme enlevé invisiblement par quelque Ange, afin qu'on peust mieux voir ladicte image; & pour lors, & le lendemain iusques après Vespres, auquel temps on voyoit remettre le voile, sans qu'on apperceust aucune main qui le remist, & demuroit ainsi l'Image voilée iusqu'au Vendredy d'après, où le mesme miracle continuoit, ce qui fut la cause qu'on comme ça d'honorer plus particulièrement a ce jour la Mere de Dieu.' On the elaborate costumes that Mary wore see the descriptions of 'una Vergine col'habito di sotto bianco di teletta et sopra la veste di drappo turchino col trina d'oro velo si bella e corona col perle falze' and 'una statuetta vestita che rapresenta la Vergine in una scatola lunga dipinta' listed in ASF, MPP 2661, f. 388r & f. 211v respectively.

⁸⁶ ASF, MPP 2660, 16 October 1621, ff.618r-627r.

⁸⁷ Francesco Panigarola, *Prediche quadragesimali* (Venice: Marchiò Sessa, 1577) 398.

⁸⁸ Bernardino da Siena, *Prediche volgari sul campo di Siena (1427)*, ed. Carlo Decorno, 2 vols. (Milan: Rusconi, 1989), 2: 862.

⁸⁹ ASF, MPP 2657, (2 September 1600), f.365r. A quote from Paolo Niccolini regarding the outfitting of his son Jacopo's bed, highlights the way in which an image of the Madonna was understood as an essential component of the bed: 'Our Lady with the canopy, candlesticks, and curtains, was over the top of the bed, and every other thing needed for the appointments of the bed and of the little bed was my very own, and by me bought and paid for.' As quoted in Ginevra Niccolini di Camugliano, *The Chronicles of a Florentine Family, 1200-1470* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1933), 168-9.

⁹⁰ See also the appendices in Ronald G. Kecks, *Madonna und Kind. Das Hausliche Andachtsbild in Florenz des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1988).

his miraculous recovery from illness shows the Madonna as she appeared to him in a vision in his *camera* (fig. 2.29). Her placement shows the role of religious art as a spiritual window and Mary's role as an intermediary guardian balancing between interior and exterior spheres by protecting the residents that lay within. Given its explicitly commemorative function, il Moro's ex-voto makes clear the way in which images were structured through a system of mnemonics that in turn involved a memory of space.⁹¹ The appellation of the *Madonna da camera* implicitly recognises the way in which Mary was *a priori* memorialised within the *camera*, as it translates not only as the 'Madonna of the chamber' but also as the 'Madonna from the chamber'. As the Jesuit Paul de Barry (1587-1661) wrote the Virgin was to be the guardian of the chamber, the focus of prayer there and the bestower of advice.⁹²

The close relationship between an image's site and its meaning which is explained in Mancini's text and highlighted in St. Bernardino da Siena and Panigarola's sermons, is fundamental for understanding household Marian images and their predominant placement within the *camera*. Originally the most elaborately decorated room within the household, the main chamber was in theory and, as the inventories demonstrate, in practice the most likely space to contain the household's valued and prestigious possessions.⁹³ Images of the Madonna often entered this room through the ritual of marriage, upon which the value of the household quite literally depended, and which was presumably to be cemented in the *camera*'s bed.⁹⁴ Numerous scholars have noted how Marian images were closely linked with nuptial exchange in pre-Tridentine Florence, sometimes forming part of the female's *corredo*, and sometimes being purchased for the new wife by the groom and his family.⁹⁵ Such family alliances could be clearly extolled with coats of arms painted onto or carved alongside images of the Virgin Mary, as the description of a gilded image of 'Our

⁹¹ Regarding the links between *ars memoriae* and medieval figurative art see Daniel Arasse, 'Fonctions de l'image', while on the intimate connection between memory and the theory of representation in the Middle Ages see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). See also Lina Bolzoni, *The Web of Images: Vernacular Preaching from its Origins to St Bernardino da Siena*, trans. Carole Preston and Lisa Chien (London: Ashgate, 2004) and *La stanza della memoria: modelli letterari e iconografici nell'età della stampa* (Turin: Einaudi, 1995).

⁹² de Barry, *Le Paradis ouvert*, 10: '[...]verrez vous une chamber où la Sainte Vierge ne paroisse comme la gardienne & bien aymée'; and p.132: 'imputerez-vous cette merveille, ou à la devotion à une image de la Vierge, qu'il est bon d'avoir en sa chamber pour se recommander à elle, & la prier souvent...'

⁹³ More specifically, according to Lanteri, items of value should be stored in women's chambers: '[...] la parte della casa piu segreta alle donne doversi dar cosi ancora dico (perochè tocca loro la maggior cura intorno all'addobbamento) nelle istesse loro camere doversi porre le cose di maggior valuta, cioè gli argenti, le tapezzarie di prezzo, che di continuo non si adoprano, le biancherie, & altre simili cose'. See Giacomo Lanteri, *Della economia [...] nel quale si dimostrano le qualità, che all'huomo et alla donna separatamente convengono pel governo della casa* (Venice: Vincenzo Valgrisi, 1560), 37.

⁹⁴ Marriage could also take place within the *camera* as Suor Lucia Pioppi's description of her sister Catherine's marriage in her diary shows: 'Il dì 7 maggio si maritò mia sorella charissima Catherina in messer Giuglio Camillo Crivelli [...] fu sposata nella camera di messer padre e di madonna madre [...] Dio la benedica.' Lucia Pioppi, *Diario (1541-1612)*, ed. Rolando Bussi (Modena: Edizioni Panini, 1982), 8.

⁹⁵ On the 'quadro da sposa' see Vasari, *Le Vite*, VI: 383 & 417; Armenini, *De' veri precetti della pittura*, 189. Cf. Wackernagel's discussion of domestic Marian images for the early and mid-fifteenth century, Wackernagel, *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist*, 173.

Lady' with the heraldry of the Dei and Lapi families in Carlo Dei's house in Santo Spirito exemplifies.⁹⁶ Somewhat ironically given Mary's virginity, an image of the Madonna and the baby Jesus positioned by the conjugal bed emphatically inscribed the room as the site of reproduction of both lineage and fortune whilst providing the single most important model of comportment for a new wife to follow. As the mother of Christ Mary functioned as the domestic exemplar and intercessor for those living, and one that remained pointedly gendered and housebound. As St. Bernardino of Siena explained, Mary stayed locked within the *camera* reading:

[...] to provide a role model to you girl, so that you would not take pleasure by staying at the door or at the window, but that you would stay inside the house, saying Ave Marias and the Paternoster [...].⁹⁷

Bartolomeo Lantana in the 1608 edition of his sermons on the *Evangelii* was equally clear on this matter, noting that 'the saintly virgin had closed the door' to the chamber and stayed there 'praying to her eternal Father'. Like Bernardino, the passage continues with advice for the female listeners: '[t]herefore our virgins should learn to want to love the secret *camera*, not to converse in public, not to walk the streets curiously, not to see others [...]'.⁹⁸ Both the *camera* and the Virgin Mary are understood as the space or the vehicle through which intimacy, privacy, and interiority could be accessed, allowing an escape from references to outside thoughts and the corrupting outside world. Moreover, as the particular habitat of the Virgin, the *camera* was the room type most suited to devotion. The idea of being in the 'camera segreta' or the 'camera serrata' was not just a way of preserving chastity and virtue, or keeping off the streets, but was also a way of being with God and within the self. Lantana's text and the inventories show that the space between these poles of God and self was one usually occupied by Mary. They also demonstrate how religious art (and especially images of Mary) helped redefine the parameters of a room and expectations not just of piety, but also intimacy.

⁹⁶ ASF, MPP 2655, Inventory of Carlo Dei (4 June 1583), f.231v: 'una Nostra Donna a guarnieto di legname t[ut]to dorato col arme de Dei e Lapi.'

⁹⁷ Bernardino da Siena, *Prediche sul campo*, 2: 862: '[...] per dare essempla a te fanciulla, che mai tu non abbi diletto di stare né a uscio né a finestra, ma che tu stia dentro in casa, dicendo delle avemarie e de' pater Nostri [...]']

⁹⁸ 'In che luogo è egli entrato? Io stimo nella sua camera [...] dove la santà vergine, chiuso l'uscio, facevi oratione al suo padre eterno. Quindi le nostre vergini imparino à voler'amare la camera segreta; non conversare in publico, non camminare per le strade curiosamente, non voler vedere altri, nè esser vedute, accioche, caome avvenne à Dina, non sieno forse desiderate & oppresse.' From Bartolomeo Lantana, *Prediche [...] di sermoni sopra gli evangelii propri [...]*. Venice: Al Segno della Concordia, 1608, book 2: 31 (faulty pagination). See also pp. 18-19: 'Et però quando tu orerai, entra nella camera tua, & chiudi l'uscio, & ora al Padre tuo secretamente; percioche egli, che vede il secreto del cuor tuo, te lo rimunererà in palese.' Pietro Belmonte was more explicit about the practical effects: 'facendo tutto ciò humilmente in segreto nel la tua propria camera, fuggendo ogni occasione in publico di soverchia santità, percioche il mostrarsi tal'hora troppo religioso dà sospetto di ipocrisia, & che dire à molti, forse non meno, che si faccia alcuno poco catolico: perche la gente è sempre più acconcia à credere il male, che il bene.' See Pietro Belmonte, *Institutione della Sposa* (Rome: Giovanni Osmarino Gigliotto, 1587), 4.

The space belonging to Mary was not, however, circumscribed to within the house. The proliferation of religious images can be seen as part of a continuing Catholic tradition alongside a quite conscious response to Protestantism, factors that have been widely understood as confirming and consolidating the position of the Virgin Mary as the model for female sanctity.⁹⁹ For Catholic women Mary's chastity and maternity gave her relevance to the two avenues of nun or wife that were on offer, avenues that the Catholic Reformation sought to reinforce with increasing discipline. It was through Mary, and more particularly representations of the Immaculate Conception and her Assumption, that differences in doctrine between Catholics and Protestants were able to be shown visibly, and her status within the Catholic Church and home seems to have risen accordingly.¹⁰⁰ Among the eighteen points that Pope Clement VIII laid out in 1598 to the King of France, assiduously recorded by the Florentine canon of San Friano, the fourth condition, 'to take for a protector particularly the most saintly woman, the Mother of God', demonstrates Mary's fundamental and institutional importance to Catholicism.¹⁰¹ Indeed, Paul de Barry proclaimed Mary's intervention as the reason for success in military actions (and the conversion of China) and lauded her single-handed ability to defend the tenets of Trent.¹⁰² He noted that an image of her in one's chamber was not only able to put joy into one's heart, but would also ensure that victory was at hand and the kingdom assured.¹⁰³ The Madonna's importance can also be evinced in the way that Wilhelm Gumpfenberg's *Atlas Marianus* (1657-59 & 1672) attempted, through miraculous images of her, to map out a Catholic 'Empire of Mary' that extended all around the world (and beyond), while de Barry's own Marian topography and text offered the possibility that 'these small pilgrimages' could be equally effective in front of her image at home.¹⁰⁴ The way in which Marian imagery 'conquered' the home points quite clearly towards her as a 'badge of Catholic orthodoxy' and an understanding of Mary that must be read as both socio-political and socio-spiritual.

⁹⁹ Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 68 & 88. Cf. Helen Hills, *Invisible City. The Architecture of Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Neapolitan Convents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 51-61.

¹⁰⁰ Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 2. On the striking confessional differences articulated by household imagery see Benedict, 'Towards the Comparative Study of the Popular Market for Art', esp. pp. 111-112. Mary was the most popular image in Benedict's study of Metz's Catholic households, but was almost never represented in Protestants' homes.

¹⁰¹ ASF, CSI 108, *Diario di Ser Francesco d'Abramo Canonico di S. Friano dal anno 1597 al 1619*, f.8r. 'pigliare p[er] protettrice particolarmente la Santissima donna Madre di Dio'.

¹⁰² Barry, *Le Paradis ouvert*, 408. See also p. 14: 'Il semble qu'une image de la sainte Vierge d'as chamber, en veüe, ne fasse pas grand bien, ha! combine de fois est ce que l'ennemi perd courage de nous attaquer à la veüe d'une seule de telles images, sur tout lors que nous la logeons & mettons en veüe pour servir de sauvegarde, & d'object le plus aimable que nous ayons'.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 13-14: 'Philagie, ie ne sçay point si iamais vous aurez de parielles attaques, mais si sçay-ie bien que vous auriez grand tort de loger dans une chamber degarnie de quelque image de MARIE, puisque la seule veüe de son pourtrait est capable de vous mettre les allegresses dans le coeur, les victories en main, & les couronnes en teste'.

¹⁰⁴ Wilhelm Gumpfenberg, *Atlas Marianus*, 2nd ed. (Munich: Ioannis Iacklini, 1572); de Barry, *Le Paradis ouvert*, 187 & 302.

The vast majority of Marian images listed in the inventories were probably 'orthodox', as the materials like gesso and terracotta from which they were commonly made suggest that they were produced in large numbers as affordable commodities.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, the inventories often point towards the generic and serial nature of her representations by their simplified notations of 'una Vergine Maria' or 'una Madonna da camera', as well as by noting the large number of gesso or painted Marian reliefs of the same size: typically one or one and a half *braccia*. These descriptions show how many of the domestic Marian images conformed to a standardised half-length relief similar to the ones hanging on a wall at the Museo Bardini (see fig. 2.30), or the freestanding sculptures described by Geraldine Johnson.¹⁰⁶ Later painted and printed versions drew on this same pictorial formula again and again, enabling a type of endless variation with minimal difference. It is this endless repetition of a specific pictorial formula that ensured an image's effectiveness by establishing it as an iconic and universal type. The recurrence of many 'copies' within a single interior merely reinforced the image as canonical (and therefore powerful), and artists played on this by reproducing their own Marian paintings within images with different subjects. For example, Jacopo da Empoli's standard depiction of the Virgin and Child (figs.2.31-32) was incorporated into paintings such as an altarpiece *The Madonna with Child between Saints Laurence, Jerome, Francis and Dominic* (1592) intended for Lorenzo Torrigiani's domestic chapel (fig.2.33), and *The Honesty of St. Egidio* (1614) (fig.2.34) painted for the *Compagnia degli Orefici* in Florence.¹⁰⁷ The currency of the copy was already well established within the devotional market by the fifteenth century, aided by several parallel social developments in religious practices. The Renaissance saw an expanding class of patron, be they confraternal, guild, or family based, and, as the inventories show, an increase in private worship that in turn demanded large quantities of items (such as the *Andachtbilder*) for domestic devotion. Coupled to this was the escalating trade in indulgences and associated pilgrimages to places such as Loreto and the Santissima Annunziata of Florence, which produced copies of specific devotional icons and images on a serial basis for all budgets.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ On the large scale production of Marian images during the quattrocento see Anabel Thomas, *The Painter's Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 54, 59, 279-80, 288; Esch, 'Roman Customs Registers 1470-80', 73 & 75-8. In relation to the increasing demand for Marian reliefs in the quattrocento, Ann Jolly has noted how '[c]ommon sense suggests that the works were cast not only for commission, but that a larger number was kept in stock in the workshop for clients to choose from' and that '[t]his signifies an important change in the relationship between artist and patron towards a modern market'. See Anna Jolly, *Madonnas by Donatello and His Circle* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1998), 15.

¹⁰⁶ See Johnson, 'Beautiful Brides and Model Mothers' and 'Family Values'.

¹⁰⁷ On Empoli's images see Rosanna Caterina Proto Pisani, Antonio Natali, Carlo Sisi, and Elena Testaferrata, eds. *Jacopo da Empoli (1551-1640): Pittore d'eleganza e devozione* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004), 104-8, & 144.

¹⁰⁸ Peter van der Brink, 'The Art of Copying: Copying and Serial Production of Paintings in the Low Countries in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,' in *Brueghel Enterprises*, ed. Peter van der Brink, 13-43, 2001. On the production and market for copies in Florence see Thomas, *The Painter's Practice*, and Andrew Ladis and Carolyn Wood, eds. *The Craft of Art: Originality and Industry in the Italian Renaissance Workshop* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1995). For the pilgrim souvenirs from

Whether bought, commissioned or gifted, emulations through fakes or replicas of devotional images, the copy was deeply embedded within the cultural framework of exchange in renaissance and early modern society.

THE MADONNA DELLA NEVE, THE MADONNA DI LORETO, AND THE ANNUNCIATE
MADONNA.

In a list of forty-seven paintings that Giovambattista Strozzi commissioned between 1627 and 1629 to decorate Palazzo Strozzi and his country estates, over twenty of them, including three Madonnas, were noted as copies.¹⁰⁹ While the copying of artworks may have sometimes been for aesthetic reasons of artistic mimesis or to reproduce as gifts their own paintings for those families in possession of a particularly famed example, it was also and especially so for devotional images, about recreating the authenticity of the original rather than a mere simulacrum. It is into this context of the copy that the burgeoning appearances from the late-cinquecento onwards of specific Marys, such as the Madonna di Loreto, the Madonna di Dolori, the Madonna del Reggio, and the Madonna della Neve must be located.

The first mention of a specific Mary within the inventories came in 1557 with a picture of 'Our Lady of Rome' or the Madonna della Neve (see fig.2.35) (also known as the Madonna di San Luca or the Madonna del Popolo) found within Francesco di Gianozo di Francesco Magniale's Florentine house.¹¹⁰ In 1598 Giulio de' Medici owned at least eight images of the Madonna, one Annunciation and two portraits of both the Madonna della Neve and the Madonna di Loreto.¹¹¹ Images of the Madonna di Loreto and her *santa casa* were noted in increasing numbers in inventories from the late-sixteenth century, and contemporary examples show how her image and abode were available in a diverse range of media and prices (see for example, figs.2.36a-e). The devotion felt towards her can be seen in the 1620 estate of Giovanni di Matteo Boscherini which included no less than three small images of the 'Madonna dell'oreto', or the fact that Alessandro Bacherelli's image of her was illuminated by four white wax [*cera*] candles in 1622.¹¹² The impressive art collection of Brigida Bardi Tuccierelli (recorded between 1622 – 1640) listed no less than fourteen images of the Virgin Mary and two scenes of the Annunciation. One of the fourteen was a picture of the Madonna from Santa Maria del Carmine in Florence, two were of the Madonna del Reggio (a Marian cult that had developed after an apparition in 1595 at Cagliano in the Val di

Loreto see Floriano Grimaldi, *Mostra di Medaglie Lauretane* (Loreto: Archivio Storico Santa Casa, 1977).

¹⁰⁹ ASF, CSV 1253, ff.13r & 14v. The artists noted included Jacopo da Empoli, Giulio Bernini, Jacopo Vignali, Domenico Passignani, Francesco Furini, Sigismondo Coccapani and Tommaso Bandersì.

¹¹⁰ ASF, MPP 2651, f.179r.

¹¹¹ ASF, MPP 2657, inventory dated 1 January 1598, ff.64r-191v.

¹¹² ASF, MPP 2660, 6 May 1620, f.466v & 1 June 1622, f.725r.

Magra, Tuscany) and two more were ‘small images of the Santa Casa of Loreto in silver with ebony frames’.¹¹³

The Madonna della Neve, Madonna di Loreto, Madonna del Reggio, and Madonna di Dolori drew on and extended the traditional register of repetition that Mary’s more generic counterparts had already established whilst having recourse to their own individual and distinct powers of intercession. Their growing presence in homes denotes an increasing tendency to particularise and regionalise the universality of Marian cults in relation to material remains and their miraculous powers. Furthermore, the elaborate and costly materials of which these icons could be composed, such as the silver images of the *Santa Casa* in Tuccierelli’s estate, point out the way in which material culture expressed and helped sustain devotional belief.¹¹⁴ As Paul Davies has noted, due to the bodily Assumption of the Virgin, the scarcity of her material relics created a gap which was filled by miraculous images of her (or images of miraculous images), such as those of the Madonna di Loreto or the Madonna della Neve. To all extents and purposes these images became relics themselves, housing the holy and providing a more accessible site of supernatural intercession.¹¹⁵ The way in which images of the Madonna di Loreto or other Marian cults were encased in lapis lazuli, silver and other precious materials listed in inventories (materials which typically belonged to the domain of reliquaries), makes explicit the currency of earthly value and spiritual efficacy that she held.

Similar to the findings for angels, the dates when copies of the Madonna della Neve and the Madonna di Loreto began to be embraced at home correspond almost exactly with the increasing promotion these devotional cults received, particularly from the hands of the Jesuits, from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards. While both cults had existed since medieval times (and the importance of Loreto as a holy site had been further propagated by an ambitious program of architectural reform in the late-quattrocento), they were lifted out of the local level during the Counter-Reformation period and established as international shrines that attracted the pious and the powerful.¹¹⁶ By the late-sixteenth century the Madonna di Loreto had become the Madonna del Soccorso: the figure who appears to have been most widely invoked during moments of crisis.¹¹⁷ Indeed, in Gumpfenberg’s *Atlas* of Marian images around the Catholic globe, the Madonna di

¹¹³ ASF, LCF 366, *Inventari e Ricordi di Sig[nor]a Brigida Bardi Tuccierelli (1622-1640)*, ff.3v-19r.

¹¹⁴ See ASF, LCF 366, f.3r. For other precious representations of the Santa Casa or Madonna di Loreto, see the inventories of Lessandra Gimignani (1647) in MPP 2661, 59r, and GiovanBattista Benini (nd, c.1620) in MPP 2660, f.548v.

¹¹⁵ Paul Davies, ‘Studies in the Quattrocento Centrally Planned Church’ (PhD thesis, London: Courtauld Institute, 1992), 99.

¹¹⁶ On the Grand duchesses pilgrimages to Loreto from the late-sixteenth to early-seventeenth centuries see Sanger, ‘Women of Power’, while for the Papal ambassador’s letters concerning Giovanna d’Austria’s trip there in 1573 see ASV, SS *Firenze 2*, ff.129v, 133r, 148r, & 156r. For an account of two separate pilgrimages there see PierGiovanni Francesco Saltini’s *ricordi*: ASF, LCF 4554 (1630-1724), f.5v, & f.15v.

¹¹⁷ See for example the recording of her invocation under torture in ASF, Nunz. 843 (1568-1573), unpaginated (entry of 20 December 1568).

Loreto was ranked as the most important Marian image and the Madonna della Neve as second.¹¹⁸ The images of both these Marys were distributed worldwide as a means of conversion and diplomacy and their miracle-working cults were employed as a riposte to the accusations of Protestantism as well as a validation of the True Faith.¹¹⁹ As *acheiropoietons* (images not drawn by human hands) both the Madonna della Neve and the Madonna di Loreto substantiated the Catholic cult of images in the face of Protestant scepticism by drawing attention to the bonds existent between depiction and the divine. In addition, the Madonna di Loreto substantiated the authority of Catholicism and its tenets, as the transposition of the birthplace of Mary to the Italian peninsula served as a clear corroboration of the region's faith.

Similarly indicative of the way in which cults were promoted in order to serve more temporal concerns, was the cult of the Annunciation in Florence.¹²⁰ Nearly simultaneous with the rise in portraits and arms of the Medici listed in Florentine homes since the 1540s, was the number of Annunciation images found there, and, in fact, both phenomena were indissolubly linked. The Medici had supported the miraculous image of the Annunciation (c.1360, see fig. 2.37) housed at the Sevite church of the Santissima Annunziata since the fifteenth century, linking its cult to the interests of the family dynasty.¹²¹ However, during the reigns of Francesco I (1564 – 1587) and the ex-cardinal Ferdinando I (1587 – 1609), the cult took on a new character and became even more

¹¹⁸ Gumpfenberg, *Atlas Marianus*, nn.1 & 2.

¹¹⁹ On the Madonna della Neve or Salus Populi Romani during the Counter-Reformation period, see Kirstin Noreen, 'The Icon of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome: An Image and Its Afterlife,' *Renaissance Studies* 19, no. 5 (2005): 660-672; Machtelt Israels, *Sassetta's Madonna della Neve* (Leiden: Primavera Press, 2003); Filippo Lorenzi and Giovanni Malanima, *L'Oratorio di Leonardo da Vinci: La Madonna della Neve a Montevettolini* (Florence: Pagnini Editore, 2006); Giorgio Mancini, *Iconografia nivea: la devozione all Madonna della Neve* (Naples: Associazione Il Quartiere Ponticelli, 2000). On the Madonna di Loreto and the Santa Casa, see Weil-Garris, *The Santa Casa*; Floriano Grimaldi, *La Chiesa di Santa Maria di Loreto. Nei Documenti dei secoli XII – XV* (Ancona: Archivio di Stato, 1984); Grimaldi, *La Basilica della Santa Casa di Loreto*. (Ancona: Soprintendenza per i beni ambientali e architettonici della Marche, 1986); Giuseppe Santarelli, *Loreto: Its History and Art* (Bologna: La Fotometalgrafica Emiliana, 1983); Louis Richeome, *The Pilgrimage of Loreto* and Orazio Torsellino, *The History of Our B. Lady of Loreto in English Recusant Literature 1558-1646*, vol. 285 (London: The Scholar Press, 1976); Silvio Serragli, *La S. Casa Abbellita*. (Ancona: Francesco Serafini, 1668).

¹²⁰ See Mary Bergstein, 'Marian Politics in Quattrocento Florence: The Renewed Dedication of Santa Maria del Fiore in 1412,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 44 (1991): 673-719, for the importance that the feast day of the Annunciation held in Florence. More specifically on the cult of the image of SS. Annunziata see Megan Holmes, 'The Elusive Origins of the Cult of the Annunziata in Florence,' in *The Miraculous Image in Late Medieval and Renaissance Culture*, ed. E. Thuno and G. Wolf (Rome: Analecta Romana Instituti Danici Supplementum XXXV, 2004): 97-121, and Zygmunt Wązbński, 'L'Annunziata della Vergine nella chiesa della SS. Annunziata a Firenze: un contributo al moderno culto dei quadri,' in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Craig Hugh Smyth*, ed. Andrew Morrogh, Fiorella Superbi Gioffredi, Piero Morselli, and Eve Borsook, 533-52 (Florence: Giunti Barbèra, 1985).

¹²¹ See for example Piero de' Medici's (1416-1469) donation of the elaborate tabernacle to house the image at SS. Annunziata as detailed in Wolfgang Liebenwein, 'Die "Privatisierung" des Wunders. Piero de' Medici in SS. Annunziata and San Miniato,' in *Piero de' Medici "il Gottoso" (1416-1469)*, eds. Andreas Beyer and Bruce Boucher, 252-90 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993).

assiduously and publicly promoted.¹²² Francesco I himself was born on the feast of the Annunciation (25 March), a day that also marked the beginning of the Florentine year and since 1412 the principal holy day of Florence's *duomo*. This serendipitous fortune of birth was diligently exploited. For most of the sixteenth century up until 1580, the year that Cardinal Carlo Borromeo visited the shrine and was presented with a painting of its image (fig.2.38), direct copies of the Annunciation image that SS. Annunziata housed had been ostensibly outlawed.¹²³ From that date forward and alongside highly public devotion to the Servite church, copies were widely disseminated by the grand ducal family and their allies to align conspicuously the miracle-working image to the power and piety of the Medici and their city.¹²⁴ It was in a sense a deliberately historicised publicity campaign and one which lent the grand ducal regime a sense of pious and legitimate ancestry given the way in which it evoked an apparently uninterrupted chain of Medici patronage since the quattrocento. One of the results of the late-sixteenth-century patronage was that within the network of diplomatic gifts given from the Tuscan court to the Spanish, pictures of the SS. Annunziata's Annunciation were the third most requested category of object, with the workshops of Alessandro and Cristofano Allori virtually cornering the market in their production as diplomatic gifts (see for example figs.2.38, 2.39a-b).¹²⁵ Another result clearly traced by the Pupilli inventories appears to have been that local Tuscan devotion to the cult of the Annunciation rose accordingly, so much so that by the late-seventeenth century Baldinucci remarked upon the success enjoyed by copies of the SS. Annunziata's image in Florentine homes.¹²⁶ Paintings of the Annunciation had grown from representing just 2.3% of Marian images within the 1580s (*Pupilli*

¹²² Fantoni, Marcello. 'Il Culto dell'Annunziata e la sacralità del potere Mediceo,' *Archivio Storico Italiano* 147 (1989): 771-93; Wązbfński, 'L'Annunciazione della Vergine', esp.536. For a comparable situation in Turin in which religious images (and relics) were consciously employed as a means of dynastic state-building, see Paolo Cozzo, *La geografia celeste dei duchi di Savoia. Religione, devozioni e sacralità in uno Stato di età moderna (secoli XVI-XVII)* (Bologna: il Mulino, 2006), esp. 149-215.

¹²³ See Francesco Bocchi, *Opera [...] sopra l'immagine miracolosa della Sanitissima Nunziata di Fiorenza*. (Florence: n.p., 1592), 88.

¹²⁴ See for example the canon Ser Francesco d'Abramo's numerous entries regarding Medici patronage and devotion at SS. Annunziata in ASF, CSI 108, *Diario di Ser Francesco d'Abramo Canonico di S. Friano dal anno 1597-1619*, f.23v & f.26v. Alongside the reproductions of the painting, were a number of laudatory texts explaining the history of the SS. Annunziata in Florence. Typical of the period is the servite friar Luca Ferrini's *Corona di sessanta tre miracole delle Nunziata di Firenze [...]* (Florence: Giorgio Marescotti, 1593), dedicated to Grand Duchess Christine of Lorraine. Ferrini had previously received a lectureship in theology at the University of Pisa on recommendation by Eleonora of Toledo.

¹²⁵ Edward Goldberg, 'Artistic Relations between the Medici and the Spanish Courts, 1587-1621,' *The Burlington Magazine* CXXXVIII (1996): 105-114 & 529-540; Rosemarie Mulcahy, *Philip 2nd of Spain. Patron of the Arts* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 78. Although other artists such as Zanobi Rosi, Valerio Marucelli, and Cigoli all produced copies of the SS. Annunziata's Annunciation, the success enjoyed by the Allori workshops can be discerned in the fact that between 1596 and 1621 around twenty copies by Cristofano Allori of the were listed in the Medici *Guardaroba* and that the General of the Jesuits specifically requested that his copy was by Cristofano: Miles L. Chappell, ed., *Cristofano Allori* (Florence: Centro Di, 1984), 34. See also Cozzo, *Geografia celeste*, as cited n.123.

¹²⁶ See Baldinucci, *Notizie 1681-1728*, III: 522 as quoted in Simona Lecchini Giovannoni, *Alessandro Allori* (Turin: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1991), 252.

file 2655) to account for more than 12% by the 1600s (*Pupilli* 2657). This figure continued to grow, rising from 15% in the 1620s (*Pupilli* 2660) to 18% in the 1640s (*Pupilli* 2661). Like images of the Madonna di Loreto, multiple images of the Annunciation were also kept in individual estates.¹²⁷ As Francesco Bocchi (1548-1618) so astutely remarked in his *Opera [...] sopra l'immagine miracolosa della santissima Nunziata di Fiorenza*, this increase in popularity was in part '[...] because all the arts are subject to politics'.¹²⁸ Bocchi's statement can also be read in relation to the generous indulgences that accompanied images of the Madonna della Santissima Annunziata and the Madonna di Loreto or della Neve, another factor that undoubtedly aided the popularity of these cults.

THE HOLY HOME

The Madonna di Loreto and her *santa casa* as well as the numerous pictures of the Annunciation that the inventories registered were of course wholly appropriate subjects for the domestic sphere. Indeed, in the story of the *santa casa* of Loreto, God apparently intervened directly to preserve the sanctity of the domestic sphere and Mary's memory by sending his army of angels to transpose the house from Nazareth to its final resting place. Hundreds of affordable images reproduced this scene by showing Mary and the infant Christ atop a cookie-cutter house held 'flying' through the air by angels (see for example figs.2.36d & 2.36e). This story and the images that depict it establish a sanctified zone of protection surrounding the home. Moreover, this sanctity, and in particular, female sanctity, is located *a priori* as being conceived at home.

Images of the Holy Family alongside images of the *santa casa* and the Annunciation disseminated a proper model for the entire household and its role in reproducing social norms. Like images of the Madonna di Loreto or the Virgin Annunciate, the percentage of images of the Holy Family found in homes also grew throughout the timeframe studied. By the 1640s (*Pupilli* file 2661) pictures of the Holy Family had more than doubled from twenty years previously to make up 2.3% of religious art.¹²⁹ Although this subject had occurred as early as 1544 in a *camera* of Bartolomeo di Jacopo Caccia's, because of the habit of notarial conventions which subsumed pictures of the Holy Family into pictures of the Virgin Mary, it never figured as a topic of any widespread popularity before the first quarter of the seventeenth century.¹³⁰ By the 1640s, however, descriptions of the Holy Family were qualitatively different as they gave equal weight to Mary,

¹²⁷ See for example the 1602 inventory of the Pisan *bicchiera* Giovanni Coscietti whose estate held ten Marian images, at least five of which were Annunciation scenes. Inventory reproduced in Gabriella Cantini Giudotti, *Tre inventari di bicchiera toscani fra Cinque e Seicento* (Florence: L'Accademia della Crusca, 1983), 130-146.

¹²⁸ Bocchi, *Opera [...] sopra l'immagine miracolosa*, 1.

¹²⁹ Disregarding references to him in within images of the Holy Family or *presepi*, St. Joseph is mentioned at least six times in the 1640s sampling. See for example ASF, MPP 2661, f.408v; f.920r; f.191v; f.84r; f.309v.

¹³⁰ ASF, MPP 2648, (30 October 1544), f.866v: '1 VM con arme del caccia e nobilli col bambino & San Giuseppe & cortina da coprire entrovi Gesu'.

Joseph and the infant Jesus.¹³¹ Moreover, as Sara Matthews Grieco has interpreted, the widely accessible printed offerings of the Holy Family that appeared from the mid-sixteenth century began to reflect the increasing nuclear character of the early modern household and the concern with social order through the adherence to clear-cut gender roles.¹³²

The gendered virtues of domesticity and the 'holy home' that these images extolled are closely related to Church policies that clearly promoted the sanctity of marriage and the family, and Medicean ones that sought to embody them. Francesco di Tommasi's household treatise, published with the approval of the Holy Office (see fig.2.40), emphasized not only the religious nature of the household, but also the incumbent roles of the father as 'a minister of God' and the wife as the obedient handmaiden to God (and presumably to her minister as well).¹³³ Cardinal Agostino Valier (1531-1606) had been equally explicit about the individual roles of the family in order to create 'houses of God' in his treatise *Della istruzione delle donne maritate* (1575).¹³⁴ A saintly home was rhetorically analogous to a saintly State and Church, and clearly while the latter two wanted to assert authority over the former, it appears that in positing the sacrality of the house and the family, both forms of government engendered the domestic with its own sovereignty. Arguably, the Catholic home post-Trent has a claim to the religious autonomy and self-construction that Reformation historiography has typically bestowed to the other side of the confessional divide. As Daniele Frigo has noted, this process of the sanctification of the home can also be traced within the written tradition of *Economia*, such as Tommasi's or Valier's texts. By the last few decades of the sixteenth century, there was a shift within these treatises to view domestic relationships and affairs as an instrument with which to save one's soul.¹³⁵ Similarly, while family group portraits remained rarely listed within early seventeenth-century inventories, the increasing representations of the Holy Family at home suggests a more specific timeframe in which the sentimentalization of the family group (prefigured by its sacred counterpart), as argued by Philippe Ariès, became embedded in popular culture.¹³⁶

THE HUMBLE HOME AND THE SAINTLY FAMILY

¹³¹ See for example the reference to a 'quadretto della Madonna. S. Gioseffe, e Giesu, dipinto in tela con cornice nere perfilate di oro braccia 3' in Jacopo Antonio della Chiesa's estate of 17 November 1649, f.193r.

¹³² Matthews Grieco, *Ange o diablesse*.

¹³³ For the role of the father as 'il ministero di Dio', see Francesco Tommasi, *Reggimento del Padre di Famiglia* (Florence: Giorgio Marescotti, 1580), 5, 55 & 78. More widely on family roles within early modern Italian household treatises see Frigo, *Il Padre di Famiglia*. The diary of Giambattista Casale demonstrates that treatise's advice that the man of the house prayed with his family and servants and relayed the Sunday sermon as part of his role as 'the minister of God' was actually practiced, see Marcora, 'Il Diario di Giambattista Casale', 225.

¹³⁴ From Romano, *Housecraft and Statecraft*, 22.

¹³⁵ Frigo, *Il Padre di famiglia*, 39.

¹³⁶ Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood* (London: Cape, 1962).

Entwined to this idea of the 'holy home' and its constituent members must be seen the concurrent rise of the 'cappannuccia' (the humble home) or the *presepio* in the *Pupilli* inventories of the late-sixteenth century. The *presepio* (the stable at Bethlehem) gave a different form to the birth of Christ and the Christian virtues of domesticity, family and reproduction that images of the Holy Family embodied. The household crèche was in a sense the logical outcome for the sculpted *gesuini* and bas-relief nativity scenes listed in fifteenth-century homes by providing a narrative structure in which to locate Jesus' triumphant birth, albeit an outcome that occurred only in the first decades of the seventeenth century. Even though three homes in the 1620s sampling possessed them, images of the Crib had more than doubled to occur seven times in the 1640s sampling.¹³⁷ *Presepi* could be commercially produced sheets of copperplate engravings or xylographs by artists such as Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione (c.1609 – c.1664) that bore illustrations able to be cut out, mounted and displayed like the example of 'la cappannuccia d'fogli' in Lelio d'Alessandro Quaratesi's house demonstrates.¹³⁸ However, as the famous example of Bernini's *presepio* for Prince Barberini's palace in Rome highlights, or the eighteenth-century British traveller Samuel Sharp's astonished valuation of £8,000 for a Neapolitan nobleman's household crèche demonstrates, these crèches could become expensive and competitive affairs for the patrician households in which they were displayed.¹³⁹ Elaborately sculpted of gesso, wood, terracotta and *carta pesta*, painted and gilded, their artistry and expense potentially belied their rustic appellation in the inventories as 'cappannuccie'. In 1617 Michelangelo di Santi Viviani kept his crèche in a room devoted to it: a 'stanza della Capanuccia' replete with a bench for praying and other devotional images.¹⁴⁰ In 1650 Vincenzo Bardi kept his seemingly elaborate version on top of a wooden altar covered with red taffeta runners in his domestic chapel.¹⁴¹ If Arnolfo di Cambio's sculptured *presepio* (1289) in the Oratorio del Presepe in Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome bore witness to the burgeoning medieval devotion to the Nativity, the *Pupilli* inventories nonetheless show that this devotion was not embraced at home until at least the first decades of the seicento. The collecting and display of *presepi* can be read as relating not only to the precedents of church nativity sets or medieval mystery plays, but also to the increased status the feast of Christmas, the

¹³⁷ ASF MPP 2660, f.239r; f.512r; f.638v; MPP 2661, f.58r; f.65v; f.234r; f.289v; f.298v; f.398r.

¹³⁸ ASF, MPP 2661, 14 May 1650, f.299r. A number of these 'presepi di carta' can be found in the Civica Raccolta di stampe Bertarelli at Castello Sforzesco, Milan.

¹³⁹ For Sharp's reaction to Neapolitan cribs see Olga Raggio, 'A Neapolitan Christmas Crib,' *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 24 (1965): 151-58, 151-2. The standard work on creches remains Ruldoph Berliner, *Die Weihnachtskrippe* (Munich: Prestal Verlag, 1955).

¹⁴⁰ Stored in Viviani's room were 'una capannuccia con la Madonna S. Giuseppe Angioli Magi e Cavallo et altre figure di carta pesta dipinte, una panca per la predica, un quadro col cornice d'albero dipinte entrovi più figure in stampa, due quadretti di Madonne', 'una mezzina d'ottone grande a vaso col suo brevario', 'un'altra mezzina d'ottone minore', and various kitchen utensils and grains, ASF, MPP 2660, f.239r.

¹⁴¹ 'Un altare di legno sopranato tutto di taffetta rosso col bullette d'ottone et nastrino d'argento dentro di quale vi e la Capanuccia col rifatte statutte [...] l'asino et il bue et 6 altre statutte di gesso et altri angeli di carta pesta et carta semplice ... due bandinelle di taffetta rosso per corprire la cappannuccia', ASF, MPP 2661, ff.388r-v.

mysteries of the Incarnation and the Nativity had begun to assume in the liturgy and 'popular' imagination ever since St. Francis of Assisi encouraged the cult of the crib in 1223 and the Jesuits later promoted it. In addition, by adopting a phenomenon that previously was limited to the space of the church, convent or monastery, household *presepi* reveal a reformulated perception of the sacred nature of the domestic sphere and a closer alignment between the family and the holy.

CHRIST AND THE HOST'S ROLE AT HOME

The centrepiece of the holy family and *presepi* was in reality of course Christ, and the inventories show that the position of Christ in the household was as assured as Mary's. Indeed, the gap in numbers between Marian and Christological images began to close during the 1620s. Despite the decreasing proportion of images of Christ that took place during the period studied, as was the case with Marian images, there was nonetheless an increasing number of and diversity in representations of Our Lord that were recorded in estates. In the 1560s (*Pupilli* file 2651) the 'Name of Jesus' (probably a picture of his monogram IHS, a devotion popularised in Italy first by St. Bernardino of Siena and then by the Society of Jesus) was first noted and became a subject whose popularity was to grow in subsequent years.¹⁴² During the 1580s (*Pupilli* 2651), there was a marked rise in the number of narrative scenes depicting Christ, including pictures of Christ carrying the Cross, Christ in the Garden, the Flight into Egypt, and the Last Supper. By the 1600s (*Pupilli* 2657), this repertoire was added to with subjects of his Baptism, the Calling of St. Peter, the Flagellation of Christ, as well as several depictions of Christ at the Column. Images of Christ's sermon in the Garden, the Circumcision of Christ, the Story of the Widow of Nain (described as 'il figlio della Vedova di Nuino col Nro Sig. Io resuscita'), Christ in the Wilderness, the Ascension, the Resurrection, Christ before Caiaphas, the Entombment, the Marriage at Cana, the Holy Sepulchre, the Miracles of Christ, and numerous images of his Passion further supplemented this list between c.1620 to c.1650 (*Pupilli* 2660 and 2661). For the first time, in the small but interesting collection of the silk weaver Giovanni di Luca Rinieri, a painting of the Eucharist ('il sanctissimo sacramento') was noted in the mid-seicento.¹⁴³ Donald Weissman has noted that parish confraternities devoted to the Holy Sacrament flourished following the Medici restoration in 1530, and by the end of the fifteen hundreds the Eucharistic devotion of the *Quarantore* had become one of the most attended Florentine religious rituals.¹⁴⁴ Rinieri's painting is not only evidence of the fundamental importance that Eucharistic devotion held in early modern Florence and the importance of communion in salvation, but also shows how images, in giving the populace the ability to constantly view the chalice and host by themselves, provided a means through which sight

¹⁴² On the devotion to the IHS monogram in Germany see Scribner, 'Popular Piety', 453.

¹⁴³ ASF, MPP 2661, (4 November 1649), f.177r.

¹⁴⁴ Weissmann, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 208, 222-3, 229-234. On the *Quarantore* see Mark S. Weil, 'The Devotion of the Forty Hours and Roman Baroque Illusions.' *JWCI* 37 (1974): 218-245

could substitute for touch, and the communal experience of the Sacrament could be brought home.¹⁴⁵

In addition to the increased diversity in Christological images, the notaries began to show a greater accuracy in distinguishing images of Christ's life from depictions of Mary's, suggesting a more nuanced understanding of religious history and orthodox tenets by the late-cinquecento. Certain specific and iconic images of Christ, such as the 'Sudario' (the Holy Shroud), the Pietà and the Ecce Homo remained constant throughout the period studied, while other types such as the Salvator Mundi (see fig.2.41) were in fact only distinguished towards the end of the cinquecento. However, it was 'images of piety', that is scenes of his crucifixion or crucifixes, that constituted by far the most common representation of Christ. In addition, and as figures 2.16 and 1.41 show, the Christological images most often noted as veiled or with candles attached similarly tended to be representations of his crucifixion. In theory then, for households the focus of devotion to Christ lay in his suffering and the redemption offered by his death. These were the same themes of penitence and imitation as had been mapped out by late medieval devotional writings such as Domenico Cavalca's *Specchio della croce* and Ludolph of Saxony's *Vita Christi*: books which had themselves been noted in earlier *Pupilli* inventories.¹⁴⁶

HOUSEHOLD SAINTS

Compared to images of Mary and Christ, images of individual saints were not common in the early inventories. However, in contrast to the falling proportion of Marian and Christological images, by the late-sixteenth century their numbers began to rise. By the 1650s, saints made up almost half (44%) of religious works or 14.3% of art overall, meaning that almost more images of saints were kept in houses than pictures of the Madonna and Christ combined. In addition, more individual saints were recognised in later inventories. The 1640s sampling (*Pupilli* 2661) shows that at least thirty-seven individual saints or *beati* were recorded in varying numbers alongside several pictures of martyrs. These figures indicate a 'Counter-Reformation' effect, evincing as they do a strong personal affirmation of the communion of Saints and their intercessory role, even as such theological tenets were being rejected North of the Alps. As David Gentilcore in his study of everyday religious practices in early modern Southern Italy has noted, this intercessory quality of saints was affirmed by the way that they were believed to materialise quite literally within domestic

¹⁴⁵ On the role of sight in communion and the appropriation of the sacrament by lay participants see Grubb, *Provincial Families*, 186-87. See also Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, 183, who notes that seeing the Host was a tactile experience as much as a visual one.

¹⁴⁶ See Chapter 4 on books, and also, for the enduring popularity of Cavalca in the inventories, Bec, *Le Livres des Florentins*, esp. pp. 120, 32, 41, 79, 81 & 146.

images and keep watch over their household – a quality demonstrated succinctly by Domenico di Tommaso Fagioli's 'picture of a St. Catherine who moves her eyes'.¹⁴⁷

In terms of Counter-Reformation Saints, St. Carlo Borromeo was by far the most popular in Florentine homes. The increased presence of his images in the 1640s suggests that for Florentines he had assumed some of the protective properties traditionally attributed to St. Sebastian and St. Roch by the time the devastating plague hit Tuscany in the years 1630-33.¹⁴⁸ Paintings similar to Andrea Comodi's *St. Carlo Borromeo Praying for the Plague to End* (c.1622) (fig.2.42) were widely copied and reproduced as engravings and helped to consolidate St. Carlo's position as a special intercessor during times of pestilence.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, in contrast to the iconic images of St. Sebastian's martyrdom, Comodi's painting might be read as emblematic of a shift in the best ways to intercede. St. Carlo's kneeling posture of entreaty at the altar and scourge slung casually around his shoulders (which knotted three times is analogous to St. Francis's symbolic belt) offered the viewer a clear means and location for salvation: prayer, penance and humility at the foot of the Church.

However, disregarding the household presence of St. Carlo Borromeo, Counter-Reformation Saints, and more specifically Counter-Reformation Saints from Florence (such as SS. Filippo Neri, Caterina de'Ricci, Maddalena de'Pazzi and Andrea Corsini), were not especially popular. Despite having been canonized almost twenty years previously, St. Ignatius of Loyola was recognized only twice in the 1640s sampling.¹⁵⁰ When 'new' Tuscan Saints were registered in inventories, they were without exception found within wealthier households. The data conforms to Sallmann's findings for Naples: sanctity was profoundly noble.¹⁵¹ With the single exception of Beato Ippolito Galantini, not only were the Florentine Saints from noble families, but their cult in the domestic sphere also tended to be maintained by families of similar standing.

Although exceptional compared to Pazzi, Ricci, Borromeo, Corsini and Neri because of his humble origins, Beato Ippolito Galantini (1565-1621) provides a paradigmatic example regarding the domestic display of images of modern saintly candidates. Galantini's image was first distinguished in wealthier household inventories during the second quarter of the seventeenth century. Gio Battista di Vincenzo Spogliati, for example, had a picture of the Beato Ippolito in his second bedchamber, and Brigida Tuccierelli had a painting of him next to images of SS. Filippo

¹⁴⁷ ASF, MPP 2661, 4 January 1617, f.56r: 'un quadro d'una S.ta Cat.a ch muove gl'occhi'. See Gentilcore, *From Bishop to Witch*, 184-6.

¹⁴⁸ On the 1630 plague see Calvi, *Histories of a Plague Year*.

¹⁴⁹ Comodi painted this image himself at least four times. See *Il Seicento Fiorentino*, 1:144.

¹⁵⁰ One of the mentions was in Francesco di Matteo Lomi's estate, where St. Ignatius was listed next to 'un gesuino di carta pesta in sul mondo', ASF, MPP 2661, f.126r.

¹⁵¹ Jean-Michel Sallman, *Naples et ses saints à l'âge baroque (1540-1750)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1994), 156. See also Eric Suiere, *La Sainteté française de la Réforme Catholique (XVI^e - XVIII^e Siècles) d'après les textes hagiographiques et les procès de canonisation* (Bordeaux: Presse Universitaires de Bordeaux, 2001), 426-430.

Neri, Carlo Borromeo, Pietro Lacrimante, and Bernard.¹⁵² Galantini trained by giving sermons in the Jesuit Church in Florence, and by 1602 had founded the Congregation of Christian Doctrine in Florence.¹⁵³ Although not formally ratified until the early nineteenth century, the Congregation (whose adherents were known as 'Vachetoni') expanded rapidly with regional branches throughout Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, and was dedicated to a severe and catechetical form of Christian education for the laity. While the Grand Duke had established a perpetual chaplaincy for the order, the cult that sprang up shortly after Galantini's death became the cause of some consternation among Florentine church authorities. They clearly and understandably felt that his cult was legitimate as, according to the Florentines, all the necessary formalities had been observed in the *processus ordinarius* of Ippolito started straight after his death; a decree from the Sacred Congregation of Rites had officially recognized his cult; a book of Ippolito's life published in both Rome and Florence had labelled him (with permission) 'beato'; and no less than two Popes (first Gregory XV (1554-1623) and then Urban VIII (1568-1644) in September 1623) had conceded the right to celebrate Ippolito's cult.¹⁵⁴ However, by 1625 the local authorities were unsure how official Ippolito's recognition was, due to a decree issued by the Holy Office on 13 March of that year. Simon Ditchfield has noted how this decree prohibited both the publication and possession of texts extolling the miraculous nature of unauthorized saintly contenders, and forbade the adornment of their graves with candles, images or other offerings until the cult was officially confirmed by the Papacy.¹⁵⁵ As local Inquisitors from Florence and Modena as well as the Florentine Archbishop Alessandro Marzi-Medici had explained in correspondence to Rome, not only had the cult been seemingly recognised by the papacy twice, but given the vast numbers of images, ex-voti, and lamps attached to his sepulchre and the fact that 'there [was] not one child that did not know to invoke his name', his cult may not have been completely official but it most assuredly was publicly established. As Ditchfield has noted, the effect of the Holy Office decree was to ensure that in order to be eligible for beatification or canonization, the candidates for sainthood had somehow to

¹⁵² For Spegliati see ASF, MPAP 2661, (31 March 1647), f.23v; for Tuccierelli ASF, LCF 366, f.7v.

¹⁵³ On Galantini see Dionigi Baldocci Nigetti, *Vita del beato servo di Dio Hippolito Galantini Fiorentino fondatore della Congregazione di S. Francesco della dottrina Christiana in Fiorenza* (Rome, Alessandro Zannetti, 1623), and more accessibly Arnaldo D'Addario, *Aspetti della Controriforma a Firenze* (Rome: Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, 1972), 45-47, and Gilberto Aranci, *Formazione religiosa e santità laicale a Firenze tra Cinque e Seicento: Ippolito Galantini Fondatore della Congregazione di San Francesco della Dottrina Cristiana di Firenze (1565-1620)* (Florence: Giampiero Pagnini, 1997).

¹⁵⁴ ACDF, St.St. B 4 b. 1, Venerazione di persone non canonizzate o beatificate, lettere ed altri documenti, 1615-1783, no.15 (unpaginated), 'Florentin Hippolito Galantini Fundatori Congregationis Doctrine Christiane (1625)'. According to a copy of Y. Beaudoin's typescript 'Index processum beatificationis et canonizationis qui in Archivo Secreto Vaticano et in Archivo Congregationis Pro Causis Sanctorum Assevantur (1588-1982)', 83, there was already a trial to ascertain Galantini's holy reputation ('processus super fama') in Florence in 1620. This was followed by an apostolic trial 'super virtutibus' in Florence in 1623-29, as well as ones in Modena (1626-29) and Lucca (1627). In 1657 there was a trial 'super non cultu'. I would like to thank Simon Ditchfield for these references from Beaudoin's typescript.

¹⁵⁵ See Ditchfield, 'Tridentine Worship and the Cult of Saints,' 213-4.

provide evidence of their sanctity whilst demonstrating that they had no public cult.¹⁵⁶

Unsurprisingly, the Florentine Archbishop's office was unsure how to proceed, writing that 'we do not see a way of making [Ippolito's sanctity] recognised without risk of error.' The letter continued by pointing out the effect which the change of face imposed by a central authority on the local populace would have, as 'taking away this honour [to Ippolito] that up until now has been permitted, will cause greater harm than good'.¹⁵⁷

While there is no evidence that the public face of Ippolito's cult was removed, the inventories clearly demonstrate that it continued in private. Even though Ippolito was not declared venerable until 1756, or beatified until 1825, images of him allowed his cult to be maintained and promoted from the domestic sphere. Images were thus a key way to disseminate cults and promote the process towards beatification, while helping to explain how quickly Counter-Reformation Saints such as SS. Carlo Borromeo, Filippo Neri and Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi found their way into the *Pupilli* files. For example, the painter Francesco Curradi (1570-1661), in addition to other Florentine artists, testified as to how he alone had produced over eighty paintings of St. Maria Maddalena de'Pazzi during the first decades of the seventeenth century that were distributed throughout Italy in the lead up to her canonization proceedings.¹⁵⁸ The imagery of Filippo Neri appears to have been even more prolific. Simon Ditchfield has shown how by 1598, just four years after the Oratorian died, no less than 3,250 images of Neri had been distributed to his devotees.¹⁵⁹ The canonization trial for the Florentine St. Andrea Corsini explains how Bernardino Poccetti prayed at home to the image he had painted of the would-be Saint and how the painter Lorenzo

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 213-4.

¹⁵⁷ ACDF, St.St. B 4 b. 1, no.15 (unpaginated), letter from Alessandro Marzi-Medici (Archbishop of Florence), Piero Niccolini (Vicar of Florence), and (Alessandro Vasoli), Prior of San Lorenzo, dated 11 May to 1625 and addressed to the Holy Office: '[...] Hora stante il sopradetto decreto publicato in Roma, siamo sforzati a ricorrere per aiuto indirizzo e consiglio alle SS VV Illme e Rev.me per che nelle lettere Remissoriali concesse dalla santità di Gregorio XV, (il quale si compiacque ancora che il libro della sua vita fusse stampato col titolo di Beato), e confermato anco dalla santità di NS Papa Urbano Ottavo sotto il dì 23 Settem.re 1623 [...] noi stiamo al presente in dubbio in qual maniera in questo habbiano a regolarci, perche non vediamo modo da poter fare detta recognitione senza riscio di fare errore poi che il decreto comanda che i voti e le tabelle si devino levar via [...] che togliendosegli quell'honore che fin'hora se gl'è permesso ne seguirebbe più tosto sollevam.te e disturbo che altro buono effetto [...] non vi è bambino che non sappia invocare il suo nome'.

¹⁵⁸ 'Io come pittore ho fatto ottanta ritratti in circa di detta Signora Maria Maddalena, dopo la sua morte ad istanza di deverse persone [...] li hanno mandati in deverse città della Toscana et fuori: a Lucca, a Bologna, a Mantova, a Perugia, et di presente ne fò et ho per mana dua, che hanno andare in Anversa, fatti ad istanza di due signori inghilesi [...] et un altro ne ho fra mano che deve andare a Napoli, et anco so che molti altri pittori in Firenze ne hanno fatti [...] come Nicodemo Feruzzi, uno de' Casini et altri pittore', testimony of Francesco Curradi during the process of Pazzi's beatification as quoted in Ermanno Ancilli, 'Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi.' In *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, VIII, 1107-1131 (1967 repr.; Rome: Città Nuova Editrice, 1998), 1130. On the important role of visual iconography in promoting Pazzi's sanctity see Piero Pacini, 'Contributi per L'iconografia di Santa Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi: una 'vita' inedita di Francesco Curradi,' *MKIF* 3 (1984): 279-350, and Pacini, 'Due 'Depositì' di S. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi e la diffusione delle sue immagini (1607-1668),' *MKIF* 32 (1985): 173-235.

¹⁵⁹ Francesco Zazzara, 'Diario delle onoranze a S. Filippo Neri dalla morte alla canonizzazione,' *Quaderni dell'Oratorio* vol.6 (n.d.), 11.

Cresci created images of Corsini for his relatives to keep at home. In fact, one of Cresci's paintings of the saint (given to his *cognato*, the merchant Matteo d'Angelo) was prayed to as part of a family ritual and used itself as evidence of Corsini's sanctity.¹⁶⁰ In the 1623-35 canonization trial of another local Florentine Saint, Caterina de' Ricci, the painter Stefano d'Antonio Parenti recalled how, as early as 1598, he was commissioned to paint portraits of her by noble clients to send as personal gifts, while other witnesses testified to keeping her image *a casa* as the focus of prayer. Moreover, the court noted how commercial printed images of Ricci as a Saint had already been published in both Venice and Rome at the beginning of the sixteen hundreds.¹⁶¹

The seeming under-representation of these would-be *beati moderni* in Florentine homes is perhaps understandable given that some 64% of saints were unidentified in the 1640s (*Pupilli* 2661). Otherwise, and despite the greater number of saints listed in the sixteen hundreds, the model of sanctity represented by domestic collections during the Counter-Reformation period is one of continuity that drew on and modified a model already laid out in Middle Ages.¹⁶² That canon was constituted by (in alphabetical order) St. Catherine of Alexandria, St. Francis, St. Jerome, St. John the Baptist, and St. Mary Magdalene; with, as noted, St. Carlo Borromeo's image appearing to replace St. Sebastian's in the seventeenth century. However, most noticeable among saints' images was the escalating presence of St. Francis. By the mid-seventeenth century he was clearly the most popular household saint. Although this popularity is evident in the large number of fairly formulaic representations of him by Tuscan artists of this period, such as those by Ludovico Cardi detto il Cigoli (1559-1613) or Cristofano Allori (1577-1621) (both of whose representations were reproduced in print thus ensuring a wider distribution of this saint's image) (see figs. 2.43 – 2.48, see also figs. 1.57-59), the inventories suggest a more pointed devotion towards St. Francis in Florence during this period than has previously been appreciated¹⁶³. Renato Ago has shown how St. Francis and the Magdalene were the most popular household saints in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Rome and the equal esteem in which Romans held both saints draws attention to the similar qualities with which they were typically depicted from the mid-sixteenth century onwards (for images of the Magdalene see figs. 2.49-50).¹⁶⁴ For example, a lunette by Curradi of *St. Mary*

¹⁶⁰ On Pocetti, see ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, Processus 760, f.136v (testimony of Lucretia wife of Bernardino Pocetti), & f.349v (testimony of servant of Pocetti, the widow Alessandra Simonis Cipriani). Cresci noted that '...vedendo tante gratie ch'havevo ricevuto dal detto Beato l'ho fatto dipingere et lo tengo in casa, et a tutta la mia famiglia li fo fare riverenza et fare oratione, et io medesimo nell'hore canoniche che recito ogni giorno me fu ogni di commemorazione nel matutino et al vespro', *ibid.*, f.359r. See also f.165 & ff.312r-v.

¹⁶¹ ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, Processus 794, ff.4v-6v, ff. 55v-56r & Processus 797, ff.512r-v & f.517r.

¹⁶² See also Sallman, *Naples et ses saints*, 14.

¹⁶³ On the attribution of these paintings of St. Francis as by Cristofano Allori rather than Cigoli see Miles L. Chappell, 'Cristofano Allori's paintings Depicting S. Francis,' *The Burlington Magazine* 113 (1971): 444-455.

¹⁶⁴ Ago, 'Collezioni di quadri', 379 - 404. For an understanding of a 'new post-Tridentine Franciscan

Magdalene in Prayer (c.1622) (part of a series painted for the Grand Duchess Maria Maddalena's villa chapel at Poggio Imperiale, see fig.2.51) depicts the same series of conventions established in Cigoli's images of St. Francis. Set within a penitential landscape, both saints are shown absorbed and identified with Christ's Passion, ecstatically contemplating a crucifix, at the base of which lies a skull signifying Golgotha and an open book of the scriptures. The two images show the saints as paradigmatic of an affective, penitential and deeply Christocentric devotion. Their eremitical depiction recalls Lantana's or Bernardino's advice to retreat into the religious solitude of the domestic sphere, or more particularly the 'cell' of the *camera*. The *camera* or *cella* was in fact commonly described in devotional literature and preaching as an uninhabited 'desert' whose visual realisation is akin to the isolated wilderness where the Magdalene and St. Francis pray.¹⁶⁵ The saint's triumph over suffering, their profound humility and conformity of soul to the Lord, as well as their very positions in each painting, offer an empathetic ideal on which the viewer is to model their own devotions and one similar to that offered in Andreani's print (fig.2.16). In fact, given the prevalence of crucifixes that the inventories recorded within *camere*, it becomes clear that the devotional model offered by St. Francis and St. Mary Magdalene in paintings such as Cigoli's and Curradi's was widely embraced.

If the penitential and affective character of devotion that St. Francis of Assisi offered had become the most desirable role model for early modern Tuscans at home, it appears that this position was at the cost of individual images of St. John the Baptist. St. John had been the most popular saint in cinquecento Florentine homes, a position that is unsurprising given his role as patron saint of the city and the prefiguration of Christ. Indeed, from the late Medieval period as Tuscans opted to name themselves after their saintly intercessors (and as the Church and communal government agitated for simpler names), the esteem in which St. John was held by Florentines is reflected in the fact that by 1427 the most popular male name was Giovanni.¹⁶⁶ However, David Herlihy has noticed that despite only being embraced from the beginning of the trecento, by the middle of the quattrocento the name Francesco had become very widely used, so much so that from

imagery' see Pamela Askew, 'The Angelic Consolation of St. Francis of Assisi in Post-Tridentine Italian Painting,' *JWCI* 32 (1969): 280-306 and Emile Mâle, *L'Art religieux après le Concile de Trente* (Paris: A. Colin), 172-79.

¹⁶⁵ See Giordano da Pisa's advice that 'Cristo [...] fuggie gli uomini, fuggi il mondo a dârete exemplo che .ttu (tutti) déi fuggire la gente e andare al diserto. Questo diserto può essere la cella tua, la casa tua, la camera tua; quando lasci il mondo, raccogliti con Dio nella casa tua, questo diserto può essere il cantone de la casa tua: fa' tu che .ttu (tutti) fuggi il mondo e la gente', from *Quaresimale fiorentino, 1305-1306*, ed. Carlo Delcorno (Florence, 1974), 40, as quoted in Schmidt, *Painted Piety*, 29, n.38. De Barry offered the same trope three hundred years later in his *Solitudine di Filagia* (1659): 'Poiché voi siete in solitudine nel picciolo deserto della vostra camera, voi mi permetterete di lodarvi un tantino la vita de' solitari [... v]oglio rendervi invaghite d'una facile ed agevole solitudine, cioè di quella della vostra piccola Camera, del Gabinetto e della stanza della vostra Casa [...]', as quoted in Gabriella Zarrì, *Recinti: Donne, clausura e matrimonio nella prima età moderna* (Bologna: il Mulino, 2000), 222.

¹⁶⁶ David Herlihy, 'Tuscan Names, 1200-1530,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 41 (1988): 561-582, 564.

between 1450 to 1500 it was the most popular name among all Florentines scrutinized for office.¹⁶⁷ Herlihy's survey shows the appeal that St. Francis quickly gained and with it the increasing influence of the mendicant orders during the Renaissance. On the other hand, the inventories do not reflect the fortune that Francesco enjoyed in Herlihy's findings until c.1580. The possible revival of St. Francis' cult suggested by the inventories and his usurpation of St. John in devotional images by the end of the cinquecento, deserves further analysis through an investigation into how the cult of St. Francis was promulgated from the last decades of the sixteenth century into the seventeenth century, and the role played by the Franciscan orders (including that of the Capuchins) in early modern Florence.¹⁶⁸

MIRRORS OF RELIGION

Finally, one of the more intimate and curious objects found in the *Pupilli* inventories was the number of mirrors ('spera' and 'specchio') painted with religious figures or scenes. For example, Filippo di Dionigi Carducci kept in the *camera nuova* of his suburban villa a 'very small image used as a mirror with a black casing [*co' ornamento*] with pinchbeck, inside which is a gilded relief of the Madonna of Loreto'.¹⁶⁹ This section briefly explores mirrors like Carducci's by discussing the mirrored surface of devotion and the ways in which religious images could incorporate the viewer into the viewed, redefining not just the parameters of the space in which spectatorship was located, but also the parameters of the self.

As remaining examples show, Renaissance mirrors could be encased in elaborately carved or decorated frames, as shown by the mirror in the shape of a Medici ring (after Antonio Pollaiuolo, c.1460-1465) (fig.2.52) or a mother-of-pearl inlaid and gilded mirror frame and stand dating from the 1590s (fig.2.53).¹⁷⁰ Descriptions from inventories confirm the importance of surrounds for mirrors, with, for example, 'a metal mirror with a frame of ebony and three alabaster statuettes' listed in a mid-seventeenth-century inventory of the Della Stufa palace, and a 'mirror in a gesso figure' found in Messer Francesco di Messer Lionardo Busini's *casa del potere* at Caponzone c.1600.¹⁷¹ A Florentine mirror frame from the del Tasso workshop dating from the early-sixteenth century in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and replete with a fold-down shutter shows how domestic looking glasses could be important examples of high craftsmanship (fig.2.54). The del Tasso frame also draws attention to the fact that mirrors during this period were often covered.

¹⁶⁷ Herlihy, 'Tuscan names', 575.

¹⁶⁸ Contemporary sources such as Arditi and Ricci seem to indicate that the feast of S. Giovanni retained its civic importance for Florence at least until the beginning of the seicento, although Weissman has noted that the sacred geography of this feast was altered by new parish confraternities see Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood*, 211.

¹⁶⁹ ASF, MPP 2660, f.655r.

¹⁷⁰ See also Luigi Dami, 'Cornici da specchio dal Cinquecento,' *Dedalo: rassegna d'arte* I (1921): 625-42.

¹⁷¹ ASF, MPP 2657, f.567v.

Numerous mirrors in the inventories were listed with covers or cases, usually described as of taffeta or velvet, although some were noted as being painted or made of wood or leather.¹⁷²

As in the case of devotional art, these coverings and framing devices for mirrors served several functions. The surface of most mirrors listed throughout the timeframe of the sampling was typically polished metal ('di acciaio'), although a few examples of brass were listed and from the mid-sixteenth century onwards, wealthier estates could also have the larger, more expensive 'Venetian' mirrors of crystal glass which would have produced a much clearer and more accurate reflection.¹⁷³ Covers protected these delicate surfaces from scratching, stains or rust.¹⁷⁴ Covers also allowed looking glasses to be transported and handled safely, and indeed, due to technical limitations, the majority of early mirrors were small, portable and fragile things and being either convex or concave in shape, offered distorted and dark reflections. Moreover, the decorative framing and covers bestowed on mirrors drew attention to the act of looking as much as the mirror itself, in that the mirror becomes a double-faced aide able to reveal as it conceals.

In the example of an early sixteenth-century mirror frame from Ferrara in the Victoria and Albert collections, elaborately carved allegorical decorations served to forewarn the viewer against the sins of vanity (fig.2.55). Bearing Alfonso d'Este's (1486-1534) emblem of a flaming grenade, carved animals and skeletal remains alternately symbolizing virtue and vice are hidden amongst the spiralling volutes of the frame, while at the base the inscribed letter 'Y' has been understood as signalling the necessity of selecting between these two moral pathways.¹⁷⁵ Given an understanding of the face as a 'mirror of the soul' on which the moral qualities of its owner could be read, as well the dualistic role that the mirror held in medieval spirituality, the decoration on the Este mirror is a wholly appropriate analogy.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, the frame of the mirror itself posits a metaphysical frame

¹⁷² For example, ASF, MPP 2661, f.61r: '1 spera col suo coperchio dipinta'; f.288v: '1 spera di christallo di braccia con ornamento d'ebano e sua coperta di taffeta rosso e suo tavagnolo d'argento', MPP 2660, f.112v: '1 spera d'ottone col sua coperta di noce'; f.58r: '1 spera col coperta di cuoio tocco d'oro et il vetro rotto'; ASF, CSV 1430, 1646 inventory of palazzo Strozzi, unpaginated,: '1 specchio d'acciaio coperto et ornato di noce puro'.

¹⁷³ The continuing reference to mirrors of 'acciaio' or 'spere ordinarie' in inventories of the mid-seventeenth century should make us wary about positing that the '[...] new clarity and fidelity of the mirror reflected the spirit of the Renaissance, which saw a philosophy of world reality and natural clarity overtake the metaphysical world of religion seen "through a glass, darkly"', as interpreted by Benjamin Goldberg, *The Mirror and the Man* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), 135. In fact, the inventories show that the technical innovations of Venetian and later Bohemian mirror workshops in producing sizable mirrors with reflective accuracy were embraced slowly in homes, and only rarely were mirrors listed as 'grande' or in excess of one *braccio*.

¹⁷⁴ For the history of the mirror see Goldberg, *The Mirror and the Man*, and Sabine Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror: A History*, trans. Katherine H. Jewett (New York & London: Routledge, 2001).

¹⁷⁵ In addition, carved onto the frame are the gilded letters (anticlockwise from the bottom) 'B', 'N', 'M', 'M', and 'M'. To the best of my knowledge, the iconography and symbolism of this frame have never been discussed.

¹⁷⁶ See Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror*, 108-111 and Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, esp. chapter one 'Species: Vision and Values'.

that acts synecdochically for the moral choice that the viewers had to make when contemplating their self.

For someone like Leonardo Fioravanti (1517-1588), a Bolognese surgeon and natural philosopher who was also the author of a treatise on mirrors, such a choice was too difficult for women to make. Either, like Narcissus, they would become enamoured of their own beauty in the mirrored surface and therefore become vainglorious, or alternatively they would realise that they were ugly and understandably be deeply perturbed by themselves. Because of this conundrum, Fioravanti warned that mirrors were awful things to keep at home (*'malissima cosa da tenere nelle case'*) and that furthermore, even men were falling prey to their realities.¹⁷⁷ From this viewpoint, covers clearly offered protection from the viewer's own self and vision, showing how the carving on the Este example must also be understood as a premonitory device.

Other mirror frames that depicted beautiful women as the surround prefigured the virtue of beauty to be found within by offering it to be gazed upon externally first, and thereby circumvented Fioravanti's fears. Clearly, the sins of vanity could be avoided simply by gazing at someone else's face rather than one's own. Three Florentine mirror frames dating from the late-quattrocento appear characteristic of what must have once been relatively common objects at home while an example from the Strozzi inventory of 1646 shows that the female portrait-mirror was a continuing form well into the seicento.¹⁷⁸ The three extant examples play on a written and visual tradition of the virtuous and beautiful female exemplar by presenting within an elliptical or *tondo* frame a portrait bust of a beautiful woman in relief, positioned above the circular space where a mirror originally lay. One example is the papier mâché version from the workshop of Neroccio de' Landi (c.1475-1500) (fig.2.6), another a polychrome and gilt frame by Mino da Fiesole (1429-1484) (fig.2.56), while the third is a maiolica relief (c.1500) on which are emblazoned the words 'ISORETTA GALANTE' (figs.2.57).¹⁷⁹ Hung at eye level, all three ladies would gaze chastely and demurely downwards towards the mirror and encompass the viewer's sight and subject of sight. The viewer's pictorial counterpart therefore offered the reflection of a virtuous other. These mirror types 'corrected' the viewer's vision and helped construct their identity through a model of ideal likeness.

¹⁷⁷ Leonardo Fioravanti, *Dello specchio di scientia universale* (Venice: Heredi di Marchiò Sessa, 1572), 62r: 'Ma in effetto mi pare, che gli specchi siano malissima cosa da tenere nelle case; imperoche specchiandosi una bella donna ella si piglia vanagloria, & fa peccato: et specchiandosi una, che sia brutta, si conturba, & parimente pecca: & per questa ragione li specchi son mala cosa nelle case: et tanto più, quanto al dì d'hoggi non solo le donne, ma gli huomini ancora si vogliono specchiare [...]'.
¹⁷⁸ ASF, CSV 1430, Inventory of 1646 (unpaginated): 'un ritrattino in asse a uso di spera di una testa d'una donna'.

¹⁷⁹ In addition to Pope-Hennessy, 'A carta-pesta mirror frame', see Frida Schottmüller, *Die Italienischen und Spanischen Bildwerke der Renaissance und des Barocks in Marmor, Ton, Holz und Stuck (Königliche Museen Zu Berlin)* (Berlin: Druck und Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1913), 103-4.

This ideal likeness becomes more explicit in the 'religious mirrors' that the inventories list, such as the one of the Madonna di Loreto belonging to Carducci. While no surviving examples have been sourced, most mirrors in the inventories described as painted, with portraits, or with representational frames appear to have been religious (and may or may not have been used in a theurgical context).¹⁸⁰ While the majority of mirrors described were Marian, images of the Pietà, the Passion of Christ and the Adoration of the Magi were mentioned. For example, the estate of Michelangelo Viviani contained a 'picture to use as a mirror with a walnut frame that is carved and decorated with the arms of the Viviani, inside which is a Pietà' and fifty years earlier a 'picture to use as a mirror painted with Our Lady Enthroned' was listed in the *scriptio* of Giovanni di Alessandro Martelli.¹⁸¹ Occasionally, the description of these mirrors in the inventories suggests that these devotional images were in fact painted, etched onto (or under), or sculpted by the mirror glass itself, rather remarkably suggesting that the object gazed upon in the mirror was not one's self. This hypothesis appears plausible given that other types of early mirrors (in particular, fifteenth-century *mirrors de mort*) did have images drawn on their linings in order that the viewer would see their own image superimposed with another one, be it the Madonna or a skull.¹⁸² In addition, a recent article has drawn attention to how Donatello's *Chellini Madonna*'s original function may have been as a mould to produce devotional mirrors, showing the close symbolic and formal connection between the *spera* and the devotional *tondo* (fig.2.58).¹⁸³ A surviving Florentine mirror frame in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (figs.2.59a & b) demonstrates the layers of viewing that Renaissance and Early Modern mirrors engendered and the way in which some devotional mirrors must have functioned. The Metropolitan mirror was constructed with three levels of sight mouldings that enabled a painted glass slide to cover another painted slide that in

¹⁸⁰ Regarding the use of mirrors in religious 'scrying' or divination see Goldberg, *The Mirror and the Man*, 14-16. For an example of mirror frames carved with religious themes see the plates reproduced in Dami, 'Cornici da specchio', pp.624 & 632.

¹⁸¹ ASF, MPP 2660, (22 March 1617), f. 234r: 'un quadretto a uso di spera col cornice di noce intagliato et decorato col arme de Viviani entrovi una Pieta'; MPP 2651, (n.d., c.1556), f.24v: 'Un quadretto a uso di spera dipintovi una nostra donna Incoronata'. Also noted in Martelli's *sala grande di sopra* was a 'un tabernacolo di legni ogrande entrovi la Incoronatione dlla Madona', f.27r. Other examples of imaged mirrors include MPP 2661, (1653), f.917r: 'un ottangolo di vetro con specchio dipintovi la vita della Santissima Madonna'; MPP 2660, (1621), f.653r: 'un quadrettino piccolo col ornamento nero qle dorato a uso di spera entrovi l'adoratione de Magi di matena dorata'; (1619), f.214r: 'spera dreto a un Rilievo di Gesso di Cristo'; (1617), f.267r: 'spera dentrovi u quadretto di una Madonna'; f.212v (1619): 'un quadro di gesso entrovi una spera cattiva'; MPP 2657, (1598), f.148v-9r: 'un quadro mezzino con ornamento noce messo a oro a uso di spera con ritratto di figure a deo'.

¹⁸² Herbert Grabes, *The Mutable Glass: Mirror-Imagery in Titles and Texts of the Middle Ages and English Renaissance*, trans. Gordon Collier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 119, as quoted in 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, 21-41 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania) Press, 1991, 27. Fioravanti also described the visual games of mirrors and the ways in which mirrors playfully circumvented expectations of a coherent identity: *Dello specchio*, 62r-v.

¹⁸³ William S. A. Dale, 'Donatello's Chellini Madonna: 'Speculum Sine Macula', *Apollo* 141 (1995): 3-9

turn covered the mirror face.¹⁸⁴ This mirror shows in material form how vision (and therefore, according to period theory, perception) was understood as a process of revelations and representations that, to quote Fulke Greville, was 'shadowed with self-application'.¹⁸⁵

Not only were material mirrors 'imaged' with devotional scenes, they were also listed as part of the accoutrements of devotional images or items suggesting the intricate ways in which religion was viewed and approached. For instance, Giulio di Simone Migliorati's *camera sulla sala* contained 'a Virgin Mary with four candles and a mirror' and Giulio de' Medici owned a book of hours replete with mirror.¹⁸⁶ The beautifully detailed mirror that is carved with Christ's Passion and placed next to a rosary in van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Portrait* (fig.2.60a & b) can therefore be seen to have its antecedents in actual practice in which mirrors formed part of a devotional system that could help visually secure the holy.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, the fact that Carducci's mirror imaged the Madonna from what was probably the most popular Italian pilgrimage site of the time, recalls the way in which mirrors were used by pilgrims in the belief that the glasses could capture and retain the divine quality of sacred relics that they visited (fig.2.61).¹⁸⁸

Coupled with the ways in which mirrors were used as part of books' titles (often used to denote the macrocosm in micro-version or an instructional guide, *specchi* or *specula* in fact very rarely refer to the reader or viewer seeing themselves, but instead something or someone else), or within art, these references should automatically make us doubt whether 'the material history of the mirror seems to offer empirical confirmation of the Renaissance as an age of secularization, humanism, individualism, and emergent subjectivity.'¹⁸⁹ The material history suggested by their trace in inventories and remaining examples suggests quite the opposite: that the mirror was not

¹⁸⁴ On this mirror see Timothy J. Newberry, Bisacca George, and Laurence B. Kanter, *Italian Renaissance Frames* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990), 54-5.

¹⁸⁵ Fulke Greville, 'A treatise of humane learning', in *Poems and Dramas of Fulke Greville First Lord Brooke*, ed. Geoffrey Bullough, 2 vols (London & Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1939): 1: 156, stanza 10, line 66 as reproduced in Literature Online, European Poetry Full-Text Database (accessed 9 October 2007).

¹⁸⁶ ASF, MPP 2655, (1583), f.219v: '1 VM col 4 falchole & u.a spera'; MPP 2657 (1598), f.80v: 'uno guancialetto coperto di raso azzurro, riccamato d'oro con sua spera e libro della Madonna.' According to Goldberg, a fashion of incorporating pocket mirrors into prayer-like books arose in the middle of the sixteenth century: Goldberg, *The Mirror and the Man*, 143-4.

¹⁸⁷ For an interpretation of the mirror based on its iconography of the Passion, and the role of the mirror within theological writings see Robert Baldwin, 'Marriage as a Sacramental Reflection of the Passion: The Mirror in Jan Van Eyck's Arnolfini Wedding,' *Oud Holland* XCVIII, no. 2 (1984): 57-75.

¹⁸⁸ Goldberg, *The Mirror and the Man*, 138-9; Heinrich Schwarz, 'The Mirror of the Artist and the Mirror of the Devout: Observations on Some Paintings, Drawings, and Prints of the Fifteenth Century.' In *Studies in the History of Art, Dedicated to William E. Suida*, 90-105 (London: Phaidon, 1959).

¹⁸⁹ Rayna Kalas, 'The Technology of Reflection: Renaissance Mirrors of Steel and Glass,' *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32 (2002): 519-542, 521. For an intelligent and sustained analysis of Renaissance mirrors (to which I am much indebted), and in particular the way in which the literary trope of the mirror confounds the presuppositions similar to Kalas's that the Renaissance enthrallment with mirrors reflects a new individual awareness and a new reflexive self-consciousness see Shuger, 'The 'I' of the Beholder'. On the role of mirror or 'specula' as a guide or admonition see Goldberg, *The Mirror and the Man*, 127.

essentially reflective but instead aimed to direct the viewer's gaze inward towards a spiritual or moral message with which the viewer was to both identify themselves and meditate upon. The surface of the mirror therefore functioned as a type of corrective lens. In fact, rather than offering an image of the self as object, these devotional mirrors described in the inventories offer an emblem of the self filtered through religion. As Debora Shuger has noted, instead of eliciting subjectivity or individualism, the renaissance mirror functioned transitively through similitude.¹⁹⁰ This point is made clear in the print 'Speculum exemplare' illustrating the Jesuit Jan David's (1543-1613) emblem book *Duodecim specula* (1610) (fig.2.62). In David's print, just as in Viviani's mirror of the Pietà or Carducci's of the Madonna, the viewer is invited to look 'through a glass' (1 Cor. 13:12) or beyond its surface in order to gain cognition of the 'spiritual mirror' or *imago dei*. These mirrors exemplify an epistemological tradition in which the person who gazes upon himself through the 'mirror of God' will perceive not just the glory of God and therefore his own abjection, but also his own likeness in God as a reflection that emanates from and returns to Him.¹⁹¹ Just as other images offered a point for devotional meditation, so too could mirrors be used, to paraphrase St. Augustine (*Commentaries* 7.10.16), to withdraw into the recesses of the viewer's soul and construct an intimate dialogue between the self through God (or Mary and the other household saints).¹⁹²

SAINTLY SELVES

These religious mirrors and the philosophy that underpins them help to make sense of what appears to be a related phenomenon: portraits (or self-portraits) as saints and other holy beings, of which the most famous example must surely be Durer's self-portrait as Christ (fig.2.63).¹⁹³ In fact, examples of this 'genre' abound and show that this portrait type was not uncommon and, despite their understandable absence in inventories' descriptions, was almost certainly intended for viewing in the domestic sphere. Examples include Francesco Furini's *Portrait of a Youth Dressed as David* (c.1630) (fig.2.64); Sebastiano del Piombo's *Portrait of a Lady with the Attributes of Saint Agatha* (after 1540, National Gallery, London); a series of portraits of *gentildonne* dressed variously as Saints Barbara, Margaret, and Margaret of Antioch by Jacopo da Empoli that date between 1600-1615 (figs.2.65-67); a portrait that Margherita de' Medici Farnese had painted of herself as St.

¹⁹⁰ Shuger, 'The 'I' of the Beholder', 23.

¹⁹¹ Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror*, 109-13; Shuger, 'The 'I' of the Beholder', 34.

¹⁹² On St. Augustine see Margaret Miles, 'Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in Saint Augustine's "De trinitate" and "Confessions"', *Journal of Religion* 63 (1983): 125-142. Regarding the continuing trope of the mirror as *imago dei* into the early modern period see for example St. Teresa's description of her soul as a mirror of God, in *The Autobiography of Teresa of Avila*, trans. and ed. by E. Allison Peers from the critical edition of P. Silverio de Santa Teresa (Michigan: Christian Classics Ethereal Library), 49 (accessed as an e-book 2/2/2007 from www.netlibrary.com).

¹⁹³ The close relationship between mirrors and portraiture can be evinced materially by a reference in Lorenzo Lotti's *Libro di spese diversi* describing a female portrait with a 'coperto a uso de specchio': Lorenzo Lotti, *Libro di spese diversi*, ed. Pietro Zampetti (Rome & Venice: Istituto per la Collaborazione Culturale, 1969), 350.

Margaret by Justus Sustermanns (fig.2.68); or Elisabetta Sirani's *Portrait of Ortensia Leoni Cordini as St. Dorothy* which was commissioned by Ortensia's Florentine husband Francesco Cordini (fig.2.69). Read in conjunction with the idea of 'mirroring', these sanctified selves are less about a gloriously self-inflating and slightly blasphemous disguise, than the recognition that one's own earthly identity was always relational to the celestial. To quote Shuger, these paintings and 'painted' mirrors are the embodiment of the belief that 'one encounters one's own likeness only in the mirror of the other'.¹⁹⁴ Clearly, these portraits and mirrors also act as invocations for that likeness, whether it be for the personal attributes and protection of the saint or biblical figure depicted, so that St. Margaret may have offered solace for Margherita de' Medici's own travails in labour, while St. Dorothy was an appropriate choice for a husband to give his new bride.

By way of conclusion, the devotional mirrors in the inventories and their portrait counterparts make an important point. They demonstrate succinctly how images, religiosity and identity were intricately and symbiotically linked. If the inventories show the wide range of art that could be seen on houses' walls by the mid-seventeenth century, the example of the devotional mirror shows that any reading of this household art must take into account the complex exchange between both ways of seeing and ways of being seen. The inventories, in recording a shift from iconic to narrative religious images for example, in fact record a shift in ways of seeing and ways of being seen. They further enable us to see that who was being seen in the domestic sphere and where they were seen was also in flux, and as the examples of angels, images of the Annunciation, the Madonna di Loreto, or new saints show, open to broader cultural and religious trends and negotiations. Perhaps most importantly though, is the way in which art collections quite self-consciously began to project a model of the holy household and its saintly inhabitants for domestic consumption and emulation. The next chapter goes on to examine another way in which householders could see and consume the sacred: the acquisition of relics.

¹⁹⁴ Shuger, 'The 'I' of the Beholder', 37.

Chapter Three

RELICS

INTRODUCTION

Nothing quite attracted the Protestant's mockery for popish ways as much as the Catholic fetish for relics, or 'the merchandise of the whore of Rome' as the prolific and vociferously protestant Titus Oakes scornfully termed them and their accompanying indulgences.¹ Yet despite the damning criticism of their veneration, by the late-sixteenth century the market for saintly remnants and remains seems to have returned to the levels of the early Middle Ages by becoming again extraordinarily buoyant, far-flung and presumably very profitable: to the extent that Richard Goldthwaite claims advertising catalogues of them were published for prospective buyers.² Indeed, given that relics were the outward manifestation of the cult of saints, the Tridentine Church, rather than reducing their importance, attempted to centralise their management and consolidate their religious, social and, especially given the threat of Protestantism's scepticism, political role.³

The twenty-fifth and final session of the Council of Trent in 1563 had called for greater intervention by Bishops to regulate and supervise the relic and indulgence market, and ensure the removal of every superstition and 'filthy lucre' from the veneration of relics. Nonetheless, the

¹ Titus Oates, *The Pope's Ware-House, or the Merchandise of the Whore of Rome* (London: Thomas Parkhurst, Dorman Newman, Thomas Cocherill, and Thomas Simmons, 1679). Oates' tirade against 'reliques and trumpery' rather inadvertently acts as a guidebook for the most important shrines of Rome.

² Richard Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art*, 113, no references given. Regarding Protestant attacks on relics, Calvin led the way with his *Traité des reliques ou advisement très utile du grand profit qui reviendrait à la chrestienté s'il se faisoit inventarie de tous les corps saints et reliques qui sont tant en Italie qu'en France* (Geneva, 1543) which ran to over twenty editions between its first publication and 1622, although Luther had damningly attacked relics earlier in his 1537 Schmalkaldic Articles. On indulgences see Alessio Maria Rossi, *Lutero e Roma. La Fatale Scintilla (la Lotta Intorno alle Indulgenze) 1517-1519* (Rome: 'Bilychnis', 1923); Alexis Henri Marie Lepicier, *Indulgences; Their Origin, Nature and Development*, 3rd ed (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1928); Kenneth W. Cameron, *The Pardoner and His Pardons: Indulgences Circulating in England on the Eve of the Reformation with a Historical Introduction* (Hartford, Conn.: Transcendental Press, 1965). For the medieval trade in relics see Patrick Geary, *Furta Sacra. Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages*, rev. ed. (1978; repr., Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990); while more recently on the relic market see Evelyn Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance. Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400-1600* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 295-6. For a thoughtful appraisal of the economic side of relics and a review of Geary, see Robert Burns, 'Relic Vendors, Barefoot Friars, and Spanish Muslims: Reflections on Medieval Economic and Religious History. A Review Article,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24 (1982): 153-163.

³ On the way in which relics were deployed at the Catholic frontiers of Bavaria see Trevor Johnson, 'Holy fabrications: the catacomb saints and the Counter-Reformation in Bavaria', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 47 (1996): 274-298.

session clearly legitimised the status of relics by affirming their role as signs of divinity and occasions for miraculous interventions, embedded within a theological system reliant on incarnation and resurrection.⁴ Exactly one hundred years later the Congregation of Relics and Indulgences was formed to create a single centrally managed authority to oversee their management and regulate more closely the authentication, translation and display of relics. The establishment of the Congregation implicitly acknowledged the status that relics held within an economy of penance, as the efficacy of relics was typically accompanied by the granting of papal indulgences, and thereby entrenched, as it were, within a system of saintly insurance.⁵ If any doubts remained regarding this system (including, as we have seen, sacramentals such as holy water), from the late-sixteenth century onwards, Catholic authors made a concerted effort to dispel them. Bellarmino's *De Controversiis* offered a systematic rebuttal to the attacks against relics articulated in Luther and Calvin's writings and the *Magdeburg Centuries* (1562-74), and sought to provide a sound theological justification and apostolic precedent for the role that relics enjoyed within the Catholic Church.⁶ The work of Cesare Baronio and the Bollandists further legitimised relics in providing a strong historical framework that joined contemporary devotional practice to early Christian precedent, whilst arguing for their efficacy by demonstrating a concatenation of miracles effected by God through his saints and their material vestiges.⁷ The result of all this theory was to firmly underscore the prominent role of relics within the True Faith.

That relics then could be orthodox markers of the Catholic faith, as well as allurements towards that faith, can be seen by the way the Society of Jesus had, from the mid-sixteenth century, promoted the cult of St. Ursula and her 11,000 virgins by disseminating their relics in a type of globalised theological commodity speculation.⁸ Alongside these heroic efforts in defining

⁴ 'On Invocation, veneration and relics of the saints, and on sacred images', Session 25, 3-4 December 1563, reproduced in Tanner, ed. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*: 2: 775-6. For an example of a diocese attempting to regulate indulgences and relics by recording local practices see Lurati, 'Pene ai bestemmiatori', esp. 48-50.

⁵ On the increasing regulation regarding relics in Post-Tridentine Italy see Simon Ditchfield, 'Martyrs on the Move: Relics as Vindicators of Local Diversity in the Tridentine Church,' in *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, ed. Diana Wood, 283-294 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

⁶ Bellarmino, *De Controversiis* (1601 ed) 2:923-48: 'Liber secundus de reliquiis et imaginibus sanctorum, caput primum, Proponuntur argumenta contra cultum Reliquiarum.'

⁷ Cesare Baronio, *Sacrum Martyrologium Romanum*, 1584 (Cologne: Ioannem Gymnicum, 1610); *Annales Ecclesiastici*. 12 vols (Antwerp: ex officina Christophori Plantini, 1588-1608); Johannes Bollandus, Daniel van Papenbroeck, and Godefridus Henschenius, *Acta Sanctorum Quotquot Toto Orbe Coluntur*, 68 vols (Antwerp: I. Meursium, 1643-1867). Among other texts involved in the assertion of Catholicism through saints and their relics were Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, and texts by Martin Eisengrein, Matthaeus Rader and Giovanni Tiepolo: see Simon Ditchfield, 'Martyrs on the Move' and his 'Tridentine Worship and the Cult of Saints.'

⁸ See Osswald, 'Goa and the Jesuit cult', esp.160-164. See also Frank Gunter Zehnder, *Sankt Ursula: Legende, Verehrung, Bilderwelt* (Cologne 1985) and Jaime Ferreiro Alemparte, *La leyenda de las once mil virgenes* (Murcia, 1991) as quoted in Johnson, 'Holy Fabrications', nn.6 & 7. For the legend of St. Ursula and the holy virgins see Joan Holladay, 'Relics, Reliquaries, and Religious Women: Visualizing the Holy Virgins of Cologne,' *Studies in Iconography* 18 (1997): 67-118.

Catholicism against Protestantism and protecting it from the spreading iconoclasm in the North, were the increasingly grand and more numerous public translations of relics or *elevatio corporis* organised by the Church, like those that took place in Borromeo's Milan.⁹ At the same time, the interior architecture of churches and chapels were reconfigured around their relic collections. For example, the reliquary chapel of the Turin Cathedral helped establish the architectural structure of the church as one all-encompassing reliquary, while the Salviati chapel of St. Antonino in San Marco (built between 1579-1594) similarly extended the space of the relic it stored by carving the membranes of the building into a container for the saint's body.¹⁰ Both forms of this phenomenon of relic display served to further encase relics within popular imagination and a city's topography, as well as the liturgical calendar and devotional practice.

If Church writings, architecture, liturgy and processions helped further raise public consciousness of and devotion to relics within the early modern period, so did the rediscovery of the Roman Catacombs in 1578.¹¹ The quantity of bodies stored deep inside the Catacombs, like the continuing supply of virgins in Cologne, provided a sixteenth-century counterpoint to the 'holy martyrs, in innumerable numbers' that helped spark the relic rush of the Middle Ages.¹² Described in the posthumous publication *Roma sotterranea* (1635) by Antonio Bosio (d.1629), the Roman Catacombs drew widespread attention and large numbers of collectors towards relics.¹³ Other authors such as Ottavio Panciroli, diligently underscored the traditional wealth of pre-existing relics in the Holy City to increase Rome's status as a spiritual warehouse.¹⁴ In addition, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, high profile individuals helped make relic-collecting part of a prestigious vogue for piety. Philip II of Spain (1527-1598) avariciously amassed over 7,000 relics during his rule, and the personal collection of Maria Maddalena d'Austria (1589-1631) in Florence

⁹ On the processions that took place during both Carlo and Frederico Borromeo's reigns as archbishops and their context see Gianvittorio Signorotto, 'Cercatori di Reliquie,' *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 3 (1985): 383-418, esp.384-86, as well Marcora ed., 'Il diario di Giambattista Casale.' Casale's diary is littered with references to relic processions, but see, for example, pp. 287 & 292.

¹⁰ On Turin's chapel of the holy shroud see John Beldon Scott, *Architecture for the Shroud: Relic and Ritual in Turin* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003). The account books for the construction of the chapel of Sant'Antonino are available in Eva Karwacka Codini and Milletta Sbrilli, *Il quaderno della fabbrica della Cappella di Sant'Antonino in San Marco a Firenze* (Pisa: Scuole Normale Superiore, 1996).

¹¹ On the far flung impact that the catacombs had in creating saintly identities see Johnson, 'Holy fabrications', *passim*.

¹² Hansjakob Achermann, *Die Katakombenheiligen und ihre Translationen in der schweizerische Quart des Bistums Konstanz* (Stans: Hist. Verein Nidwal, 1979), 9-17, as quoted in Ulrike Strasser, *State of Virginity. Gender, Religion and Politics in an Early Modern Catholic State* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 136.

¹³ Antonio Bosio, *Roma sotterranea* (Rome: G. Facciotti, 1635). The exploitation of the catacombs resulted in the vicar general of Rome outlawing entry into them with the threat of perpetual banishment to the galleys in 1599: *Regesti di bandi, editi, notificazioni e provvedimenti diversi relativi alla città di Roma ed allo stato pontificio*, Rome, 1920, I, 137, as quoted in Welch, *Shopping*, 296. On the important role the Catacombs held in imagining Rome and vindicating the role of relics, see Ditchfield, 'Martyrs on the Move', esp.287, and G. Wataghin Cantino, 'Roma Sotterranea. Appunti sulle origine dell'archeologia cristiana,' *Ricerche di storia dell'arte* 10 (1980): 5-14.

¹⁴ Ottavio Panciroli, *I tesori nascosti nell'alma Città di Roma 1621* (Rome: n.p., 1625).

ostentatiously included the heads of two martyrs.¹⁵ The large number of relics in both their collections shows that this was a vogue endowed with more than a little degree of competitiveness.

Despite ecclesiastical reservations, the laity kept relics in their houses and all the factors listed above would seem to have cultivated an increased desire to have relics at home.¹⁶ Prior to the mid-sixteenth century references to relics kept domestically are relatively few, although private relic collecting by the aristocracy had existed since the very beginnings of Christianity.¹⁷ Closer to home and the period studied here is the example of the Girolami family's private relic of their distant ancestor St. Zenobius. In the fifteenth century, the family's relic of St. Zenobius's ring played a fundamental role in ensconcing an ancestry of sanctity within the Girolami family tree and in encouraging Florentine devotions to the saint. While the relic helped promote the status of both the family and saint, it also provided the basis for a series of important diplomatic exchanges between France, the city and the family (and an internecine domestic dispute).¹⁸

If the example of the Girolami family shows how relics could be located domestically in fifteenth-century Florence, it also shows that they did not tend to remain there and were unusual items only found in the houses of the rich or well connected. Before 1560, few relics were listed in the *Pupilli* inventories of Florentine household estates.¹⁹ In an old small walnut chest in the

¹⁵ On Philip II see Henry Kamen, *Philip of Spain* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1997), 189, who notes that at his death Philip had amassed ten whole bodies, 144 heads, 406 arms and legs, thousands of various bones and other body parts, hairs of Christ and Mary, and fragments of the True Cross and the Crown of Thorns. Maria Maddalena d'Austria's relic collecting is discussed in Sanger, 'Women of Power', 133-149, where the heads are listed as one of S. Ursula's 11,000 virgins and one of the soldier of S. Maurice's Theban legion. For an early example of relic collecting on a political level see chapter five 'The Emperor's New Bones: Charles IV and the cult of Relics in Prague,' in David Charles Mengel, 'Bones, Stones and Brothels: Religion and Topography in Prague under Emperor Charles IV (1346-78),' (Phd diss., University of Notre Dame, 2003)

¹⁶ Simon Ditchfield notes the warning against the private keeping of relics in Piacentian synodal constitutions, while David Gentilcore notes that the 1661 Gallipoli synod decreed that saints relics were not to be circulated around nor kept in private houses as the suitable place for them were churches, and priests would be required to obtain special permission in order to use relics in devotions at private houses. See Ditchfield, *Liturgy, Sanctity and History in Tridentine Italy*, 94; Gentilcore, *From Bishop to Witch*, 188.

¹⁷ For early references to private relic collecting by the aristocracy see Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 33, 34 & 87. Brown's evidence demonstrates that the example of Theodolinda Queen of the Lombards, who received from Gregory I two *phylacteria* containing secondary relics (still in the treasury of the cathedral at Monza) and had a substantial collection of holy oils, was not atypical of the elite. See also *CE*, s.v. 'Amulet'; 'The True Cross', and 'Archaeology of the Cross and Crucifix'.

¹⁸ Sally J. Cornelison, 'A French King and a Magic Ring: The Girolami and a Relic of St. Zenobius in Renaissance Florence,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 55 (2002): 434-469.

¹⁹ On early relic collecting by the aristocracy see also Patrick Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1994), 44; referencing George Duby's article 'The Diffusion of Cultural Patterns in Feudal Society,' *Past and Present*, vol.39 (1968), 3-10. Two relics were listed within Francesco Inghirrami's exceptional estate of 1471, a 'San Girolamo in uno tabernacholino con vetro dinanzi con più relique' and a 'schatolino dipinto entrovi uno tondo di cristallo e una anpollina di relique e una chordiglia bianco e uno nastro di seta bianco con orlique a picchato da porre a dosso a donna di parto', ASF, MAP 173, f.266v. After Lorenzo de' Medici's death the palace of via Larga also contained a box of relics in their chapel, while 'una reliquiera d'oro fatta a tabernacholo chon sei pezzi di sportegli, drentovi 8 perle di grani 3 1/2 l'una e 6 balasci, pesa in tutto libbra una denari 6, di stima cholla guaina fornita di toppe e chathene e

groundfloor bedchamber of Rinaldo di Lorenzo Tedaldi's household in 1543 '[...] the cloak of San Francesco [...] and other things of many Saints and lots of privileges from many Popes and many other old writings' were safely stored away.²⁰ The contents of this little chest undoubtedly represent an exceptional holy cache for a household (and one which the modesty of Tedaldi's remaining estate only serves to further stress), in both the rarity of the items themselves and the rarity of the description that specifies the relic as St. Francis's cape. The second occurrence of a household relic appeared some seventeen years later in 1560 in the wealthy and richly ornamented home of Giovanni di Raffaello del Pulito, and is much more typical of domestic relic collecting. Del Pulito's house contained simply 'a small box with many relics' alongside twenty devotional artworks.²¹ Despite these two references it was not until the first decades of the sixteenth century that domestic relics were noted with any discernable pattern. While still an understandably exclusive item, the quantity of relics in private homes more than doubled between 1620 and 1650 (see Appendix B, Graph 3.1). These figures demonstrate a specific timeframe in which relics became increasingly collected, valued, and perceived as desirable for the home.²²

This rising presence within domestic collections from the late-sixteenth century onwards suggests a clear resurgence of the role of relics and their increased social and political currency for both the Catholic Church and individuals alike, after the diminishing cultural role that Patrick Geary has suggested they played from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries in Europe.²³ This peak in the relic trade among the laity that is discernable from the mid-sixteenth until the end of the seventeenth century has precedent only in the relic booms that took place between the eighth and tenth centuries (when the holdings of several Roman catacombs were largely removed and transferred to basilicas within the city walls), and the early thirteenth century that, largely as a consequence of the Venetian sack of Byzantium in 1204, witnessed an influx of Near Eastern relics into the West.²⁴ Given the growing importance that the saints assumed within Christianity during the Middle Ages, these

ghangheri et chiave d'oro tutto f.1500' was kept in the *scrittoio* of Lorenzo's *camera*, see Spallanzani and Gaeta Bertelà, eds., *Libro d'inventario*, 24 & 43 respectively.

²⁰ ASF, MPP 2648, 22 February to 13 March 1543, f.830r: 'una cassone di noce vecchio piccolo ce ve drento la cappa di San Francesco ce dissono cela la Santo a incomanda e a qasdia [sic] e acusto dia di tedaldo e di Lorenzo tedaldi e altre cose di più santi e sante e più privileggi di più papi e più altre scritture vecchie'

²¹ ASF, MPP 2651, ff.489r-493r.

²² Perhaps significantly, the period coincides with the Holy Office decrees of 1625 which attempted to eradicate unofficial public cults. See Simon Ditchfield's forthcoming "'Coping with the *beati moderni*": canonisation procedure in the aftermath of the Council of Trent'.

²³ See Geary, *Furta Sacra*, 22-27 & 28-43; Geary, *Living with the Dead*, 177-193; Burns, 'Relic Vendors', 158. See also the addendum to chapter eight in Rothkrug, *Religious Practices and Collective Perceptions*, which argues that relics were desacralized from the fourteenth to late fifteenth centuries as part of a parallel development alongside the hereticization of magic and sorcery.

²⁴ For the effects of the sack of Byzantium and the opening of the Roman catacombs, see Ditchfield, 'Tridentine Worship and the Cult of Saints'. In addition see Michael McCormick's chapter 'Hagiographical horizons: collecting exotic relics in early medieval France', which charts the important and widely spread trade in relics from the Holy Land: McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communciations and Commerce, A.D. 300-900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 283-318.

earlier examples of relic booms help underscore the fundamental role that relics had in promoting individual saints' cults. This connection between the cult of relics and the cult of saints is discernable in the later period studied here. Indeed, the rising number of relics found within the inventories' statistics directly parallels the rise in images of saints in the home (as discussed in Chapter Two) and serves as a reminder that both phenomena were indissolubly linked and authorities for one another.

As both the historical basis for the Christian cult of relics, as well as their psychological, religious, and political function and appeal has been well-examined elsewhere, this chapter looks specifically at the examples of the relics found within the *Pupilli* inventories.²⁵ It also discusses domestic relics by examining evidence from the canonization trials of SS. Andrea Corsini and Caterina de' Ricci. Primarily using these sources this chapter attempts to contextualise relics within wider social currents of collecting and religious trends by asking what they might have meant within the domestic sphere, where they were kept, how they were displayed, how they got there, and some of the ways in which they were used. Because inventories very rarely disclosed the identity of the relics found in homes, this chapter does not discuss the crucial issue of what papal indulgences or related privileges were attached to their veneration. Rather, the chapter goes on to investigate an unauthorised 'relic' and the attachments it held. By focusing on the example of a case dealing with Fra Savonarola's cloak from a Florentine Inquisitorial trial, the chapter helps illuminate the fundamental role that the object and its aura played in cultivating and sustaining individual cults, as well as familial and collective memories. These private collections and household presences complicate Claire Sponsler's assertion that a continued public use of relics was necessary for them to remain valuable and retain their meaning as sacred objects.²⁶ Instead, they point to how values traditionally dependent on public visibility and veneration might be appropriated by a reconfiguration of the private, and how private meanings and identifications were given public voice.

RELICS AT HOME

²⁵ In addition to Geary see Arnold Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien. Die Geschichte Ihres Kultes Vom Frühen Christentum Bis Zur Gegenwart* (München: C. H. Beck, 1994); Joseph Braun, *Die Reliquiare des Christlichen Kultes und Ihre Entwicklung* (Freiburg, 1940); Brown, *Cult of Saints*; Jacques Gelis and Odile Redon, eds. *Les Miracles Miroirs des Corps* (Paris: Presses et publications de l'université de Paris VIII, 1983); Caroline Walker Bynum, 'The Female Body and Religious Practice in the Later Middle Ages,' in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body. Part One*, ed. Michel Feher, Ramona Naddaff and Nadia Tazi, 160-219 (New York: Zone, 1989), 163. For a Freudian indebted analysis of relic collecting see Werner Muensterberger, *Collecting: An Unruly Passion. Psychological Perspectives* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 56-7, while more generally on psychologies of collecting see John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, eds., *The Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion Books, 1994).

²⁶ Claire Sponsler, 'In Transit: Theorizing Cultural Appropriations in Medieval Europe,' *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32, no. 1 (2002): 17-40, 28. Sponsler's analysis of relics draws heavily on Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption. New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

For the most part, the relics listed in inventories were described as variations on a 'box with many relics' or a 'cross for holding relics' with little or no identifying features, just as del Pulito's had been noted in 1560. The descriptions suggest that these relics were either small parts of saints, or secondary relics such as *eulogiae* (oil, ashes, dust and the like) or *brandea* (cloth that has touched a relic).²⁷ The number of these nondescript holy remnants in homes shows how relics, to paraphrase Simon Ditchfield, ensured that the sacred geography of Christianity was mobile and easily appropriated.²⁸ In addition, their anonymity hints at the way in which secondary relics escaped clerical attention and regulation.

While the inventories rarely listed what specific relics were hoarded at home, the 1598 estate of Duke Alessandro de' Medici's grandson, Giuliano di Giulio de' Medici, contained a box with an identifiable relic of a saint. In Giulio's wife Livia Spinola's *camera* was 'a box with an Agnus Dei, cords of St. Francis and other blessed things'. This box was described more clearly further on as 'really a reliquary with a glass cover of copper that [Livia] says she was given by Signor Giuli[an]o her husband [and was used] for his vigil'.²⁹ These 'cordoni' of St. Francis enjoyed an extensive, albeit somewhat dubiously sanctioned, devotion from the late-sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries.³⁰ In fact, the couple had a particular devotion to St. Francis of Paula, who must have acted as both a guardian and personification of their identity. Five images of St. Francis were listed throughout the household bedchambers (three of which were specified as 'di Paula'), with a donor painting of St. Francis of Paula portraying the saint flanked by portraits of both Signor Giulio and Signora Livia kept in the *camera di mezzo*.³¹ Obtaining relics of a personal or family saint must have marked the material manifestation of a patron's spiritual attachment. Giulio de' Medici's estate is one of the rare examples where a relic of a personal and prior attachment to a saint can be discerned. However, the acquisition of a relic could give rise to personal devotion, with personal devotions travelling inwards from their public manifestations.

²⁷ For example ASF, MPP 2660: f.339r, f.464r, f.648v, f.726r; MPP 2651: ff.489r-493r; MPP 2661: f.62v, f.233v; ASF, Carte Riccardi 656, f.27r; ASF, LCF 4839, f.104r. Regarding the types of relics, Gentilcore notes a five-part typology that distinguishes between corporeal, associative, topographic, substantive or secondary, and symbolic relics: Gentilcore, *From Bishop to Witch*, 187.

²⁸ Ditchfield, 'Tridentine Worship and the Cult of Saints,' 222.

²⁹ ASF, MPP 2657 (1598-1602), f.117r & 171v. There seems to have been a particular devotion towards 'il cordone di S. Francesco' arising with the reign of Pope Gregory XIII (1572-1585) and a series of faked indulgences published. See the letter from Fra Damiano Rubeo (the Commissario del Maestro del S. Palazzo) to the Inquisitor of Bologna dated 6 June 1576, reprinted in Rotondò, 'Nuovi documenti', 161.

³⁰ Lurati, 'Pene ai bestemmiatori', 50, records that in Varese '[...] nelle chiese de Frati sono delle tavolette che contengono molte Indulgenze senza bolle, ne altra certezza, fra le altre in Santo Francesco è l'indulgentia delli cordoni di Santo Francesco', while Maria Pia Fantini records several publications specific to this devotion noted within the inquisitorial files of Modena, namely, an *Indulgenze concesse alla confraternita del cordone di san Francesco* (Venice, 1596), and one *Indulgenze concesse a quelli che portano il cordone di san Francesco* (Modena, 1587). Licences to read were conceded for both books. See Maria Pia Fantini, 'Censura Roma e orazioni: modi, tempi, formule (1571-1620),' in *L'inquisizione e gli storici: un cantiere aperto*, 221-244 (Rome: Accademia dei Lincei, 2000), 633.

³¹ ASF, MPP 2657, ff.84v, 107r, 113r, 171v, 186v.

Such a phenomenon can be seen in the way a branch of the Strozzi family rededicated to St. Hyacinth of Cracow (1185-1257) their family chapel at Santa Maria Novella in 1596 (see fig.3.1 showing the altarpiece by Alessandro Allori).³² Previously dedicated to St. Peter the Martyr, the Strozzi's shift in loyalties can be attributed to having received the gift of an important relic of St. Hyacinth from the Grand Duchess Christine of Lorraine in 1595, the same year Hyacinth was canonized by Ippolito Aldobrandini as Pope Clement VIII.³³ This public donation was itself preceded by the private connections between the Florentine families of the Strozzi, the Medici and the Aldobrandini. The possession of St. Hyacinth's relic also ensured that the private faith and face of the Strozzi was given public view. Among other conditions, the contractual pact formed between the Strozzi and the brothers of Santa Maria Novella stipulated that the relic was only permitted to be displayed during St. Hyacinth's feast day or on the death of one of the Strozzi family members.³⁴

Among the few other inventories listing specific relics were two households containing fragments of the True Cross. Alongside the more generic 'many relics of saints in various boxes' recorded in Pier Maria di Paul Antonio Pazzi's villa oratory in c.1619, was a 'gold cross of one eighth of a *braccia* high inside which is the wood from the most Holy Cross of Our Lord'.³⁵ Similarly, GioBattista d'Alamano de' Medici's estate of 1585 contained a tiny golden cross that held a small fragment of the sacred wood. The size and medium of both Pazzi's and Medici's examples recall a beautifully enamelled example of a reliquary cross held in the Victoria and Albert Museum whose external figuration depicts the instruments of the Passion (see fig.3.2).³⁶ Encased within the cross lies a fragment of the Holy Cross, as well as relics of SS. Paul and Peter, and Mary's milk. The fact that these fragments were identified by the notaries is perhaps unsurprising as the Grand Dukes of Tuscany promulgated a cult of the True Cross, and indeed there is a large number of Tuscan reliquaries of the True Cross dating from the key years of the Medici regime (see figs.3.3-3.6).³⁷ As the references to the fragments of the True Cross also demonstrate, relics did not

³² On the redecoration see Marcia Hall, *Renovation and Counter-Reformation: Vasari and Duke Cosimo in S.^{ta} Maria Novella and S.^{ta} Croce 1565-1577* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 109; Walter & Elizabeth Paatz, *Die Kirchen Von Florenz*, 6 vols (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1955), III: 716 & 745; Jack Spalding, 'Alessandro Allori's Altarpieces in S. Maria Novella,' *Storia dell'arte* 97 (1999): 311-316.

³³ See C. M. Becchi and H. Geisenheimer, 'Per la storia del culto di San Giacinto in Firenze,' *Il Rosario* XXIV (1907): 14-20, which reproduces the letters of Christine of Lorraine asking for a relic of St. Hyacinth as well as the conditions of how the relic was to be displayed. On St. Hyacinth see Ronald Finucane, 'Saint-making at the end of the sixteenth century: How and why Jacek of Poland (d.1257) became St. Hyacinth in 1594,' *Hagiographica* 9 (2002): 207-58.

³⁴ Becchi and Geisenheimer, 'Per la storia del culto di San Giacinto', 17.

³⁵ Pier Maria Pazzi see ASF, MPP 2660, f.339r;

³⁶ MPP 2655, f.603r: 'una crocellina doro piccholina drentovi un poco di legno della santa croce di christo'. The example from the V & A has most recently been discussed in Donal Cooper's essay 'Devotion' in Ajmar-Wollheim and Dennis, eds., *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, 198.

³⁷ On the ties between the Medici regime and the cult of the True Cross see Elena Fumagalli, Massimiliano Rossi and Riccardo Spinelli, eds. *L'arme e gli amori : la poesia di Ariosto, Tasso e Guarini nell'arte fiorentina del Seicento* (Livorno : Sillabe, c2001), 150.

have to come from the saints, but could also denote and encourage a Christological or Marian devotion.

Given that both Christ and Mary lacked earthly or corporal remains due to his Ascension and her Assumption, relics of them should have been more troublesome to obtain than those of the lesser saints. However, as the Victoria & Albert cross shows, Christ's cross splintered and his blood flowed into seemingly infinite and collectable particles, while Mary's milk poured into many personal reliquaries. Filippo Salviati had two reliquaries made containing, amongst other things, the milk of the Virgin Mary. He donated one to the convent of San Vincenzo in Prato and apparently kept the other at home until his death, before it too was sent to the convent.³⁸ However, easier to acquire and indicative of more local devotions, were collections of 'relics' or mementos from regional Marian shrines. For pilgrims and the devout, measurements or outlines of various parts of Mary's (or other's) body, clothing or image, could be appropriated as personal relics. Such measurements could be produced by various types of cord cut to size or even through printed images that, for example, traced the size of her foot and displayed the dimensions. Although strictly speaking not relics, these measurements had the same value and representative function that relics did. In fact, commercial reproductions of divine measurements emphasized the prophylactic qualities of their product (as well as the indulgences that they carried).³⁹ During the 1640s, amongst Brigida Bardi Tuccierelli's collection of relics was a 'box of silver worked with a burin [weighing] six ounces inside which is the measure of the belt of the Beata Vergine [della Quercia] of Prato'. Similarly, the wife of Alamanno Salviati (the cousin of Filippo) had the 'belt of the Madonna' stored among a box of other relics and a breviary.⁴⁰

While Holy Virgins' belts and their measurements represented both their owner's and their originator's piety and chastity (and were probably aids for an easy labour) and were not usually items of clothing, the small crucifixes of Gio Battista de' Medici and the Victoria and Albert Museum's example were intended to be worn. Sometimes reliquaries, such as one of St. Carlo Borromeo's glove (fig.3.7), were made to be worn despite their cumbersome size.⁴¹ Several examples of relics conjoined with jewellery or personal accessories were listed in the inventories. Take for example the 'small necklace of silver containing relics' of the baker Jacopo Picchianti, or

³⁸ ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, *Processus* 794, f.58v: '[...] fece fare un Reliquiere d'Argento ove messo le metà di detto latte [della VM] per il monasterio, et l'altra metà in una Croce d'argento con altre reliquie [...] qual croce [...] doppo morte fu rimandata al Monesterio [...]']

³⁹ For an exhaustive discussion of these measurements see Xavier Barbier de Montault, 'Les mesures, poids, fac-simile et empreintes de dévotion,' in *Oeuvres complètes de Mgr. X. Barbier de Montault*, vol.7, 313-493 (Poitiers; Blais, Roy, 1902). See also Bozóky, *Charmes et priers apotropaiques*, 53, and for a interrelated phenomenon, Eleanora Gordon, 'Measurement for a Votive Candle: A Rite of Healing,' *Storia e Medicina Popolare* 7 (1989): 3-16.

⁴⁰ For Tuccierelli see ASF, LCF 366, f.2r; for Salviati's wife Lessandra Gimignani see ASF, MPP 2661, f.62v.

⁴¹ See *Il Seicento Fiorentino*, II: 469.

the 'small cross used as a reliquary of silver with four fastenings for the head made of many colours of silk' in Senator Quaratesi's Florentine house.⁴² Surviving examples as well as the descriptions in inventories show that these reliquary pendants or brooches could be elaborate items of jewellery (see figs.3.8a-b & figs.3.9a-g). An inventory of the jewels of marquis Giovanni Vincenzo Salviati's estate taken in 1669 notes 'a reliquary of St. Filippo Neri in a jewel to wear on the chest with two emeralds and diamond' given by the Cardinal Corsi to the marquise Laura Corsi Salviati on the occasion of the delivery of a child.⁴³

The Salviati's brooch highlights several key points about relics. The first is the connection that relics, with their thaumaturgic and healing properties, had with key life-stages such as childbirth and sickness. They formed part of a widespread tradition recognised by Anthonius Guainerius, a professor of medicine at the University of Pavia, who in his *Tractatus de matricibus* advocated the use of relics for women giving labour, and also counselled doctors to keep them near at hand to both please and protect the patient as well as the doctor.⁴⁴ Secondly, the Salviati's brooch shows how relics functioned as 'phylacteries', a function that explains their important role as gifts. Relics potentially bestowed upon their receiver not just a potent device for spiritual and physical welfare, but moreover, the prestige of possession and the personal ownership of a privileged system.⁴⁵ Thirdly, the Salviati jewel demonstrates how relics, like agnus deis, could be incorporated into a transportable system of protective adornment that offered not just a visible sign of private piety and wealth (in both financial and spiritual terms), but how they also, and quite clearly, aligned their wearer's body with that of the saint who was to intercede on their behalf. Finally, taken with the figures of household images examined in Chapter Two, Laura Corsi Salviati's reliquary makes apparent how Tuscan devotion to new 'local' Florentine saints and beati, such as St. Filippo Neri (1515-1595), was largely promoted by the same patrician class from which the saints themselves had emerged. Indeed, a number of relics from Florentine saints such as SS. Filippo Neri, Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi (1566-1607), and Caterina de' Ricci (1522-1590) do appear in the domestic inventories of local elites.⁴⁶

⁴² ASF, MPP 2661, f.204r & f.296v respectively. See also ASF, MPP 2660, f.464r (inventory of Giovanni di Matteo Boscherini, bottegaio), f.589v (inventory of Antonio di Messer Rinaldi Baldesi, medico fisico).

⁴³ Pinchera, *Lusso e Decoro*, 201: 'una reliquia di S. Filippo Neri in una gioia da tenersi sul petto con due smeraldi e diamantine, donata dall'Eminentissimo cardinale Corsi in occasione di un parto alla signora'.

⁴⁴ Helen Lemay, 'Women and the Literature of Obstetrics and Gynecology,' in *Medieval Women and the Sources of Medieval History*, ed. Joel T Rosenthal, 189-209 (Athens & London: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 197.

⁴⁵ For example, from Ottaviano, Giulia de' Medici sent the Grand Duchess Giovanna d'Austria a relic of the apostle St Andrea writing that '[...] Per ricordare a vostra Altissima Serenissima ch'io le sono serva fedele, desiderosissima di servirla, le mando cinque ampolle di manna del gloriosissimo S. Andrea apostolo che miracolosament escie del suo pretiosissimo corpo. Et in questo Regno è tenuta con grandissima devotione et usano darme a malati gravi [...]', ASF, MP 5925, c.18 February 1573, f.139.

⁴⁶ ASF, CSV 1165, *Materie Ecclesiastiche*, filze 7 & 4, documents the founding of a Chapel of St. Filippo Neri by the Strozzi in San Lorenzo in 1691, as well as a Chapel of St. Filippo Neri in church of San Pier Maggiore by GiovanBattista di Lorenzo Strozzi detto il Cieco in 1634.

Valeria Pinchera has noted that the main branch of the Salviati became interested in acquiring relics for family devotions from the mid-seventeenth century. Through her close examination of the Salviati archive, Pinchera has shown that one of the first relics they obtained was from the nuns of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence. This relic was described as the white garment on top of which the dead body of the Florentine noble St. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi had rested, and Laura Corsi Salviati's mother, in obtaining this garment, also acquired the rights 'to exhibit it to her pleasure'.⁴⁷ By the time of a 1686 inventory, the relics of St. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi were in fact exhibited alongside those of St. Antonino in matching reliquaries on the altar of the family chapel of the *palazzo* in via del Palagio (today via Ghibellina).⁴⁸ The prominent placement of these relics highlights the key role both these saints held for the Salviati, as St. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi extended a century-old familial devotion towards her namesake Mary Magdalene. The Salviati had finished their chapel in the church of San Marco dedicated to St. Antonino in 1594, and their 1581 *cappella* in the via del Corso palace bore a dedication to the Magdalene. The decision to place relics of SS. Antonino and Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi in the Salviati's new domestic chapel deliberately recalls the antecedents of the family's chapels dedicated to these saints. It shows how saintly relics could act as markers for a type of religious ancestry and the patrimony of a family. It further displays how the family's public devotion to these saints was also very much a private concern. Moreover, the choice of the saints embedded the Salviati family into a saintly currency that was specifically local, and one that thereby demonstrated their loyalty to, and alignment with, the region's spiritual and by extension secular rulers. In fact, the Salviati alongside the Corsi, Pazzi and the reigning Medici family were crucial supporters of Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi's canonization.

Even though the Salviati helped to promote the sanctity of Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, Filippo Salviati and his sons Averardo and Antonio remain better known for the instrumental role they played in promulgating the cult of the aristocratic St. Caterina de' Ricci. This assistance was done in part through an expensive program of architectural patronage at the convent where she lived.⁴⁹ Although architecture, image, and text were all critical and highly visible ways to advance and uphold the holiness of a candidate, the candidate's own saintly remains were one of the most efficacious means to do so. Certainly, Caterina de' Ricci's letters reveal a wide range of relics and amulets being distributed to and from her correspondents, with the official transcripts for her

⁴⁷ Pinchera, *Lusso e decoro*, 182.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 183, the two reliquaries were described in the inventory as 'di sfoglia d'argento con specchi' resting in two cases of wood 'color rosso tocche d'oro'.

⁴⁹ The canonisation trials for St. Caterina de' Ricci show that Filippo's contemporaries regularly estimated the amount that he spent on the convent of San Vincenzo as in excess of 30,000 *scudi*, with, as Suor Maria Raphaella put it 'tutto per commodo di dette Monache et a contemplazione di detta Madre Suor Caterina, et haver sentito dire quanto si dice nel Capitolo che il Serenissimo GranDuca Cosimo Primo, soleva dire che tra l'opere meravigliose fatto da Suor Caterina, una era l'haver fatto spendere tal soma di danari al Signor Filippo Salviati tanto assegnato et accurato della roba sua'. ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, *Processus* 794, ff.51r-v.

beatification also showing how the nuns of San Vincenzo disseminated an equally wide range of de' Ricci's own body parts and clothing to the public in order to maintain and prove her sanctity.⁵⁰ In the seventeenth century the domestic chapel of the Bishop of Arezzo, Antonio Ricci, contained remains of 'those formerly of the Blessed St. Caterina de' Ricci and other relics'. Her remains allowed one of her relatives to promote and display her holiness not just at home but moreover clearly within an ancestral line and specific ecclesiastic structure.⁵¹ However, while St. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi had been canonized by 1669 and St. Filippo Neri in 1622, Caterina de' Ricci had to wait until 1732 before she was even beatified and her relics could be officially termed legitimate and an object of public devotion. It follows that the more private space of the domestic sphere was well suited for such unauthenticated or unauthorised relics, just as it was for images of would-be saints.

Nonetheless for wealthy and powerful Florentines, the legitimacy of their collections of sacred items was important, and when unable to be found locally it could be sourced from further afield. Between 1666-1680 the Salviati also came into possession of relics of St. Joseph (donated by his namesake Giuseppe Maria Ambrogio and taken from the church of Sant'Anastasia in Rome), as well as those of Romolo, Prima, Lucillo, Massimo, and Aureliano.⁵² The inventories for the Strozzi family show a similar story to the Salviati, in that although they kept relics in their villa chapel of il Boschetto by 1602, there too seems to have been a conscious relic acquisition policy dating from the 1650s.⁵³ In the 1663 inventory of Palazzo Strozzi, several relics were listed within the domestic chapel, including what was a presumably substantial reliquary containing the arm of St. Giusto.⁵⁴ Also chronicled among the Strozzi palace chapel's belongings were two boxes of relics noted as being authenticated by Bishop Oddi of Perugia and the Metropolitan Bishopric of Florence in 1659 and 1660 respectively.⁵⁵ These dates like those noted for the Salviati demonstrate

⁵⁰ See, for example, Congregazione dei Riti, *Processus* 794, f.8v, f.15r, f.151v.

⁵¹ ACAF, *Oratori* 4, unpaginated, visitation of 16 March 1641.

⁵² Paul Hurtubise, *Une Famille-Témoin: Les Salviati* (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1985), 476-479; Pinchera, *Lusso e decoro*, 1999, 183.

⁵³ ASF, CSV 1430 (unpaginated), loose inventory dating 6 January 1602 'di quello trovai in Cappella et in Camera dove dremo questo veni di casa la Signora Caterina Strozzi': '2 reliquieri dorati', '1 croce d'ebano col crocifisso d'argento di terzo braccio in circa col suo piede col 2 vasetti et suoi fiori d'argento col cinque ovati col orlo d'argento di quello di mezzo una Reliquia di S. Illaciro et 2 minaci [sic] delle paramente di S. Carlo'; inventory of Boschetto chapel dating 1611: '1 crocifisso d'argento con croce di granatiglio con piede del crocifisso di granatiglio con cornice di ebano con due vasettini di argento entrovi fior d'argento con morte d'argento con sua orti con due colonnetti d'argento con in quei ovati [...] reliquie con cerchielli d'argento', 'sul l'altare 2 reliquieri con sua reliquie di più sorte santi di legno messo a oro in faccia piana'.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, loose inventory dated 1 November 1663: '1 reliquiario d'ottone a guglia lavorate e rabescato con vetro entrovi un braccio di S. Giusto'.

⁵⁵ Senator Lorenzo Strozzi's manservant recalled how on the 10 November 1665 '[...] qui [palazzo Strozzi] venne la signora Bigliotti e detta signora li Signor Lorenzo Strozzi e sua moglie Lessandra Boromei Strozzi] dono un reliquiario qui debano con molte reliquie assai bello', see ASF, CSV 1253, *Ricordi di poco momento* (Diario privato di Gio. Camillo Malatesti di Borgo S. Sepolcro, cameriere del Senatore di Lorenzo Strozzi, dal 1 Luglio 1660 al 18 Febbraio 1670), f.64v. Regarding the authentication of relics, see also ASF, CSV 1171,

a heightened interest by the nobility in relics during the mid-seventeenth century. These boxes were similarly recorded as containing body-parts belonging to Roman martyrs of the early Church, with the relics of the SS. Pascasio, Aurelio, Lucio and Demetria stored within little envelopes of cotton and paper in one box, and those of SS. Mauro, Evenzio, Fausto, Erasmo, and Sulpizia contained within the other. Two other reliquaries 'senza autentica' were noted within the chapel: one of gilded wood with carved feet; the other made from a cover of gilded and fretworked [*traforata*] wood with a casing of glass inside which were placed the various relics.⁵⁶

Several significant issues emerge from the relic collections of the Salviati and the Strozzi. Firstly, there is a sense of an increasing concern post-Trent to ensure the authentication of relics and establish a legitimate provenance for them.⁵⁷ Secondly, their key role as gifts established and consolidated relationships. These relationships could be familial or patronal and can be understood in both earthly and celestial terms. Thirdly, relics assumed a particular importance for females within this culture, as either, like Laura Corsi Salviati and her mother, they were the recipients of relics, or, as in the example of Christine of Lorraine, the bestowers. Fourthly, the relics of Aurelio (Aureliano) and Demetria found in the Salviati and Strozzi collections demonstrate the importance attached to early Christian martyrs by the Tridentine Church. The documents furthermore suggest a clear timeframe for a renewed interest in the relic market, as well as the keen exploitation of the reopened Roman catacombs from which a large number of these otherwise obscure saintly martyrs must have come.⁵⁸ The location of Rome as one of - if not *the* - major source for holy relics during the seventeenth century doubtless helped to cement its centrality and privileged position within the sacred geography of Christianity. This trove of ancient saints further enabled a network of clerics

Miscellanea, insert 15 (11 April 1660), unpaginated, which details the authenticity of Senator Lorenzo Strozzi's reliquary of the Cross and the dress of the Virgin Mary in the church of San Michele degli Antinori.

⁵⁶ Ibid, loose inventory dated 1 November 1663: '1 scatola serrata con spaghetti entrovi diverse reliquie di santi involti in carta e cotone e con iscrizione semplice sopra detti Involti autenticate tutta dalla R.mo M. A Oddi Vesc. di Hycropoli Vicegerente del E. S. Marzio Ca[do?] Ginetti come per autentica inclusa in detta scatola segnata da detto Vescovo il detto 10 dicembre 1659 e sigillata questo de 20 Aprile 1664 da Francesco Bellini [...]1 scatoletta legata con un Cappio incarnato entrovi diversi reilique di S. Oddi vescovo allora da Perugia in detto 24 Gen 1660 con per autentica inclusa in detta scatola et in oltre confermata dal Vicario della Metropolitana firenze per ratifica in clusa in detta scatola per chigillata come sopra'; described further in an unpaginated insert of the same date as: '1 scatola piccola dentrovi reliquie di S. Pascasio, S.Aurelio, S.Lucio, et S.ta Demetria con sua autentica, 1 altra scatola simile dentrovi reliquie de SS.ti Mauro, Evenzio, Fausto, Erasmo, e Sulpizia con sua autentica'.

⁵⁷ Regarding the increased concern with authentication, see Ulrike Strasser's description of the lengths several convents in Bavaria went to, first in acquiring relics and then in ensuring that their validity was established through the correct process of authentication: Strasser, *State of Virginity*, 137-144.

⁵⁸ These findings are substantiated by Strasser who notes that the relic collections of the convents she studied began to be acquired in the 1660s, and were dominated by Saints and Martyrs from the Roman Catacombs, see note above and and *ibid.*, 210.

and cardinals such as Corsi and Ambrogi to readily obtain relics as gifts for or on behalf of patrons, supporters, and influential personages or families such as the Salviati and the Strozzi.⁵⁹

LOCATION AND CONTAINERS

As the Strozzi and Salviati examples demonstrate, a key location for relics within homes was the domestic chapel. Indeed the seventeenth-century boom in domestic chapels explored in chapter five, does in part explain the increased presence of relics within homes by the mid-century. This was because saintly remains were an efficient and impressive way to delineate the boundaries of sacred space whilst simultaneously highlighting the role of ownership in divinity. As consecrated spaces, domestic chapels were therefore wholly appropriate rooms in which to keep holy items. As legitimate relics were intrinsically sacred, their inclusion in domestic chapels functioned in the same way that they did within churches, by promoting and extending the sacredness of the space and its possessions to visitors and, within the domestic sphere, clearly aligning the family with both. Moreover, relics in domestic chapels served a liturgical or ecclesiastical purpose. Through visitation records it is clear that relics were interred in the altar's *sepulcrum* or altar cavity (referred to variously as a 'chiusino', 'sepolcro' or 'predella serrata').⁶⁰ Directly on top of the altar cavity or the *pietra sagrata* were placed the Host and chalice, allowing a symbolic and symbiotic interchange whereby the holiness of the relics and the Eucharist informed one another, and thereby provided a quite literal base of sanctity for the sacrament of Communion. Moreover, it relates back to the early Christian practice of building altars over the tombs of martyrs. By the Middle Ages this practice had evolved into a customary rule of entombing relics within altars to enable consecration.⁶¹ Additionally, the inclusion of relics within the *sepulcrum* could often inform the chapel's dedication. Sometimes relics were also recorded kept on top of the altar and, as Chapter One has noted, occasionally on top of unconsecrated *altarini* within bedchambers. Relics in the chapel or on an altar therefore helped legitimise the religious function of the domestic sphere by allowing the liturgy (or a type of para-liturgy) to be authoritatively celebrated at home.

⁵⁹ Sanger, 'Women of Power', 150, notes that as well as receiving gifts of relics from eminent ecclesiastics, Maria Maddalena d' Austria also actively solicited the help of cardinals Pallavicino, Borghese, and Del Monte to further her collection of relics.

⁶⁰ AAF, *Oratori* 5, unpaginated, visitations of Signor GiovanAntonio Cicci (4 June 1648) oratory in Sant' Andrea a Comaggiano, and Signora Francesca Guardi Ugolini's in Florence (8 April 1648); *Oratori* 4, unpaginated, visitation of Cosimo Pasquali's oratory at San Martino la Palma; *Oratori* 2 (unpaginated); visitation of Cavalieri Medici's chapel of Sant' Andrea at Sant' Andrea a Monte Giovanni (7 August 1610).

⁶¹ See CE, s.v. 'Altar'. On the ideal dimensions and materials for the altar cavity, see the section 'Il sepolcro delle reliquie nell'altare da consacrare' in Carlo Borromeo, *Instructionum Fabricae et Supellectilis Ecclesiasticae* (Milan: Libreria Editrice Vaticana & Axios Group, 2000), 57.

Just as Borromeo had advised keeping relics in a conspicuous place within the church, the dominant visual placement of relics in domestic chapels helped draw attention to them.⁶² So did their containers. Reliquaries made tangible and visible the items that they stored. While the reliquary functioned as a form of reverence to the relic it encased and offered protection from profane contact, it could also raise the value of the relic it stored through its materials and artistry, or the way in which it 'gave sight' to the relic. In the inventories or *Oratori* files, reliquaries were often described made of gold and silver or other rich and precious materials that ensured that the relics were kept with the appropriate 'somma veneratione'.⁶³ Andrea Pazzi's gold and silver reliquary cross which stood two and a half *braccia* high (approximately 150 cm) demonstrates that domestic reliquaries were at times substantial and imposing objects, which must have rivalled their counterparts in public churches (from which their form had undoubtedly derived).⁶⁴ The boxes, display cabinets, or containers in which larger amounts of smaller secondary relics were commonly stored in homes, like those listed in the Strozzi inventories, taxonomically ordered their contents and ensured that they were only displayed at set times (see for example fig.3.10). Like the other traditional forms of monstrance reliquaries, architectural reliquaries, ostensoria, urns, classicizing caskets, and boxes had the additional appeal of being easily stored, transported, and seen from different angles.⁶⁵ Covers could also control the viewing of domestic relics. For example, Cavalier Vincenzo Bardi's chapel of his Florentine palazzo in 1650 contained four reliquaries, two of which were described as made of ebony and bearing images of Jesus and the Madonna with matching covers of yellow taffeta.⁶⁶ Other reliquaries provided more directed viewing structures within their form. For example, the Strozzi household's relic of the arm of St. Giusto recalls a *Reliquary of the arm of St. Andrew* (fig.3.11).⁶⁷ These reliquary arms seem to have enjoyed a particular success in Tuscany during the seventeenth century and one that, like other types of reliquary (see figs.3.12 & 3.13), provided small viewing windows that guaranteed the intimacy of the viewer's gaze as they attempted to discern the saintly remains safely displayed inside. A similar device was probably used in the two other reliquaries chronicled in Vincenzo Bardi's chapel that were described as reliquary busts made of hardened [*indurate*] wood gilded with silver (see for example the wooden

⁶² *Ibid.*, 61: 'Luoghi, vasi e loculi in cui si custodiscono le sacre reliquie'.

⁶³ See for example the priest's comments regarding Cavalier Medici's Oratory of Sant'Andrea where the 'various relics of many different Saints are kept by the Knight with the due devotion [*con somma veneratione*]' in the locked predella: ASF, *Oratori* 2, unpaginated, visitation of 17 August 1610.

⁶⁴ For the Pazzi's villa oratory of San Piero at Santa Brigida a Lubaco, see AAF, *Oratori* 3, unpaginated, visitation of 26 April 1626.

⁶⁵ For a breakdown of reliquary typologies and useful glossary of terms see Benedetta Montevocchi and Sandra Vasco Rocca, eds., *Suppellettile ecclesiastica I* (Florence: Centro Di, c.1987), 157-205.

⁶⁶ ASF, MPP 2661, f.398v: '2 reliquiari d'ebano di braccia uno incirca col imagine di Giesu et della Madonna in mezzo dli dd reliquia col sue coperte di taffetta giallo [...]'.
⁶⁷ See Maria Matilde Simari, *Il Museo di Arte Sacra di San Donnino a Campi Bisenzio* (Florence: Giunti, 2006), 156.

reliquary bust of St. Donnino fig.3.14).⁶⁸ The representational and metonymic nature of Bardi's reliquary busts and the Strozzi's arm of St. Giusto highlight the way in which saints, relics and their containers reflexively merged together and embodied each other. Indeed, the outer form often ensured that the meaning and corporeality of the inner (and often invisible object) was understood, while the 'completeness' of the reliquary's body part went some way to extend the size and substance of the relic it housed. The complexity of such reliquaries and their descriptions within the inventories is significant. It points towards both the expenditure and importance that was given to relics for domestic chapels. Furthermore, it highlights the reliance relics had on their material staging to bestow meaning. At times, the elaborate nature of extant examples shows how the containers not only visually overpowered the relics that they housed, but presumably also superseded the cost of the relics (see for example figs.3.15 & 3.16). The latter point is also suggested by the way that inventories' descriptions of reliquaries usually failed to specify their contents despite noting, even if very generically, their form and materials. Indeed, sometimes it becomes unclear whether they even contained relics within them.⁶⁹

For the wealthy Florentine elite able to afford such a space and the permissions necessary for it, a domestic chapel was the preferred place to display the family's main relic cache. However, even within nobles' *palazzi* or villas that were outfitted with a chapel, relics were to be found in other unconsecrated spaces such as the 'small round reliquary of gilded wood next to the bed' in the *camera buia* of the Strozzi inventory of 1663.⁷⁰ Indeed, the main area where relics were found in the inventories was once again the *camera*, that locus of religious possessions for the wider populace. This example from the Strozzi inventory shows how relics noted in the *camera* appear often to have been specifically positioned by the bed.⁷¹ Like the examples of reliquaries found in chapels, those in *camere* were also often recorded as made of or adorned with prized materials such as gold, silver or crystal. When not listed cursorily as being a generic image or a box filled with relics, they also usually took the shape of a cross or had a crucifix attached. One reliquary in

⁶⁸ ASF, MPP 2661, f.398v: '2 teste di legno indurate et ci argentate da parvi le reliquie nel petto'. On reliquaries, the seminal publication remains Braun's *Die Reliquiare des Christlichen Kultes*. Braun argued that reliquaries represented their relics literally, although clearly reliquary forms should be understood as more rhetorical than literal representations: see Cynthia Hahn, 'Metaphor and Meaning in Early Medieval Reliquaries,' in *Seeing the Invisible in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, eds. Giselle de Nie, Karl F. Morrison and Marco Mostert, 239-264 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005). More specifically on reliquary busts, see Montgomery, Scott Bradford Montgomery, 'The Use and Perception of Reliquary Busts in the Late Middle Age,' (PhD diss., Rutgers State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, 1996); Barbara Drake Boehm, 'Body-Part Reliquaries: The State of Research,' *Gesta* 36 (1997): 8-19.

⁶⁹ See n. 19 describing the Medici inventory of 1492, where the description of the reliquary in Lorenzo's *scrittoio* explains in detail the valuable jewels that adorned it but makes no mention of any relics contained within.

⁷⁰ ASF, CSV 1430 (unpaginated), loose inventory of 1 November 1663: '1 reliquiarino di legno dorato tondo accanto al letto'.

⁷¹ See also ASF, MPP 2661, inventory of Francesco d'Andrea Casselli (4 March 1649), f.211r: '2 quadretti anzi tre fatti a poggia dei Reliquiari da tenere a capo a letto'.

Filippo di Dionigi Carducci's *camera di sopra* in 1621 was described as 'an agnus dei of red low pile velvet [*raso*] embroidered in gold containing a few relics'. This was listed next to a matching 'cloth for the stomach made of red *raso* with the name of Jesus embroidered in gold', perhaps signalling how relics were used to lay on the body as cures or protective shields.⁷² Certainly, wax agnus deis were often combined with relics or other objects (see fig.3.17), and there is no reason why the apotropaic qualities they possessed could not be embodied by mere representations of them. However, although inventories often cursorily described reliquaries' materials, they tended to ignore their form. In combination with the lack of reference to them in account books I have consulted, it is difficult to ascertain any consistent typologies of their form and therefore costs of expenditure and production. Nonetheless, the inventories suggest the wide variety of shapes they assumed, which in turn hint at the different functions and devotions relics engendered.

SUPPLIERS, SUPPLICANTS AND THE USES OF RELICS AT HOME

Despite the fact that relics unsurprisingly tended to be concentrated within the households of the rich, the fact that they were also found within the homes of tradesmen such as bakers and bottle makers should make us wary of positing *a priori* that they were limited to the social elite and inaccessible to most households. The cost of relics varied tremendously due to their quality, quantity, and provenance. An authenticated entire body from a reputable supply network would clearly have had more market value and social prestige than a piece of fabric taken from an obscure saint's item of clothing and purchased from one of those unlicensed relic rag-and-bone middlemen who, as Chaucer's 'Pardoner's Tale' illustrates, were seemingly not uncommon wandering round medieval and early modern Europe.⁷³ Nonetheless, regardless of its provenance or what it actually was, the very act of purchasing a purported relic and the subsequent use of it, ensured an aura of legitimacy. Indeed, its efficacy in healing or protecting its owner gave it a personal and functional value that negated any qualitative difference between it and its more 'legitimate' counterpart. As Patrick Geary has written, the circulation and acquisition of relics created their value and meaning.⁷⁴ In fact, relics were acquired from a wide range of sources that were equally variable in their degrees of legality. Relics could be acquired from licensed or unlicensed traders, the

⁷² ASF, MPP 2660, f.368r.

⁷³ Even within seemingly reputable networks, the identity of relics was liable to be reattributed to add to the profit of the seller (and presumably the sanctity of the collection for the unwary buyer). In the late-fourteenth century, Pietro di Giunta Torrigiani, a Florentine merchant in Constantinople, sold a significant Byzantine relic collection to the Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala in Siena for the huge sum of 3,000 gold florins. Torrigiani had in fact deliberately elevated a relic of the minor St. Arethas to one from St. Peter, see Paul Hetherington, 'A Purchase of Byzantine Relics and Reliquaries in Fourteenth-Century Venice,' *Arte Veneta* 37 (1983): 9-31, 22. On Florentine regulations that attempted to curtail the pawning of religious items (and thereby stand testament to what was obviously a common practice), see Marino Ciardini, *I Banchieri Ebrei in Firenze nel secolo XV e il Monte di Pietà Fondato da Girolamo Savonarola* (Borgo San Lorenzo, 1907), 32-3 & 71, as quoted in Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, 296.

⁷⁴ Geary, *Furta Sacra*, esp. 6-7.

diplomatic network, the spoils of invasions and newfound political alliances, second-hand markets and auctions, inheritance, and gifts or re-gifts.⁷⁵ For those unable to afford or attain their own, due to their flexible and often portable nature, relics were also be supplied to the home and its needy inhabitants on an ad hoc basis from religious orders and institutions.

The strong push towards canonizing St. Andrea Corsini that took place at the beginning of the seventeenth century, agitated for particularly by his successors the Bishop of Fiesole Alessandro Marzi Medici and his Carmelite order of Santa Maria del Carmine, serves as an example of the popular propaganda value of relics and their constant movements in and out of the domestic sphere. The *processi* for his canonization shows the key role that the translation of his relics back and forth into the homes of Florentines had in establishing the miracles he effected and therefore proving his sanctity.⁷⁶ St. Andrea Corsini's reputation was based in a large part upon his ability to help women give birth, so that during females' distressful travails, either they or their relatives would run to the Carmelite monastery asking for aid. Numerous witnesses from a wide range of social backgrounds personally attested to how the Fathers would then bring to the house relics of S. Andrea and place them upon either the neck or the stomach of the labouring woman and thereby miraculously facilitate an easy delivery. While items that included his mitre, his bishop's ring and shoes were used, it seems that St. Andrea's 'catena di ferro' was particularly efficacious and widely used. Given that this item was an instrument of penance usually encircled 'above his flesh' whilst alive, St. Andrea's *catena* retained a close aura of attachment to the saint that helped compress the spiritual, physical and temporal distances between the saint and the supplicant by uniting them in their joint sufferings and offering a means of triumph over pain.⁷⁷ The witnesses moreover testified to how other relics were typically (and occasionally unsuccessfully) employed during labour, such as the 'cordone' of St. Bernardino, while contemporary lore held that the hat of St. Antonino of

⁷⁵ Papers from the archive of the Mediceo del Principato show the important role of relics as high profile diplomatic gifts as well as their contemporary expense. An inventory of the Medicean courts' gifts to members of the Spanish court included no less than ten relics that were distributed to high ranking females, and which ranged from 'un reliquario d'oro a ovato con reliquie et 153 diamanti et 39 rubini' to 'una crocetta d'oro smaltata con reliquie': ASF, MP 5042, unpaginated, document dated 24 September 1590, from Emilio de' Cavalieri to Francesco di Girolamo Lenzone, Madrid. The important role that relics played in diplomatic relations between Florence and Spain is discussed in Goldberg, 'Artistic Relations'. See also, for example, the description of an authorised relic to Princess Maddalena Elena as part of the court gifts from the Medici to be bestowed to the Imperial family on account of Giovanna d'Austria marriage to Francesco I, ASF, MP 5923, c.1565, f.192: '[...] Alla principessa Magdalena un fornimento da altare et Messa con qualche reliqua che de licentia Episcopi si potrebbe mandare, et in questo si usasse ogni studio et valesse il tutto almeno mille scudi [...]'. For an early example of 'reliquary diplomacy' and the key function of relics as a Byzantine export commodity, see John W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Stewardship* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1969): 130-1; 176-7; 265; 407-8; 511-12 (accessed as an e-book from ACLS History E-Book Project, 12 August 2006).

⁷⁶ ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, Processus 759, 760, 761, 762, 763.

⁷⁷ ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, Processus 760, f.95v, testimony of Dianora Rinaldi de Brugianesi.

Florence (d.1459) was also believed to help pregnant mothers.⁷⁸ In this context the Cardinal's brooch for Laura Corsi Salviati can be seen as a singularly appropriate gift and part of a widespread phenomenon in which relics were circulated to women and particularly invoked during moments of childbirth.⁷⁹

The canonization trials demonstrate that relics were also supplied to the domestic sphere as remedies for illness or physical disabilities such as lameness, as well as spiritual possession – with the relics of St. Caterina de' Ricci apparently particularly useful for the latter in enabling successful exorcisms for the possessed at home.⁸⁰ The nuns from St. Caterina's Dominican convent willingly gave to needy members of the public seemingly everything and every part of the aspiring saint, ranging from her interior organs to her spindle shell [*fuso*] to the flowers which lay in her coffin, although for exorcisms only certain special relics were lent for the occasion to be returned back to the sisters. At the same time as the nuns provided this service of relic-lending, they established a substantial relic repository within the convent. At the time of Ricci's canonization trial of 1623-24, the description of this repository covered some fifteen closely written pages and bestowed upon the convent a physical locus of spiritual resources and saintly intercessors to further attract devotion and establish prestige.⁸¹ Their relic collection further enhanced the position of the convent as a sacred container or a type of meta-reliquary, and thereby allowed Ricci and her sisters entrance to secular spheres without ever transgressing their enclosed walls.⁸² The movement of relics back and forth from the religious to the domestic sphere had a beneficial result for both the supplicants requiring aid (assuming that the relic worked) as well as the monastery or convent who supplied them. Whether loaned or gifted, these relics raised public consciousness of the religious figure and the convent or monastery that housed their remains. The practice inculcated a sense of devotion and obligation towards the saint and the order, as well as extending both their spiritual and physical presences and authority across the city and into lay spaces. Quite succinctly, with relics both

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, f.129v, the testimony of Zanobi Paolo de Cassii regarding his wife's difficult labour noted that 'ancorche vi fusse il cordone di san Bernardino che si suole portare a Donne gravide come era questa, et vedendo che non profittava cosa alcuna le Donne [...] mi dissero che dovesse io andare al Carmine per la catena del Beato Andrea'. On Bernardino see also Gentilcore, *From Bishop to Witch*, 188-189. For the hat of St. Antonino and more generally the role of relic use during labour see Musacchio, *The Art and Ritual of Childbirth*, ch. 5, and specifically p. 114.

⁷⁹ For example, see also the letter to Sig. Leone Strozzi in Rome from his Nephew Francesco Ticci which describes the birth of his son '[...] però con tanti e tali stenti e travagli che tal volta si e dubitato della vita del figlio, e con molta ansietà di quella madre, con tutto che fosse servita, et assistita delli più efficace rimedi che si trovano et della continua presenza della signora Principessa di Conti Duchessa di Monpensiero et Duchessa d'Elboeuf et altre dame e mandateli dalla Regina molte reliquie et altri favori non piccoli [...]', ASF, CSV 1219, *Lettere diverse al Sig. Leone Strozzi* (1600-1632), 24 November 1610, unpaginated.

⁸⁰ See ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, Processus 794, ff.14v-15r; f.151v.

⁸¹ ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, Processus 794, ff.57r-65r.

⁸² On nuns and the ways in which they used relics to negotiate spiritual authority for themselves and transcend clausterization see Strasser, *State of Virginity*, particularly ch. 4. In addition, see Silvia Evangelisti's comments in her article 'Monastic Poverty and Material Culture in Early Modern Italian Convents', *The Historical Journal* 47 (2004):1-20, esp. 18.

money and profile could be raised for their owners very efficiently in the comfort of the supplicant's own home, and both were of vital importance during the canonization process for would-be saints. The Grand duchess Maria Maddalena de' Medici stands as a clear example of the way this process worked. An important patron of St. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi during her lifetime, the Grand Duchess was miraculously cured of a fever and pains by a reliquary of the saint given to her by Pazzi's convent Santa Maria degli Angeli. In gratitude she gave the convent 100 *scudi* and helped spread a belief in Pazzi's sanctity by strongly agitating for her canonization.⁸³

REGULATING RELICS AND CULTS: THE CLOAK OF SAVONAROLA

Through relics the profiles of other figures less well regarded by both civil and ecclesiastical authorities could be maintained and promoted, albeit sometimes clandestinely. As Lorenzo Polizzotto has clearly demonstrated, the shadow of Fra Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) was a legacy felt in Florence and beyond, well into the seventeenth century on both personal and political levels.⁸⁴ His shadow also casts light on many of the issues surrounding the permission and authorization of relics, their effectiveness and ambivalences.

Despite inciting the self-censorship of the Florentine populace during the famous 1497 and 1498 Lenten 'bonfires of the vanities', Savonarola himself was an object of various types of censorship both in death as in life, combining as he did pro-Republican polemics with a vituperative stance against papal and Medici power, and, furthermore, managing to be appropriated by the Protestant side posthumously. Under the direction of Archbishop Giulio de' Medici (later Pope Clement VII), the first Florentine provincial synod in 1517 confirmed strongly the eleventh session of the fifth Lateran council that had in 19 December 1516 banned any unauthorized preaching on spiritual matters whether by lay or religious persons (the Lateran council itself was held under Giulio's cousin Pope Leo X).⁸⁵ Intended to stem the flow of heretical ideas and criticism of corrupt clergy, both these legislations also demonstrated a more localised concern with preachers such as Francesco da Montepulciano, Teodoro di Giovanni and Francesco da Meleto who were continuing to preach those same apocalyptic and politically damaging sentiments of Savonarola in Florence. The preaching was seen as dangerous in inflaming and encouraging the already latent belief in the 'fra propheta' that so many Florentines had followed during the late-quattrocento, and undermining

⁸³ See Pacini, 'Due 'depositi' di S. Maria Maddalena', 176.

⁸⁴ Lorenzo Polizzotto, *The Elect Nation. The Savonarola Movement in Florence 1494-1545* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994). More recently see Stefano Dall'Aglio, *Savonarola e il savonarolismo* (Bari: Caccucci Editore, 2005).

⁸⁵ Karl Joseph von Hefele, *Historie des Conciles d'après les documents originaux*. 16 vols (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1907), VII, part II.

the Church with its anti-clerical fervour.⁸⁶ Directly after the death of Savonarola though, as Polizzotto has noted, when preaching couldn't take place in public, it took place in the home. Fleeing Florence, Pietro Bernardino spread his religious ideas in 'chasa sua' and in the houses of his *unti* or anointed followers until, under investigation from the Archiepiscopal Curia, he was captured, tortured, and burnt at the stake at the end of 1502.⁸⁷ Private houses permitted the circulation of alternative spiritual ideas and networks.

The space of the house as a locus for storing unorthodox or unauthorised religious ideas, is made clear in Lorenzo Violi's *Le Giornate*, written in the mid-cinquecento as an apologia for Fra Girolamo da Ferrara and circulated in manuscript form.⁸⁸ A successful state functionary who had previously recorded, transcribed and published Fra Girolamo's preaching, Violi's devotional book explicitly aimed to promote the ideas of that prophet 'mandato da Dio' by representing Savonarola's cycle of preaching through a series of vaguely Socratic dialogues. These dialogues are set inside the house of Sophya. The beginning of the book makes the reasons for this location transparent as Sophya questions Didymo why in fact they should be meeting at her house. Didymo responds that 'This that I want from you is not a thing for the piazza nor for the *mercato nuovo* and so I've come to your home instead.'⁸⁹ The domestic sphere therefore offered a concealing space that was unavailable in public areas like the market or the piazza, even though these were obviously the more usual places for preaching or conversations of 'importanza'. The setting of the home acts quite literally as a place of physical protection as well as acting as a metaphor for spiritual interiority.

In reality of course, the walls of the house and the boundaries between public and private were porous. In part, it is these unstable borders and the permeability of infection from inside to out which ruled so much of the Roman Inquisition, and established Rome and Florence as allies in the censorship of texts and preaching by, or in support of, Savonarola.⁹⁰ If the home's walls permitted the transfusion of ideas from person to person, they also transmitted ideas to people from the objects and texts that they housed. Objects, no less than people, functioned to engender and permit personal and unauthorized forms of devotion and credence. As the censorship of his writing has already been well examined, the final section of this chapter looks instead at Savonarola's

⁸⁶ See Roberto Rusconi, 'Predicatori e Predicazione (secoli IX-XVIII),' in *Storia d'Italia*, annali. 4. *Intelletuali e potere*, ed. Corrado Vivanti, 951-1037 (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 1981) 986-7.

⁸⁷ See Polizzotto, *The Elect Nation*, 130-132.

⁸⁸ Lorenzo Violi, *Le Giornate*, ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1996).

⁸⁹ Violi, *Le Giornate*, 9: 'Questo che io voglio da te non è cosa da piazza né da mercato nuovo, però sono venuto insino a casa tua'.

⁹⁰ Rotondò, 'Nuovi documenti'; Massimo Firpo and Paolo Simoncelli, 'I Processi Inquisitoriali contro Savonarola (1558) e Carnesecchi (1566-1567): una Proposta di Interpretazione,' *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* XVIII (1982): 200-252; Robert Klein, *Il Processo di Girolamo Savonarola* (Ferrara: Corpo Gabrielle Editore, 1998); Gigliola Fragnito, 'Girolamo Savonarola e la censura ecclesiastica,' *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 35 (1999): 501-529.

prohibition and persistence in houses (and therefore its inhabitants' spiritual landscapes) through private relic collecting.⁹¹

Alongside the power of words, the key role of material culture in disseminating dissident sentiments and creating a widespread diffusion of Savonarolan principles was recognised early on when Leo X (1513-1522) was Archbishop of Florence. This recognition underscored the way in which the domestic network actively created a cult of Savonarola. Despite the fact that immediately after the execution of Savonarola and his two fellow brothers both church and state authorities ensured that all ashes and body parts were thrown into the Arno, the remains of the friar just would not go away.⁹² As described by Marco Parenti, the Conventual monk and Inquisitor from Santa Croce, Fra Gherardo was '[...]ordered on behalf of the Archbishop that whatever person was said to have ashes or bones or teeth or effigies or casts or other relics of writing of the said friar Jeronimo in their house that had already been prohibited, were to bring them to the Vicar of the Archbishop, otherwise they would be found guilty and would be punished etc.' Parenti continued by noting that 'in reality, it was not possible to extinguish in Florence the belief in the sanctity of friar Jeronimo, where there were large numbers of his supporters both for religion as much as for reasons of state, and these things were a bitter reminder [to the authorities] because they were antagonistic to the new regime, and therefore, as said, were prohibited.'⁹³

Therefore the continuance of a cult of Savonarola's sanctity was on a very basic level linked as much to the objects or 'relics' of him secreted into and harboured inside the recesses of houses, as it was fostered by public or private utterance. The desire to control material artefacts was a desire to control the potential heresy that they embodied. The house, like the interior of a person, was a difficult space to govern, and both were spaces that inquisitorial searches and civil or ecclesiastical decrees could only ever partially illuminate and regulate. The inventories of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* only showed the objects that the inhabitants of the house wanted the State officials to see, and only one small picture of a 'Fra Girolamo' that clearly depicted Savonarola was

⁹¹ See also Patrick Macey, *Bonfire Songs: Savonarola's Musical Legacy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), which discusses the important role music had in maintaining a cult of Savonarola.

⁹² Roberto Ridolfi, *Vita di Girolamo Savonarola*. 2 vols (Rome: Alberto Belardetti Editore, 1952), I: 406.

⁹³ '[...] comandamento per parte dell' Arcivescovo, che qualunque persona dicessi d'havere in casa cenere o ossa o denti o effigie o impronte o altre reliquie di scripture già prohibite del detto frate Jeronimo [Savonarola], le portassi al Vicario dello Arcivescovo, altrimenti dopo tanti di s'intenderebbe in colpa e sarebbe gastigato etc. In effecto non si poteva spegnere qui in Firenze la openione della sanctità di frate Jeronimo, el quale ci haveva moltissimi partigiani si per religione et si per respecto dello stato, le quali chose non venendo a proposito del nuovo reggimento, erano aspramente, come s'è decto, prohibite.' As quoted in Joseph Schnitzer, *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte Savonarolas*, IV (Leipzig: Dunker & Humblot), 19, 305-307. See also Archbishop Alessandro de' Medici's letter to Grand Duke Ferdinand de' Medici in 26 August 1583 which noted that '[...] occultamente gli fanno l'Offitio [per Savonarola], come a martire; conservono le sue reliquie come se santo fussi; insino a quello stilo dove fu appiccato, i ferri che lo sostengono, li habiti, i capucci, le ossa che avanzorono al fuocho, le ceneri, il cilicio; conservono vino benedetto da lui, lo danno alli infermi, ne contono miracoli [...]'. The letter was first published in Cesare Guasti, *L'Officio proprio per fra Girolamo Savonarola* (Prato: Tipografia Guasti, 1863), 26-8.

listed throughout the entire timeframe of this study's sampling of inventories.⁹⁴ From the inventories it is impossible to say whether and in what quantity Savonarola's politics and his peculiar spirituality were kept alive through domestic *memento mori*. However, the number of surviving Savonarolan images (so assiduously collected by Ludovica Sebregondi) demonstrate how portraits of Savonarola circulated and functioned as important pictorial mnemonics for a quite ample lay and clerical market.⁹⁵ St. Filippo Neri, for example, had a picture of Savonarola with an aureole in his chambers at the Chiesa Nuova in Rome, and similarly, St. Caterina de' Ricci kept not only his portrait but also several relics pertaining to him in her cell at San Vincenzo in Prato.⁹⁶ The more corporeal relics of Savonarola that Fra Gherardo was ordered to eradicate certainly played a fundamental role in engendering devotion towards him.

The hagiographic literature on Savonarola that sprang up shortly after his death relies on the apocryphal role of his relics to prove his sanctity (or at least disprove his official position as heretic). His relics moreover draw attention to a gulf between public and private actions and belief. Chapter forty-five of an anonymous sixteenth-century treatise entitled *La vita del Beato Ieronimo Savonarola* notes how Savonarola 'was divided in many parts' and goes on to tell the rather grisly story of a young boy finding the friar's hand amid the smouldering remains of the preacher and taking it home as a 'great gift' for his devotee mother. Thrown into an *acquaio* by her husband, an 'enemy of the servant of God', the hand was finally retrieved through the machinations of the wife and her 'venerable' and goodly female friend who had the *acquaio* drained. Restored to the two ladies, the hand was promptly divided between them, and their respective halves hidden in their houses with 'the most revered veneration'.⁹⁷ The text explains how the *piagnoni* rescued Savonarola's remains and stealthily took them back to their homes to divvy up and store 'under gold and silver', noting how these 'sacred relics of this servant of God performed infinite miracles' and were used successfully for exorcism, healing illnesses or diseases, and helping women during

⁹⁴ ASF, MPP 2655, inventory of Raffaello di Giovanbattista Santa Croce, 2 January 1584, f.536v, in the *camerino a capo di scala* were '3 quadretti piccholi il Pico della Mirandola, Fra Girolamo e Dante di varie misure,' Francesco di Jacopo Partini had 'un quadro dentrovi Pico della Mirandola' in the *andito da capo di scala*, see ASF, MPP 2660, n.d. c.1622, f.736v.

⁹⁵ Ludovica Sebregondi, *Iconografia di Girolamo Savonarola 1495-1998* (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo per la Fondazione Ezio Franceschini, 2004).

⁹⁶ See Ivan Cloulas, *Savonarola o la Rivoluzione di Dio*, Italian ed. (1994; Casale Monferrato: Edizioni Piemme, 1998), 389; Sebregondi, *Iconografia*, 91-2.

⁹⁷ Piero Ginori Conti, ed., *La Vita del Beato Ieronimo Savonarola scritta da un anonimo del sec.XVI e già attribuita a fra Pacifico Burlamacchi* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1937), 185: '[...] un fanciullo, pensando di fare un gran presente a sua madre, che era divota del servo di Dio, ricolse una sua mano et portolla a sua madre dicendo: "Ecco la mano con le dita del vostro propheta", onde lei con allegrezza la ricevette; ma il suo marito, che era de' nimici del servo di Dio, udendo questo la prese et gittolla in uno acquaio. Allora questo donna ciò conferì con una venerabile donna da bene sua amica, la quale, colto il tempo, a sue spese fece votare quello acquaio et cavandone quella mano, se la divisono infra lor due sole [...]'. A similar story is told in Egisto Lotti ed., *Anonimo del secolo XVI, Il Cappello di Sangue. Vita, Confessione e Martirio di fra Girolamo Savonarola* (Vicenza, 1982), with the difference that the husband threw the hand into 'un luogo comune, senza di ciò farsi vedere'.

labour.⁹⁸ Like a devotional roll-call of health regained and demons vanquished, the miracles that his relics performed are the very ones that are stressed in the canonization trials of Andrea Corsini, Caterina de' Ricci and Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi. By meeting the expected standards, the miracles worked through the vestiges of Savonarola therefore became more credible in vindicating him and in establishing the legitimacy of his sanctity by giving extra weight to the calls for his canonization, even as they implicitly criticise those *bigi* and *arrabiati* who would doubt him (the relics themselves were bestowed with a punitive ability to criticize disbelievers more forthrightly).

That the relics of Savonarola continued to circulate at the end of the sixteenth century was a fact heavily criticised by the Archbishop of Florence Alessandro de' Medici. In a 1593 letter to Ferdinando I, the Archbishop observed how they were conserved as if he were a saint while his supporters furtively held office for him as a martyr.⁹⁹ *La vita del Beato Ieronimo Savonarola* provides a lengthy list of the people who conserved various relics of the preacher that functions almost like an itinerary for a tour of Savonarola's remains.¹⁰⁰ The list also records that Savonarola's cape was in the possession of Francesco Davanzati, a fact that perhaps would be of little interest if this cloak had not survived and come to the attention of the Florentine branch of the Roman Inquisition in the middle of the seventeenth century, which shared the very same concerns expressed by Alessandro de' Medici seventy years earlier.

In April 1663 the painter Vincenzo Dandini and the goldsmith Michelangelo Targioni were both questioned by Inquisitors regarding their purchase of a cloak that had belonged to Savonarola.¹⁰¹ Targioni began by protesting that he couldn't remember whether he had in fact bought anything at the sale of household possessions that included the friar's cape. He then stressed that if he had bought anything, he would have certainly bought it by himself. Despite the initial obfuscating tactics of Targioni, the history of the cape and how it fell into his and Dandini's possession becomes clearer.¹⁰² Prior to its acquisition by Targioni, Dandini, and their friend Carlo Ninci (who had died a year before the trial), the cloak had been kept in Signor Zanobio Mazzinghi's house in via della Scala. Upon Mazzinghi's death some three or four years previously, his goods had passed to the confraternity of the Buonhuomini di San Martino – an organisation historically

⁹⁸ Ginori Conti, *La Vita del Beato Ieronimo*, 187-189.

⁹⁹ ASF, MP 3294, f.623r: 'Fanno cose prosontuosissime; occultamente gli fanno l'offizio come a martire, conservono le sue reliquie come se santo fusse, insino a quello stilo dove fu appiccacato, i ferri che lo sostennero, li abiti, i cappucci, le ossa che avanzarono al fuocho, le ceneri, il cilicio, conservono vino benedetto da lui, lo danno alli infermi, ne cantono miracoli [...]', as quoted in Klein, *Il Processo*, xviii & n.35.

¹⁰⁰ Ginori Conti, *La Vita del Beato Ieronimo*, 187-9. See also P. Pacifico Burlamacchi, *Vita del P. F. Girolamo Savonarola, riveduta da P. F. Timoteo Botonio* (Lucca: Vincenzo Giuntini, 1761), 172; Luca Landucci, *Diario Fiorentino dal 1450 al 1516* (Florence: Sasoni, 1883), 177.

¹⁰¹ AAF, TIN 42.22, doc.1, *Deposizioni* (22 April 1663), ff.12r-14r.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, f.13v: 'Può esser Io habbi comprato qualche Cosa che sia stata di detto Signor Mazzinghi perche doppo ch egli fu morto le sue robbe, mobili, credo anco stabili, furono venduti alla Tromba, ma che robbe perche m'habbi comprato non mi ricordo [...] Se Io havevo comprato delle robbe di detto Signor Mazzinghi l'havevo sicuramente comprate solo.'

linked with Savonarola.¹⁰³ Although it had originally been in the hands of Davanzati prior to Mazzinghi's ownership of it, evidence from the Gondi archives suggests that Francesco di Giuliano Boni had with 'much money' bought a cape of Savonarola's. Through a succession of deaths and bequests, in 1571 Boni's cape arrived in the monastery of Santa Maria Novella the morning of St. Clemente with a reception of peeling bells and a celebratory *quarantore*.¹⁰⁴ During this time Santa Maria Novella was under the leadership of several Savonarolan-minded leaders, such as Alessandro Capocchi (prior from 1579-1581) and Girolamo de' Ricci (prior from 1581-1584). This institutional devotion to the Ferrarese friar can be seen in the insertion of his portrait amongst Dominican saints in frescoes by Santi di Tito and Bernardino Poccetti in the monastery that both date from this period (see fig.3.18a & b).¹⁰⁵ It is unclear whether Mazzinghi somehow re-appropriated the cape from the monastery of Santa Maria Novella or if in fact, another one of the friar's was in circulation and was desired by the monastery to make a pair. Nonetheless, by the time the confraternity decided to sell off Mazzinghi's effects at 'La Tromba' (a second-hand market in Florence) a hundred years later, a bidding war between the Dominicans of San Marco and Santa Maria Novella, the painter, the goldsmith and their friend in order to gain possession of the cloak was in play.¹⁰⁶ It was the last three individuals who successfully negotiated with the Confraternity to acquire Savonarola's coat for a *carità* of 15 *scudi*.¹⁰⁷

After this the movements of the cloak become unclear. Both the painter and the goldsmith agree that it was Carlo Ninci who, after about a year of infighting amongst themselves over how long it was to stay in each of their houses, decided to give it to a certain friar at San Marco. However, the identity of the friar was unknown to Dandini and Targioni, and no further comment in the trial alludes to where the coat was now to be found, whether it had been sequestered by the Inquisitors or had since moved on to another more stable home. In fact, the coat had by 1685 ended up back in the observant Dominican convent of San Marco - Savonarola's old home. It was gifted to the institution by Giacinto Maria Marmi, who had somehow acquired it through Mazzinghi's

¹⁰³ Antonietta Amati, 'Cosimo I e i Frati di S. Marco,' *ASI LXXXI* (1923): 227-277, 228.

¹⁰⁴ Archive Gondi nos. 57 & 58, 12 November 1573, 'Delle vicende di una cappa di Fra Girolamo Savonarola (I)' as transcribed in Ridolfi, *Vita*, 101-2. See also Sebregondi, *Iconografia*, 93.

¹⁰⁵ Sebregondi, *Iconografia*, 93, 107-10.

¹⁰⁶ AAF, TIN 42.22, doc.1, *Deposizioni*, 22 April 1663, f.12r, testimony of Vincenzo Dandini: '[...] i Padri di Santa Maria Novella et i frati di S. Marco facevano a gara per haverla [la cappa] [...] finalmente vi introposi Io col i suddetti compagni come dissi et usandogli Carità di quindici scudi la detta casa di S. Martino o perchè meglio i Buon'huomini la lasciorno a noi.'

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, f.12r, testimony of Vincenzo di Pietro Dandini: 'Saranno tre anni incirca che passò da questa a miglior vita il Signor Zenobio Mazzinghi Gentilhomio fiorentino che stava in via della Scala, onde occorrendo vendersi dalla Casa di S. Martino alcune sue massarizie di Casa, fra le gli v'era una Cappa del fu fra Girolamo Savonarola Domenicano molto ben noto in questa Città e perche Io per l'innanzi vivente anco di Signor Zanobio sapevo che l'haveva procurai haver la detta vesta insime con Michel' Angelo Targioni orefice in Ponte Vecchio e Carlo Ninci (è morte sarà un'anno) [...] ma perche i Padri di Santa Maria Novella, et i frati di S. Marco facevano a gara per haverla [...] finalmente vi intrposi [sic] Io col i suddetti compagni come dissi et usandogli Carità di quindici scudi la detta Casa di San Martino o perche meglio i Buon'huomini la lasciorno a noi [...]'

nephew Pietro after its brief custody in the hands of Dandini and Targioni.¹⁰⁸ Unlike, however, the rather grandiose reception afforded it at Santa Maria Novella, the *cappa* was kept ‘in secret’, although today it is there on public display alongside other relics of Savonarola (figs.3.19a & b, 3.20).¹⁰⁹

While the Inquisition’s ruling on the matter of the cloak is absent (if indeed any was made), Dandini’s and Targioni’s testimonies are interesting both for the disjunctions and concordances between their statements as much as the interest that the Church authorities were expressing over the Ferrarese friar’s personal effects. The two men took equal pains to explain to the Inquisitors that they were interested in the coat purely as an antique and not as a relic or ‘for any other ends such as to honour or revere it’. In fact, Targioni emphasised how he kept it in a room in his house alongside other antiquities.¹¹⁰ Dandini stressed that though he was interested in it ‘for simple curiosity and antiquity of the friar’, the cloak for him also served a practical purpose due to his profession as an artist by providing an historically accurate costume for his depiction of Dominican saints.¹¹¹ The statements implicitly reflect an awareness of the need to assure the authorities that their possession of Savonarola’s cloak was in no way associated with an anti-establishment devotion towards him, nor a belief in his particular form of millenarian ideology, as Targioni and Dandini highlighted how they didn’t perceive or use the cloak as a relic with any immanent religious value, but rather as an item imbued with a certain historicity. The Inquisition’s anxiety to establish how it got into San Marco, who put it there, and who kept it there, demonstrates their dissatisfaction with Targioni’s and Dandini’s answers and a more accurate understanding that it was linked to a continuing religious cult of the friar more than indicative of Florence’s civic history, a fact that the cloak’s provenance and subsequent storage ‘in secret’ confirms. The high price that the three men paid for the object, their arguments over its possession, and Targioni’s irritation that the Buonhuomini refused to honour their word by authenticating the cloak, similarly betray their testimony.¹¹² The case moreover shows how easily relics could be acquired on the open market

¹⁰⁸ Alessandro Gherardi, *Nuovi documenti e studi intorno a Girolamo Savonarola* (2nd ed., Florence: n.p., 1887), 364-66, quotes two documents dating 1686 and 1685 respectively: Archivio dei frati dei S. Marco, *Libro di ricordanze della Sagrastia di S. Marco* (Florence, 1586-1750, n.60, f.51v); Biblioteca Laurenziana, San Marco 906, *Ricordanze D* (1637-1780), f.68r.

¹⁰⁹ Magnolia Scudieri and Giovanna Rasario, eds. *Savonarola e le sue 'Reliquie' a San Marco. Itinerario per un percorso savonaroliano nel Museo* (Florence: Giunti, 1998), 55-57.

¹¹⁰ AAF, TIN 42.22, doc.1, *Deposizioni* (22 April 1663), f.14r, testimony of Targioni: ‘Io mi diletto assai d’antichità essendo la detta Cappa cosa antica parevo a caro haverla appresso di me per poterla porre col altre antichità ch’ho in una stanza della mia casa a’ parte, e non per altro fine come per honorala e riverirla [...]’.

¹¹¹ Ibid., f.12r: ‘[...]l’haveva procurai haver la detta vesta...] per semplice curiosità et antichità di detto frate [...]e la usai] oviamente ch’Io sono Pittore, e devo dipingere l’Immagini de diversi e particolarmente dei Santi Domenicani per vedere modo ch’usavano di vestire anticamente.’

¹¹² Ibid., f.14r: ‘In tanto Io tenni che fusse la cappa suddetta del Savonarola, perché quei Signori dei Buonhuomini dissero che era tale quando ne la venderno benche doppo ricevuti i denari da me, chidergli un attestazione che fusse del Savonarola cominciorno n’e deve e dire che loro a lo sapevano veramente ma che in casa del detto Mazzinghi cos dicevano a non volsero fare alcuna attestazione.’

and, disregarding personal disputes, how easily they could be transferred from one house to another, as much as between the domestic sphere of the house and the religious sphere of the monastery and back again. It also shows that the provenance and belief in a relic or would-be religious object and system could in fact originate and extend outwards from the home itself.

CONCLUSIONS

The increasing number of relics that appear in the inventories from the late-sixteenth century onwards helps to answer the question of when people more generally started to bring relics into their homes. However, the key question of why they should have started to do so at this particular historical juncture, is more complex and has no one simple answer. Nonetheless, this chapter has attempted to shed some light on the motivating factors for domestic relic collections. These factors can be summarised as follows.

Firstly, relic collecting can be located within a self-conscious tradition of *collezionismo* that emerged during the Renaissance. While scholars have tended to concentrate on secular collections of naturalia, artworks, antiquity, and humanism itself, the first three chapters of this thesis have demonstrated that religious objects and images also became increasingly collected and collated around the house by the end of the period studied. In many ways, relics must have represented the apogee of a system of pious artefacts, as they provided a legitimate and inviolate material form of intercession and sanctity that could be privately possessed and understood. The display of their peculiarly somatic quality and the material piety that they offered seems to have become increasingly desirable during the mid-cinquecento to mid-seicento. The legitimization of relics by the Church in the face of Protestant scepticism, and the increasingly public role they assumed directly after Trent, undoubtedly helped to ensure their popularity and their constitutive role in demonstrating Catholic orthodoxy.

Even though the relic market was an international affair, the rediscovery and exploitation of the Roman catacombs further engendered an interest in relics during the late-sixteenth century. The catacombs provided a sustainable and seemingly infinite source from which relics could be gathered, authenticated, sold or donated in a way that could establish individual or ecclesiastical relic collections quickly whilst embedding them loyally within the sacred geography and history of the Catholic Church. Aside from the Roman catacombs, the inventories suggest how relics were available in a wide range of forms, from a wide range of sources (that had varying degrees of legitimacy) and at a wide range of costs. It is, however, impossible to say whether supply led demand or vice versa, although, somewhat ironically, it does appear that relics became more available post-Trent.

For the Strozzi and Salviati families the display and function of relics at home emphasised the role played by their other relic collections that, like the chapel of St. Antonino, were more

publicly displayed around Florence. The saintly remnants stored at home may have been subsidiary collections of lesser importance, but an arm of St. Giusto and a box full of bits of Roman martyrs nonetheless conferred on their owners the prestige of possession and the insurance of personal protection and intercession. In addition, domestic relic collections could ensure the household's participation in the spiritual life of the city. As Sally Cornelison has demonstrated through the example of the Girolami family's ring of St. Zenobius, relics at home could attract an outside reputation.¹¹³ However, as their incorporation into the very fabric of domestic chapels evinces, they sanctified the household from within.

The case of Savonarola's cloak and the hagiographic literature that surrounded the Dominican preacher reveals that household relics could indeed garner a public reputation. It also suggests the way in which various material items could be transformed into relics through private devotion and how, in turn, private, and in this case illicit, devotion could be inculcated by material items.

For both families and religious institutions, relics played an important role in the currency of gift culture by prompting ties of allegiance and support. However, even within gift culture, relics, because of their healing properties, served a primarily functional role and because of this, having relics at home was an eminently sensible idea. As the examples of SS. Andrea Corsini and Caterina de' Ricci's remnants have shown, relics were useful devices against the dangers of the quotidian. They were easily employed in the service of sickness, pregnancy, labour, spiritual possession and all the other vicissitudes of everyday life that took place at home. The next chapter goes on to examine another stable religious item found in homes which was also employed in the pursuit of understanding and managing daily life and the after-life: the book.

¹¹³ Sally J. Cornelison, 'A French King'.

Chapter Four

BOOKS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter takes as its focus the devotional and spiritual texts found in inventories and houses from c.1480 to c.1650. In doing so it examines the issue of Church censorship and how this may have impacted on personal pious (or potentially impious) reading practices at home. By looking at the books found in the *Pupilli* inventories and their role in the remaining documents of the Florentine Inquisition, this section questions the religious reading habits of Florentines, the role the Church took to direct them, and the effect of the post-Trent indices.

Gigliola Fragnito's recent and meticulous work, based on the archives of the Congregation of the Index and the Holy Office in Rome, has examined in detail the activity of the Congregation since its establishment in 1571 up until the early seventeenth century, the application of the universal Tridentine indices and their impact on the Italian peninsula.¹ In particular, Fragnito has raised the important issue of the role that Ecclesiastical censorship had in limiting the cultural heritage of Italians and the accessibility of their own faith. Even though this chapter is not primarily concerned with investigating such issues, it inevitably responds to a prevalent strand of Counter-Reformation historiography that emphasizes the internalization (or 'autocoscienza') by the Italian populace of a systemic social discipline implemented by the Church through a wide range of devices.² Although the role of the confessional box, missionaries, schools of Christine Doctrine, and the Roman Inquisition have been examined thoroughly by scholars, one of the key devices, as understood by Fragnito and others, was the censorship by the Church which banned or severely restricted certain fundamental religious texts in the vernacular for lay readers.³ This thesis of social discipline, which

¹ See particularly Gigliola Fragnito, *La Bibbia al Rogo: la Censura Ecclesiastica e i Volgarizzamenti della Scrittura (1471-1605)* (Bologna: il Mulino, 1997); Fragnito ed., *Church, Censorship and Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Fragnito, *Proibito Capire. La Chiesa e il Volgare nella prima Età moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005).

² For trends in counter-reformation historiography see Ditchfield, 'In Search of Local Knowledge'; O'Malley, *Trent and All That*; Prosperi, 'Riforma Cattolica'; and the introduction in Wieste De Boer, 'Sinews of Discipline: The Uses of Confession in Counter-Reformation Milan' (PhD thesis, University of Rotterdam, 1995).

³ See for example De Boer, 'Sinews of Discipline' and *The Conquest of the Soul. Confession, Discipline and Public Order in Counter-Reformation Milan* (Köln: Brill, 2001); Miriam Turrini, "'Riformare il mondo a vera

taken to its logical end implies, not simply the removal of a certain freedom of individual piety, but little less than the loss of individual agency and the mental colonization of lay society. However, this relies on the troublesome assumption that public practices and precepts were not only uniformly established but were also replicated in private at home. It also implies a causal link between print and an enlightened modernity formed through Protestantism's unfettered access to the Bible. The relative nature of privacy and the complex way in which texts were used and understood is sidelined. As Chapter One has demonstrated in regard to *brevi*, texts could be used as objects possessing their own intrinsic apotropaic powers. Indeed, for the wealthy widow Isabella Serragli, the simple act of reading a devotional book was enough to trigger an erstwhile evil spirit to emerge confrontationally from a houseguest.⁴ The provocative role that books had in a range of 'superstitious' rites and remedies was not limited to Catholicism but, as Andrew Cambers has recently shown, extended to both sides of the confessional divide.⁵

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to fully document devotional 'reading' habits in the home or to establish the effect of censorship on those habits because of the impoverished nature of documentary sources, the sheer profusion of devotional texts and religious experiences that the sixteenth century witnessed, and the complex and highly specialised nature that any discussion of the book trade invariably requires. Nevertheless, the chapter aims to introduce and clarify some of the current arguments surrounding domestic book consumption in early modern Florence. To do so, this chapter begins by examining the number of books owned, where in the house they were stored, and which ones were kept at home. It then moves on to discuss the core spiritual texts for the reader during this period, drawing on original archival sources and an analysis of two large published studies of the books listed in the inventories of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* by Christian Bec and Armando Verde.⁶ Finally, it looks at the *libri di donne* (Books of Hours) that were kept at home in order to introduce a more general summary of the censorship of religious books in the vernacular, and the domestic consumption of spiritual literature.

WHO HAD BOOKS AND WHERE DID THEY KEEP THEM

vita Christiana": le scuole di catechismo nell'Italia del Cinquecento,' *Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento* 8 (1982): 407-489; Turrini, *La coscienza e le leggi: morale e diritto nei testi per la confessione della prima età moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991); Angelo Turchini, *Sotto L'occhio del padre: società confessionale e istruzione primaria nello stato di Milano* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1996); Adriano Prosperi, 'The Missionary,' in *Baroque Personae*, ed. Rosario Villari, 160-194 (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Prosperi, *Tribunali della coscienza: inquisitori, confessori, missionari* (Turin: Einaudi, 1996).

⁴ ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, Processus, 760, 1603, f.388v.

⁵ I would like to thank Dr. Cambers for letting me read his article 'Demonic possession, literacy, and superstition in early modern England' to be published in *Past and Present*.

⁶ Bec, *Les Livres des Florentins*; Armando F. Verde, 'Libri tra le pareti domestiche'.

Although more Florentines had images than books, according to the *Pupilli* inventories a surprisingly large proportion of the populace (almost 34%) had at least one book in their house by the 1540s, whether they were personal books, or printed or manuscript texts (see Appendix C).⁷ This figure, possibly symptomatic of a particularly high literacy rate in Tuscany and Florence, rose steadily so that by the 1620s over half of all estates sampled contained books or writings.⁸ These findings contrast sharply with those of Christian Bec in his important work *Les Livres des Florentins (1413-1608)*, which suggest that in fact only 5.2% of households for the period 1570-1608 contained books.⁹ The glaring disparity between our figures may be partly accounted for by the fact that Bec does not consistently include personal writings and books (such as *ricordi*, *zibaldoni*, letters or account books) within his survey, and also omits the numerous *libri di donne* found in the inventories from his statistics. Even if we are to be cautious by accepting a figure in excess of the one posited by Bec and less than the one this finding suggests, the data nonetheless shows a substantial increase in the number of households possessing books of some sort over the sixteenth century, and clearly demonstrates the impact that the printing press and the publishing industry had over the long term.

Although the largest libraries were invariably owned by the patrician and professional classes and tended to specialise in certain subjects such as humanist, legal, musical, ecclesiastic or scientific texts, there was a striking diversity in the make-up of book owners. Bakers, carpenters and other tradesmen as well as women were all recorded as owning books in the inventories. For example, Bartolomeo di Domenicho d'Antonio, a *cimatore* (cloth-shearer or 'topper'), owned two Books of Hours in 1496, while a book of the Nativity of Christ, a book of Psalms, and two other small books in vellum were recorded in the belongings of Madonna Ginevra (the daughter of Count Antoniomaria della Mirandola) in 1505.¹⁰ While the very poor inevitably did not own any books, a surprising number of extremely rich and apparently 'cultured' estates possessed few if any books at all. The absence of books in households that *should* have had them highlights both the potential unreliability of the inventories as a source, and the need to take into account the fluid exchange and circulation of books, as well as the ephemeral nature of texts and reading itself.¹¹

⁷ Sample taken from ASF, MAP 189, MPP 2648; 2651; 2655; 2657, 2660, 2661.

⁸ For Italian literacy rates of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries which hovered at 30-33% of males, see Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning 1300 – 1600* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989), and more recently his *Books and Schools in the Italian Renaissance* (London: Variorum, 1995), 453 & 779. On humanist and Latinate educations see Robert D. Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁹ Bec, *Les Livres*, 91.

¹⁰ See Verde, 'Libri tra le parete', 171 & 200.

¹¹ The failure of books to be recorded may be due less to their absence and more to the habit of redacting books in a specialised inventory elsewhere. While this appears to have been more typical of a family's own private inventories, occasionally within the *Pupilli* files themselves an individual's books or different properties may be listed in a separate *filza*. See for example the case of Neri di Jacopo Neri's estates, where

The growth in estates owning books was matched by the simultaneous increase of the numbers of books owned. For example, by the 1620s, libraries in excess of one hundred books were no longer the rarity that they were 200 years previously. According to Christian Bec's figures, the largest domestic book collection inventoried in the *Pupilli* for the first half of the fifteenth century consisted of little more than fifty volumes.¹² Even though the vast majority of libraries studied by Christian Bec from the beginning of the fifteenth until the beginning of the seventeenth centuries consisted of less than five volumes, by the mid-sixteenth century the number of estates possessing six to twenty volumes rose showing a pattern very similar to the ownership of images as discussed in Chapter Two.¹³

In terms of where these books were found, they were predominantly kept within urban residences with smaller numbers listed within villas or *case da signori*. Despite the prevalent notion of the humanist villa, there appears to have been a religious bias to the books permanently kept in them.¹⁴ The fact that in the 1650s both Senator Lelio Quaratesi and Anton' Maria Pitti kept missals at their country residences clearly points to the religious patronage that extended outwards from villa complexes.¹⁵

The inventories show how books were dispersed throughout the home and placed in numerous types of containers, although by the middle of the seventeenth century furniture types dedicated to books were well established. By the beginning of the fifteen hundreds containers or shelving specifically designed to store books in the domestic context such as 'armadi', 'scaffali', 'studioli', 'credenzoni per i libri' and 'rastrelli da libri' started to appear in inventories. However, it was the multi-functional chest, box, or basket (*forziere, cassa, cassone, scanietta, zana* and *tamburo*) that provided the main form for storing books throughout the timeframe and it was in a *cassone* that both Pitti's and Quaratesi's missals was kept.¹⁶ As the majority of libraries consisted

his books are listed in detail in ASF, MPP 2712 [Campione], (n.d., c.1599), ff.208r-211v, and not in ASF, MPP 2657, ff. 290r-291r.

¹² For *Pupilli* file 2660 (1617-1620), each household that contained books whose quantity was listed possessed an average of fifty-seven, with several estates holding collections between one hundred to two hundred volumes and two estates containing in excess of four hundred volumes each. On the quantity of volumes in houses listed in the *Pupilli* files for the years 1413-1453, see Bec, *Les Livres*, 20-21. Susan Connell, drawing on Venetian inventories between 1345-1480, similarly notes that most early book collections were small and that the largest did not exceed forty volumes. See Susan Connell, 'Books and their Owners in Venice,' *JWCI* 35 (1972): 163-186, 163.

¹³ Bec, *Les Livres*, 91-21.

¹⁴ For example PierMaria di Pagol' Antonio Pazzi kept only the 'Giardino d' esempli' and a 'trattato della frequente comunione' at his villa di San Cervagio in the 1620s, whilst Lionardo di Simone Niccolini's *casa da padrone* stored a Book of Hours and a copy of the *Vita di Santi Padri*. See ASF, MPP 2660, f.336; f.124v & 106r-v respectively.

¹⁵ ASF, MPP 2661, ff.308r-311v & f.916r.

¹⁶ On storage for books and the evolution of this furniture, see the subsection on panelling, fitted desk units, sets of furnishings, desks, bookshelves and cabinets of chapter three in Dora Thornton, *The Scholar and His Study*, 53-76; and Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior*, 222-233. Alongside the inventories, see the testimony of Bastiano, in AAF, CCR, PP 04.2, *Bastiano di Giuliano di Lino, per possesso di libri proibiti*, 7 September 1549, unpaginated.

of between one to ten books, containers such as chests provided an accessible, convenient, and space-efficient method of keeping books safe alongside other heterogeneous household items.

Chests filled with books were listed in *sale, saloni, salotte*, storerooms (*dispensa*), tutors' and servants' chambers, workshops, kitchens, churches and monasteries, and various other nooks and crannies. Nonetheless, religious books did tend to concentrate within one of four room types. For families possessing one, the domestic chapel or its adjoining sacristy unsurprisingly tended to house the family missal, with breviaries, spiritual books and hymnals also occasionally recorded there.¹⁷ The second major room type where religious texts were found was the study (*scrittoio* or *studiolo*). Around one fifth of books and writings in the sampling were kept in studies, and for those who owned substantial numbers of books, the main collection was usually kept in *scrittoi* or sometimes in *guardarobe*.¹⁸ While religious and secular books were shelved together in studies or *guardarobe*, the religious books stored there were of a different nature to the subsidiary collections housed elsewhere. The religious books in these 'libraries' tended to be theological texts or tomes than dealt with doctrinal issues, like the eighteen volumes of the works of St. Thomas stored alongside 665 other books in Giulio de' Medici's *guardaroba* in 1599.¹⁹

Even though a *scrittoio* was the typical location for the bigger and more specialised book collections that generally belonged to the elite, for the majority of households books were kept elsewhere. Domenico di Giuliano Bondicchi da Certaldo, explained to the Florentine Inquisition in 1642 how eight years ago he had bought and read prohibited works including anti-clerical and heretical texts by the notorious Ferrante Pallavicino (1615-1644). When questioned about where he kept the books Bondicchi simply responded that it was 'in my chamber on a shelf'.²⁰ In fact, Bondicchi's place to store books, if not the choice of texts, was typical of this entire timeframe.

¹⁷ See for example ASF, MPP 2661, inventory of Cav. Vincenzo Bardi, 14 October 1650, ff.398v-9r; MPP 2660, inventory of Messer Alessandro & Filippo Bacherelli, 1 June 622, f. 725 and the visitation report of Neri Capponi's oratory in AAF, *Oratori* 2, 9 September 1610, unpaginated.

¹⁸ By the end of the sixteenth century, studies appear to have assumed some of the functions of libraries or 'biblioteche' (a room type that was itself never mentioned within the domestic ambience of the inventories). The absence of texts within 'scrittoi' and 'studioli' becomes especially conspicuous when reading inventories of wealthier families as these room and furniture types in theory provided a purpose built space for reading and writing, as well as the secure display of personal collections. On the history and functions of the Italian study, see Thornton, *The Scholar and His Study* and Wolfgang Liebenwein, *Studiolo* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1977).

¹⁹ ASF, MPAP 2657, f.164. Other libraries containing the works of St. Thomas Aquinas or large theological collections include MPAP 2660, inv. of PierMaria di Pagol'Antonio Pazzi (c.22 September 1619), f.353v; abd MPAP 2657, inv. of Muzio di Tomaso di Alessandro Manelli (c.1598), f. 27v; and the inventories of Torquato Malaspina (1595) and Antonio di Niccolao Forti da Pescia (1584) as listed in Bec, *Les Livres*, pages 280-84 and 284 respectively.

²⁰ AAF, TIN 39.31, doc. 1 (15 November 1642), unpaginated: 'in camera mia in uno scaffare'. Bondicchi sent to the Inquisitor's office five volumes by the condemned apostate Pallavicino including 'La Susanna', and two he described as 'La rete di Vulcano' and 'La Talichea'. He also sent in three volumes by Giovambattista Marino (1569-1625), and a novel called 'le Trinchiate', stating that he did so after he was informed by a passing *libraio* that these books were prohibited and that 'io havevo scropolo [sic] in detto libri onde fassoli vedere et essendomi detto esser tali, presti il medisimo partito per a star sotto le scomuniche'.

Just under two thirds of books listed in the inventories were kept in *camere* or *anticamere*. As the vast majority of book collections were small and mainly comprised of religious texts, it becomes apparent that religious books were normally kept within *camera*. As suggested above, even within households with large book collections, certain types of texts were generally stored apart from the main book library and kept in the *camera* instead. For example, Giulio de' Medici's estate shows that separate from the main library of the *guardaroba* were smaller collections of texts littered throughout the *camere* of the house. These consisted solely of personal writings and devotional texts. Among the books listed in chambers were a breviary, five 'offitioli della madonna', 'la settimana santa', and the 'somma de' sacramenti'.²¹ In a similar fashion, Cosimo di Domenico di Franco Cioli da Settignano had some sixty-seven books in his Florentine house when his estate was taken in 1619, keeping in the *anticamera* five books whose titles were not recorded and fifty-six musical texts. In addition to a copy of Orlando Furioso and a book 'On the Nature of Food and Drink', Cioli also owned and kept in the main bedchamber a printed catechism, a book of spiritual lauds, a *Pistole et vangeli*, as well as the 'Guida de' peccatori' by Luigi da Granada.²²

The different room types where books were kept thereby signifies a difference in the nature of the texts themselves. Importantly, the *camera* was the only place where a distinction between religious and secular texts was made, given that religious works predominated there. The examples of Medici's and Cioli's collections highlight how certain works were not perceived as part of a 'library' but rather as texts serving an everyday function. As the first three chapters have already shown, the *camera* was the locus for all the devotional miscellanea of the household, and so the space itself indicates that the books stored there were valued, used and perceived in different ways and probably by different users. It shows that the books kept there were read with a degree of intimacy and frequency that books found elsewhere might lack. However, the nature of the religious texts that were kept in these rooms and whether they changed over the period is more difficult to define, and is the issue to which this chapter now turns.

²¹ In the *camera sulla sala* was 'Una guancialetto coperto di raso azzurro, riccamoto d'oro con sua spera e libro della Madonna' and a 'libretto da scrivere e far ricordi'; in the *Anticamera della Casa* were private inventories and '1 offitiolo della Madonna'; in the *Camera di mezzo sopra la volta* were '1 breviario, 1 libro di philosophia, 3 offitioli della Madonna et 1 della setamana Santa'; in the *Camera a tetto* '4 libretti in stampa volgari et 1 libretto della settimana santa, 1 libro di somma de' sacramenti et Un'altra della sacra scrittura coperto di carta pecora et 1 libro della Vanità del mondo', ASF, MPP 2657, ff.80v, 82r, 84v, 87r, 110v, 125v-126r.

²² ASF, MPP 2660, f.72r-74v: '1 libro in stampa in ottavo chiamato il Catechismo la prima parte delle Storie di Giorno in stampa in ottavo, 1 libro in stampa in quarto cioè braltalo [sic] della natura de cibi del bere [...] 1 furioso in stampa in quarto folio, 1 libro di laude spirituali in ottavo, 1 libro delle Pistole et vangeli in ottavo, 1 libro cioè la Guida de Peccatori di fra Luigi da Granata in sedici [...] 2 libri in stampa in ottavo di varii autori'; f.92r: '56 libri di Musica et intavolatura di diverse sorti, 1 libro in stampa in ottavo, 1 libro in d stampa quarto, 1 libro di stampa in ottavo [...].'

WHAT BOOKS WERE IN HOMES

The topic of what books Florentines kept at home has been the focus of a myriad of individual studies of humanists' and patricians' libraries, although there have been two studies whose focus was larger in scope.²³ Of the latter two, Christian Bec's *Les Livres des Florentins (1413-1608)* published in 1984 has provided the benchmark for studies of this sort regarding Florence.²⁴ Bec's publication, drawing on a methodological patrimony of the *Annales* School and an interest in Florentine humanism, is an analysis of books found in 582 estates of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* inventories. The main function of Bec's study was to gauge the *mentalité* and intellectual taste of renaissance Florentines through the books they owned whilst simultaneously underlining the function of texts as a means of cultural circulation and exchange. While Bec was publishing his survey of books found in Florentine houses, Armando Verde was working on a similar type of project that was eventually published in 1987.²⁵ Verde's article is a complete transcription of all references to books he found within the *Pupilli* inventories between 1473 and 1508, accompanied with detailed annotations suggesting the publication history of individual works and a further bibliography.²⁶ Verde's findings on the whole are consistent with Bec's and point towards a growth in the presence of classical and contemporary authors over the sixteenth century, and a Florentine culture that although in continual evolution remained at heart conservative.²⁷

Regarding religious texts, Bec's findings can be summarised as follows. Religious books dominated collections from the beginning of the fourteen hundreds until the middle of the sixteenth century, accounting fairly consistently for around a third of all books owned. Over the entire timeframe Bec surveys, religious works were present in between 72% to 87% of all households that had books.²⁸ However, after 1570 Bec found that the percentage of religious works dropped from approximately 30% to account for only 11.83% of books. In contrast, the rather broadly defined

²³ For example, see Albina De La Mare, 'Cosimo and his Books,' in *Cosimo "il Vecchio" de' Medici*, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis, 115-56 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); De La Mare 'The Library of Francesco Sassetti (1421-90),' in *Aspects of the Italian Renaissance: Essays in Honor of P. O. Kristeller*, ed. Cecil Clough, 160-201 (Manchester, 1976); James Hankins, 'Cosimo de' Medici as a Patron of Humanistic Literature,' in *Cosimo "il Vecchio"*, ed. Ames-Lewis, 69-94; G. Fiocco, 'La Biblioteca di Palla Strozzi,' in *Studi di Bibliografia e di storia in Onore di Tammaro de Marinis*, 2 vols. 2: 289-310 (Verona: Stamperia Valdonega, 1964); For a full if slightly dated listing of all studies on Florentine libraries and book owners, see Verde, 'Libri tra le parete', 12-38.

²⁴ Bec, *Les Livres*.

²⁵ Verde, 'Libri tra le parete'. See also Verde, *Lo studio fiorentino, 1473-1503: ricerche e documenti*, 3 vols. (Pistoia: Apresso 'Memoriae Dominicane', 1973-7).

²⁶ The date range encompasses complete or partial files from ASF, MAP 172 to 183. Verde does not consistently transcribe in detail the lists of personal or business books such as *ricordanze* or books of accounts found within the homes.

²⁷ Verde, 'Libri tra le parete', 204.

²⁸ Bec, *Les Livres*, 23, 39, 55, & 116-117

category of 'technical treatises', humanist texts, and classical Greek literature all increased significantly.²⁹

Bec attributes the sudden drop in the ownership of religious books to a diminishing number of sacred texts in the vernacular owned by households, briefly drawing attention to the censorship put in place by the Congregation of the Index.³⁰ In particular, Bec links the Church censorship of vernacular spiritual literature to the declining fortune he perceives of one of the most popular books in Florentine homes over at least one hundred and fifty years: the *Pistoli e Vangeli* (or Gospels).³¹ Moreover, he identifies a distinct shift in spirituality through the books inventoried. This shift is understood as having a Counter-Reformation flavour and takes place after Bec's so-called 'Savonarolan' period dating from the end of the fifteenth up until the middle of the sixteenth century. Bec identifies the Tridentine reforms as having had a clearly discernable impact on reading habits in the period from 1570 to 1608 not only in a decrease of such fundamental texts as the *Evangelii*, but also through the 'triumph of Thomism', the codification of disciplined religious practices by a rising number of books on confession and communion, and the success of works by international preachers such as Luigi da Granada.³²

In reality though these figures and conclusions are slightly more problematic. As Bec himself remarks, the fall in the number of religious books owned by households appears as a somewhat surprising paradox given the expanding publication of devotional texts and 'libri spirituali' and their wider dissemination among the laity and the clergy towards the end of the sixteenth century in Italy.³³ Paul Grendler's examination of the Venetian books industry from 1550 to 1606 shows how during this period the publication of books with religious subject matter more than doubled to account for over a third of the market (35.5%) while the production of secular vernacular literature dropped from a third (32.7%) to less than a quarter (22.2%).³⁴ In fact, Ugo Rozzo has noted that throughout all the Italian states, by the mid-cinquecento religious texts

²⁹ Ibid., 67.

The category '*ouvrages techniques*' encompasses, among other miscellaneous books, law, medical, scientific, military and agricultural treatises, comportment and travel literature, commentaries, texts by canonists, and church decrees.

³⁰ This shift in religious works Bec notes can also be seen to correspond to Adriano Prosperi's observation that by the 1570s, the sense of emergency against the threat of Protestantism had ceased, and the Inquisition subsequently turned more to the policing of morals rather than doctrine: see Prosperi, *Tribunali della coscienza*.

³¹ Bec, *Les Livres*, 98 & 118.

³² Ibid., 88-81, & 120.

³³ Edoardo Barbieri and Danilo Zardin, *Libri, Biblioteche e Cultura nell'Italia del Cinque e Seicento* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero Università, 2002):5-7; Barbieri, 'Tradition and Change in the Spiritual Literature of the Cinquecento,' in *Church, Censorship and Culture in Early Modern Italy*, ed. Gigliola Fragnito, 111-131 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 113.

³⁴ Paul F. Grendler, 'The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540-1605,' *The Journal of Modern History* 47 (1975): 48-65, 54-5.

constituted more than half of the printing industry's entire production.³⁵ In contrast to Bec's figures, Grendler's and Rozzo's suggest that the expanding range of religious titles that were more widely available must have found a counterpart in the increased consumption and ownership of devotional texts.

In fact, Bec's own figures show that the proportion of households owning religious works increased even if the percentage of such texts fell overall in proportion to secular books. This point is significant and warns against any easy assumption of the secularisation of reading habits. Bec's figures regarding the domestic ownership of religious books are analogous to this thesis's findings regarding religious images in Chapter Two. Even though the overall percentage of both declined in relation to their secular counterparts over the period, their numbers remained constant. This demonstrates how rather than becoming less popular, religious books like religious images were instead somewhat obscured by the few large and often specialist libraries whose sheer quantity of books with a wider-ranging repertoire of subject matter invariably distorts everyday ownership and reading patterns.³⁶

Similar again to the findings regarding images in Chapter Two, for households possessing just one book, that book was almost always of a spiritual nature – a prevalence that decreased relative to the number of volumes inventoried. Indeed, there was a wide distinction between the small number of wealthier estates, which possessed theological or canonical texts and the Sacred Scriptures in Latin, and those smaller book collections that continued to constitute the majority of domestic libraries in Florence. For the latter type of household, commonplace and usually vernacular devotional texts including translations from the Bible, collected sermons and hagiographies appear to have remained the most diffuse and widely owned books over the entire period just as they constituted the major part of religious books published.

Bec's conclusions need to be examined more closely by questioning the source of the *Pupilli* inventories, as well as relating the findings back to domestic book consumption and reading practices and the possible effects of secular and ecclesiastical censorship on texts such as the *Vangeli*. In addition to the usual caveats regarding probate studies as documentary evidence, and more specifically those relating to the *Pupilli* files as discussed in the Introduction, a survey of books encounters its own peculiar problems.³⁷ When looking at books in homes through inventories and then attempting to relate them back to a cultural *zeitgeist*, several particular issues

³⁵ Ugo Rozzo, *Linee per una storia dell'editoria religiosa in Italia (1465-1600)* (Udine: Forum Editrice, 1993), 7-20. See also Barbieri, 'Tradition and Change', 119-20.

³⁶ Using Bec's figures, it is possible to calculate that the number of religious books per household averaged 1.4 (for the period 1413-1453); 1.2 (1467-1520); 1.2 (1531-1568); 1.4 (1570-1608). See Bec, *Les Livres*, 116-7.

³⁷ On the limitations of Bec's methodology and inventories, see Giovanni Ciappelli, 'Libri e Letture a Firenze nel XV secolo. Le "ricordanze" e la Ricostruzione delle Biblioteche Private,' *Rinascimento* XXIX (1989): 267-292.

arise. These include the difficulty of discerning the timeframe in which books were acquired and how they were acquired (problems compounded by the nature of a Florentine society which tenaciously conserved, reused and recycled everything - especially when it was written). The inventories also obfuscate the texts' editions and date of publication. Incidences of book loaning or the possibility of several owners remain undisclosed, as does the identity of their readers, how they were read (whether to the self or to a group), or indeed if they were read at all. In addition, inventories ignore the possibility of what Eduardo Barbieri and Danilo Zardin have termed 'virtual or mental libraries': that is, the ability for texts to be stored, shared, and transformed through memory.³⁸ However, without doubt, the largest problem of using inventories to study reading habits and book ownership is the difficulty in ascertaining the exact nature and numbers of the books that Florentines kept at home. Bec somewhat glosses over his observation that the number of books able to be identified dropped dramatically from 71% to 26% during the timeframe he studies, and further compounds the problem by not always accurately recording the books in the inventories, and excluding personal writings such as *zibaldoni*, *libri di famiglia* or *ricordanze* which could function as important types of commonplace books.³⁹

In a large number of inventories, notaries would simply record that the estate contained a specific quantity of books in folio, octavo or quarto editions. Sometimes it was specified whether books were in Latin or the vernacular, or if they dealt with religious subjects. However, all too frequently generic expressions such as a 'più', 'qualche', 'tanti libri', or simply 'libri' were employed to denote book collections.⁴⁰ As suggested by Bec's figures, such practice became increasingly standard from the late-sixteenth century onwards. This was doubtless due to the impact of the publishing industry, the lower market prices for texts, and the accumulation of books through many generations – all factors that resulted in households possessing an increased number of books whose prices could be estimated collectively. This shift in the way books were recorded in inventories shows how, as the numbers of books in homes increased, they ceased to be regarded as rare or individually precious items, and subsequently the desire and necessity to record or

³⁸ Barbieri and Zardin, *Libri, Biblioteche e Cultura*, 23.

³⁹ Bec, *Les Livres*, 14-16, 92-3. Anxious to provide a more accurate and full listing, see Verde's criticisms regarding Bec's study in 'Libri tra le pareti', 8. Unfortunately, Bec's data has been relied upon for other studies such as Dale Kent's appendix of *zibaldoni* or *quadernucci*, see Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici and the Florentine Renaissance. The Patron's Oeuvre* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 385-86. On Florentine *ricordanze*, see P. J. Jones, 'Florentine Families and Florentine Diaries in the Fourteenth Century,' *Papers of the British School at Rome* 24 (1956): 183-205; Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, 'Comptes et Mémoire: L'écriture des Livres de Famille Florentins,' in *L'écrit dans la société médiévale: divers aspects de sa pratique du XI^e au XV^e siècles*, ed. Caroline Bourlet and Annie Dufour, 251-258 (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1991); Giovanni Ciappelli, 'La devozione domestica nella ricordanze fiorentine (fine XIII- inizio XVI secolo),' *Quaderni di Storia Religiosa* 3 (2001): 79-115; the special edition on 'Écritures et Mémoire Familiale,' *Annales* 59 (2004): 785-858. On the 'literary' nature of *libri di famiglia*, see William J. Connell, 'Libri di famiglia and the Family History of Florentine Patricians,' *Italian Culture* 8 (1990): 279-292.

⁴⁰ For the expressions used in the *Pupilli* inventories see Verde, 'Libri tra le pareti', 9-11.

enumerate each volume was lost. The fact that the majority of books' titles and authors in households was never disclosed in later inventories could significantly change the conclusions of both Bec's and Verde's studies. It also renders a quantitative study of domestic reading habits near impossible when using the *Pupilli* inventories as the main source from the mid-sixteenth century onwards.⁴¹ Indeed, a sampling of inventories from the *Pupilli* file 2660 (1617-22) shows that while 56% of estates had at least one book, less than half of these books were listed in specific numbers. Of those books (some 1,711 texts), the subject matter was only given in 5% of cases.⁴² This means that an estimated 97% of books noted in the *Pupilli* inventories during the 1620s are completely unidentifiable.⁴³

In terms of religious books, problems are compounded by the discrepancy between often manifold editions of devotional literature or spiritual tracts and their lack of identifiable presence within homes. Despite Bec's assertion of a discernable Savonarolan period evident in the *Pupilli* files, similar to the lack of images of him noted in Chapter Three, relatively few works written by him were listed in inventories during the late-quattrocento to mid-cinquecento. However, the fact that Florentine printers published at least 150 editions of his sermons and pamphlets in less than nine years (from 1489 to 1498), attests to a greater consumption and dissemination of Savonarola's teachings than can be accounted for by the inventories alone.⁴⁴ In the absence of clear documentation it seems reasonable that print runs and other sources can help furnish us with a more accurate idea of the individual books collected. For example, Barbieri and Zardin have highlighted how works of Spanish spirituality by authors such as Lorenzo Scupoli were extremely popular in the seventeenth century running through numerous editions.⁴⁵ Inventories and documents from the mid-cinquecento onwards highlight how authors such as Francesco Panigarola, Silvano Razzi, Vincenzo Bruni, Lodovico Pittorio, Fra Diego Stella, Francesco Sansovino, Bartolomeo Lantana, and as Bec had noted, Luis of Granada, assumed some of the importance that the texts of Cherubino da Spoleto, Roberto Caracciolo, pseudo Bonaventura, Leonardo da Udine, Domenico Cavalca, Boethius, Jacopo de Voragine, and St. Antoninus had held in Florentine homes during the quattrocento: albeit often by simply producing new editions of these earlier authors' publications

⁴¹ While Bec notes the results of two other French studies where the number of books impossible to identify was calculated at 78% and 68%, he rather vaguely states that 'pour notre part, le pourcentage des livres 'muets' semble largement inférieur [à ceux figures]': Bec, *Les Livres*, 14-15. For the seventeenth-century *Pupilli* inventories that I have looked at, very rarely are titles of books noted, a tendency that is also noticeable in private family archives.

⁴² Figures from 71 estates sampled in ASF, MPP 2660 (1617-22).

⁴³ Cf. Isabella Palumbo-Fossati, 'Livres et Lecteurs,' 483, n.4.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 205-6; Victor Scholderer, 'Printers and Readers in Italy in the Fifteenth Century,' *Proceedings of the British Academy* 1949 (1949): 25-48, 34-5. On the censorship of Savonarola in the Indices see Gigliola Fragnito, 'Girolamo Savonarola e la Censura Ecclesiastica,' *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 35 (1999): 501-529, and Massimo Firpo and Paolo Simoncelli, 'I processi inquisitoriali contro Savonarola (1558) e Carnesecchi (1566-1567): una proposta di interpretazione,' *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* 18 (1982): 200-252.

⁴⁵ Barbieri and Zardin, *Libri, Biblioteche e Cultura*, 17-19.

and thereby allowing medieval texts to co-exist within ‘new’ titles.⁴⁶ For example, the continued presence of *Lo Specchio della Croce* and the *Vite dei Santi Padri* in inventories alongside the consistent republications, reworking and re-editing of Domenico Cavalca’s texts by modern authors throughout the entire period surveyed, further points towards a deep sense of spiritual continuity as much as any true shift.⁴⁷ Similarly, sixteenth-century writers were also rewritten into more popular formats, so that Andrea Gianetti da Salò’s *Rosario della sacratissima Vergine Maria*, based on the writings of Luis de Granada, had thirteen editions alone from its first publication in 1572 until 1593.⁴⁸ This seemingly endless recycling of texts from innumerable religious books highlights the commercial savvy of publishers and authors who understood that a well-trusted formula would sell, but that people were more likely to buy a familiar text if it was advertised as substantially new or at least ‘di nuovo rivista et ampliata’.

Confessionali, catechisms, and books simply noted as ‘on Christian doctrine’ do appear to be recognised more by the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* officials in later inventories, thereby suggesting the increasing ubiquity of these subjects. These later inventories also demonstrate a rising number of both breviaries and missals, sometimes specified as ‘new’ and therefore one of the reformed Tridentine editions. Missals and breviaries were often noted as elaborately bound or in cases or covers. For example, in the middle of the seventeenth century, Pagolo di Jacopo Mormorai owned a missal for the *chiesina* of his villa at Ponte a Sieve replete with a custom-made fabric slipcover.⁴⁹ Similar to the veiling of pictures, slipcovers protected not just books’ valuable bindings but also their sacred contents. Despite the advent of print reducing the intrinsic cost of these books, slipcovers for missals, breviaries, and primers were often listed in later inventories (see for example fig.4.1), and surviving examples show how they continued to have ornate and expensively customised bindings (see figs. 4.2-4.4).⁵⁰ These accoutrements demonstrate the fundamental importance and value of these liturgical texts, and the material artistry with which they were endowed. Although the liturgical reforms of the sixteenth century necessitated large print runs for both these books, their more noticeable presence among household possessions appears to be

⁴⁶ Verde, ‘Tra le pareti’, 207. See also Anne Jacobson Schutte, *Printed Italian Vernacular Religious Books 1465-1550: A Finding List* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1983).

⁴⁷ *Specchio di croce* by Domenico Cavalca (c.1270-1341) had fifteen editions in the quattrocento and twenty-nine in the cinquecento. However, from around the mid-sixteenth century onwards, Cavalca’s name was usually omitted from the authorship, with new prints being edited by Remigio Nannini and Francesco Turchi da Treviso in 1565 and 1568 respectively: see Barbieri, ‘Tradition and Change’, 117-8; Barbieri and Zardin, *Libri, biblioteche, e cultura*, 6-7. The fact that Cavalca’s text was still being published in the seicento can be discerned from a 1596 publication issued by the Florentine printers Francesco Tosi and entitled ‘Libro intitolato Specchio di Croce overo Breve Trattato della Santa Croce dove si mostrano le virtù eccellenze e miracoli fatti da molti santi pmezò della stessa croce raccolto da più autori dal sopradetto Fra Timoteo [Ricci]’, ACDF, Index, Vol.XVIII/I, f.351r.

⁴⁸ See Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose*, 60.

⁴⁹ ASF, MPP 2660, f.368r: ‘1 guanciaie di drappo giallo et altri colori per il messale.’

⁵⁰ Bernardino di Marco Bartoli’s estate in 1524 was typical in its listing of ‘3 libriccini di donna col serrami darento vestiti di drappo’, ASF, MAP 189, f.274r.

accounted for by the growing domesticisation of the liturgy due to the late-sixteenth-century boom in household chapels (see Chapter Five).⁵¹

In addition to the missals and other books of Christian doctrine that were found within homes, Florentine publishers' lists from 1596 show how print houses were producing (and often in numerous editions) religious texts by now largely forgotten authors. Included as authors within the lists were the Jesuits Francesco Arias and Giovanni Benigla, the seemingly prolific and popular Augustinian monk Fra Timoteo Ricci, the Genevan Fra Silvestro Facio, and the Florentine monks Serafino and Girolamo Silvano Razzi.⁵² A domestic audience was the key target for many of these books, such as the pocket-sized editions of *La Vita della Madonna* and *Della economia christiana e civile* by the *camaldolese* Silvano Razzi (1527-1611) and published by Giunti.⁵³ Specifically aimed at the upper-classes (or at least those aspiring towards such an appellation), Silvano's *economia* provided a Catholic counterpart to the household and its art collections as formulated later on in Raffaello Borghini's *Il Riposo* (1584) by offering a gentile and Christian introduction into the appropriate nature of art and good living for the Tuscan audience.⁵⁴ The regional emphasis of Razzi's treatise is also evident in a concern for texts on more specifically local saints, like Razzi's own *Vita de' santi e beati toscani* (first published 1593), that become discernable in later inventories. For example, Francesco d' Andrea Castelli's collection in 1649 of twenty or so books in his *scrittoio* included two books on Florentine and Tuscan Saints next to St. Augustine's *Meditations*.⁵⁵

The inventories also show a continued and substantial number of *libriccioli* or *libriccini* sometimes described with elaborate bindings, clasps and coverings that, although unspecified, were probably more often than not small religious books or compilations by authors like Razzi and Ricci.

⁵¹ On the sixteenth-century trade in missals and breviaries in Italy see Barbieri and Zardin, *Libri, biblioteche e cultura*, 16, and Simon Ditchfield, 'Tridentine Worship and the Cult of Saints', 201-5. Grendler, 'The Roman Inquisition', 59, draws attention to the exclusive papal privileges promulgated by the Council of Trent regarding the right to print missals and breviaries and how this effected publishers, as does Lisa Jardine who stresses the substantial profits to be made by securing the printing rights to their reformed versions. See Jardine, *Worldly Goods*, 152. Michael Milway notes that printers of incunabula in the fifteenth century alone produced approximately 180,000 missals and 225,000 breviaries: Milway, 'Forgotten Best-Sellers from the Dawn of the Reformation,' in *Continuity and Change. The Harvest of Late-Medieval and Reformation History.*, ed. Robert J Bast and Andrew C Gow, 113-142 (Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2000), 124.

⁵² Lists of the publishing houses of Michelagnolo Sermartelli, Jacopo Giunti, Filippo Giunti, Francesco Tosi, and Giorgio Marescotti, ACDF, Index, Vol.XVIII/I, ff.348r, 349r, 350r, 351r, 352r. See also William Pettas, *The Giunti of Florence, Merchant Publishers of the Sixteenth Century* (San Francisco: Bernard M. Rosenthal, 1980), whose coverage unfortunately stops in the 1570s. The lists additionally show the publication of works by St. Pancratio, and several 'Conclusioni' printed specifically for Tuscan orders and confraternities. On the large publishing industry built up around confraternities, see Barbieri and Zardin, *Libri, biblioteche e cultura*, 6, who note that more than 300 different editions of confraternal rules and regulations were published in Italy during the second half of the sixteenth century.

⁵³ Razzi's *La vita della Maria Vergine e S. Giovanni Battista* went through at least four Italian editions between 1577 and 1622, and his *Miracoli di Nostra Donna* had at least four editions between 1576 and 1657.

⁵⁴ Girolamo Silvano Razzi, *Della economica christiana, e civile* (Florence: Bartolomeo Sermartelli, 1568). Raffaello Borghini, *Il Riposo* (Florence: Marescotti, 1584).

⁵⁵ ASF, MPP 2661, ff.224r-v.

These devotional and usually devotionally repetitive texts have been the books most likely to be cursorily brushed aside by scholarship. Usually based around church sermons, devotions like the rosary, and parables of saints' lives, these books could be reproduced quickly and cheaply on thin paper with modern font as chapbooks of popular piety intended to edify and instruct.⁵⁶ In fact, the most frequent religious texts both published and found in houses during the timeframe studied were anthologies, florilegiums, pericopes, prayers, prose or verse translations derived (sometimes scandalously loosely) from the Holy Scriptures or variations on common orations such as the decades of the rosary - complete editions of the Bible seem to have been comparatively rare within the inventories of Florentine homes.⁵⁷ This category includes the numerous *Epistole et evangeli*, Offices of the Madonna, *Fioretti della Bibbia*, historical compendia and 'sommari' of the Old and New Testaments, breviaries and *settimane sante* found in the inventories from the quattro to seicento. Not only more likely to be placed in *camera* (like the examples of Giulio de' Medici's *Offices of the Madonna* and Cosimo Cioli's *Epistole et evangeli* already mentioned), these texts were also the most likely to be singled out amongst generic notations like 'più libri', thereby suggesting how instantly recognisable and familiar they were to the notaries recording household belongings.

If the storage of these devotional works within the *camera* suggests in itself that they were read with a degree of closeness and regularity, so does the format that these books commonly took. Certainly, the book of Spiritual Lauds, the *Pistole et vangeli*, the printed catechism and the *Giuda dei peccatori* by Granada that Cioli kept in his *camera*, do not only represent a typical collection of the period, but they also demonstrate the small size and often ephemeral nature of such books that would have provoked a different method of reading and engaging with the text.⁵⁸ The inventory notes that Granada's treatise was in *sedici* (sextodecimo or *seidecimo*), and the three others in *octavo* - a size that Aldus Manutius had declared in 1501 as 'more convenient for holding in the hands'.⁵⁹ Indeed, extant copies of Granada's writings and other early devotional texts of the period like Razzi's show them to be frequently bound in these or even smaller formats.⁶⁰ These sizes made

⁵⁶ Bec, *Les Livres*, 118. On the consumption and dissemination of devotional chapbooks in an English context see Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*.

⁵⁷ For the history of the Bible in Italy, see Edoardo Barbieri, *Le Bibbie italiane del Quattrocento e del Cinquecento. Storia e bibliografia ragionata delle edizioni in lingua italiana dal 1471 al 1600* (Milan: Editrice Bibliografica, 1992).

⁵⁸ ASF, MPP 2660, f.72r-74v. On Granada, Bec notes copies in inventories of *Tutte le opere* (1597), *Vita Christiana* (1605), and an *Orazione* (1605): Bec, *Les Livres*, 79.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Jardine, *Wordly Goods*, 169.

⁶⁰ Bernardino da Siena, *Prediche* (Venice: Bernardino de Viano de Lexona Vercellese, 1541); Vincentio Ferrini, *Secondo alfabeto esemplare* (Venice: Erasmo Viotti, 1590); Luis de Granada, *Trattato della confessione, & comunione. Pratica del Viver Christiano* (Venice: Angelieri, 1597); Luis de Granada, *Pratica del viver christiano* (Venice: Giorgio Angelieri, 1599). The size of octavo and sextodecimo are taken from folding a sheet measuring approximately 19 x 25 inches either three or four times to create eight or sixteen pages respectively, see Jean Peters, *The Bookman's Glossary* (New York & London: R. R. Bower

commercial sense and moreover had a somatic appeal by fitting comfortably into the palm of a hand or pocket, thereby allowing for easy portability, as well as engendering a particularly quick, private and intense form of reading.

In addition to their small sizes, these popular books by Lantana, Granada, Pittori, Razzi and their anonymous counterparts, tended to fit a similar stylistic pattern. Written predominantly in the vernacular and with prose that is colloquial and conversational, these religious texts usually employed a direct and familiar address and deployed personalizing analogies and anecdotes in order to engage the reader with the synopsis of the biblical history and liturgy they describe. The effect was to establish an accessible, authoritative and believable interpretation of Christian theology and liturgy that was essentially based on preaching. These books allowed an ideal experience of the Catholic calendar to be quickly absorbed, recreated and reformulated at home by offering a type of 'best practice' code for believers on how to live (or die), including lessons on the seven sacraments, how to pray and how to meditate. For example, the sections on how to pray in the 1608 edition of Lantana's sermons on the Gospels recommended mental prayer over vocal and not to talk too much. Moreover, Lantana exhorted the reader that when they prayed, they were to enter into their *camera* (the very room where this book would have been kept), close the door and pray to the Father secretly.⁶¹ Indeed, common devotional texts placed an emphasis on secrecy or a personal engagement when praying which was engendered not only by the book's physical format or their placement within the *camera* of the house, but also through the notion that, in Pietro da Lucca's words, meditation at home 'is like a secret sermon' composed through reading books like his beforehand.⁶² Given the 'uniform and monotonous' nature of these 'sermons', a comprehensive textual and contextual analysis of popular devotional chapbooks remains to be done.⁶³ However, it is safe to say that their very mundanity, uniformity, repetitiveness and ritualistic quality were part of a formula that made them eminently suited for the everyday and easily digested by readers.

Another part of this formula were the pictures of varying sophistication that often accompanied devotional books and offered a comprehensible illustrated summary of biblical narratives for any literacy level – a fact that the consumption of Jerome Nadal's illustrated gospels

Company, 1983), 34-5, and D. C. Greetham, *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction* (New York & London: Garland, 1992), 125-8. Smaller again are tricesimosecundo and sexagesimoquarto.

⁶¹ 'Et però quando tu orerai, entra nella camera tua, & chiudi l'uscio, & ora al Padre tuo secretamente; percioche egli, che vede il secreto del cuor tuo, te lo rimunererà in palese': Bartolomeo Lantana, *Prediche di Sermoni Sopra gli Evangelii* (Venice: n.p. (Al Segno della Concordia), 1608.), 18-19.

See also p.14.

⁶² Pietro da Lucca, *Regule de la vita spirituale e secreta theologia* (Venice: Francesco Bindoni & Mapheo Pasini, 1538), 21r: 'Ma prima nota che la meditatione è come una secreta predicha [...] perho è necessario prima legere, & mettere a memoria li principali puncti, di quello che legi: e puoi quelle cose lecte meditare, e fare a te medisma, come el predicatore fa a popoli.'

⁶³ The quote is lifted from Baldacchini's comments regarding the same problem facing popular religious prints: Lorenzo Baldacchini, 'Per una bibliografia delle stampe popolari religiose,' *Accademie e biblioteche d'Italia* XLIV (1977): 24-35, 29.

(first published 1595) relied upon (see figs 4.5 & 4.6).⁶⁴ Book illustrations moreover worked independently of the text by acting as a means for contemplation and meditation, and, especially in chapbooks expounding devotional practices like the rosary, became instrumental in establishing what St. Ignatius had termed 'the composition of place' (see figs.4.7 & 4.8a-b).⁶⁵ Even cruder examples, such as the illustrated frontispiece for Giovanni Pino di Tolosa's *Vita di S. Rocco* depicting a man in prayer pinioned to the foot of St. Roch (see fig. 4.9), could provide a visual cue for the reader's (or listener's or viewer's) comportment. Perhaps more so than any other books, these spiritual chapbooks gave the liturgy and biblical narratives a domestic voice and place.

LIBRI DI DONNE AND THE OFFICE OF THE VIRGIN

Dismissed by Bec from his study, one of the most richly illustrated books (in both early manuscript versions and later printed ones) were primers such as the five *offitioli della Madonna* listed in the *camera* of Giulio de' Medici's home. Their widespread currency in Florentine homes from the late-medieval period up until the seventeenth century, shows how these books deserve more attention than they have hitherto been given.⁶⁶ In fact, *offitioli* or *Horae*, like those owned by Giulio de' Medici, constituted the single most popular household text for the timeframe surveyed and were the only book title to clearly occur more than once during the 1620s sampling.⁶⁷ Like the Psalter (which inventories show they were closely associated with), Medici's *offitioli* were instrumental in establishing a method of prayer and a lasting understanding of religion and spirituality for the laity. As Virginia Reinburg has demonstrated, this was a conception of religion based on notions of 'hierarchy and reciprocity' as the very format of these *offitioli* constructed a thoroughly mediated system of exchange and patronage between their user (or supplicant) and the addressee.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ The 1607 edition has recently been reissued as *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels: The Infancy Narratives* (1607), trans. Frederick Homann (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2003). For a discussion of the illustrations in early religious books, see Martha W. Driver, 'Pictures in Print: Late Fifteenth- and Early Sixteenth-Century English Religious Books for Lay Readers.' In *De Cella in Seculum: Religion and Secular Life and Devotion in Late Medieval England*, ed. Michael G. Sargent, 229-244 (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1989).

⁶⁵ See also fig.1.47 which highlights through the rosary the close relationship between the textual, visual and material.

⁶⁶ See however, the section on 'Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis' in Paul Grendler, 'Form and Function in Italian Renaissance Popular Books,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 46 (1993):451-485, 467-470; and Roger Wieck's important contributions to the study of Books of Hours: Wieck, *Painted Prayers: the Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: George Braziller, 1997) and Wieck, ed., *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (New York & Baltimore: George Braziller & Walters Art Museum, 2001).

⁶⁷ For the 1620s see ASF, MPP 2660 (1617-22): ff.124r; 422v; 549v; 623v; 734r.

⁶⁸ '[In books of hours ...] hierarchy and reciprocity governed relations between devotee and supernatural patron, as was true in most social relations of the sixteenth century', Virginia Reinburg, 'Hearing Lay People's Prayer,' in *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800). Essays in Honor of Natalie*

The 'Office of the Madonna' or the *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis* were more usually referred to as simply *libri di donna* or *libriccini da donna* in the inventories, and a photo showing the uncut pages of a 1677 edition kept in the University of Iowa gives a good sense of why the diminutive form of *libro* was so often used (fig.4.10). Throughout the medieval period and into the early modern, Books of Hours or the Office of the Madonna (for purposes here they were essentially interchangeable in both form and name) were a bestseller, perhaps the number one bestseller, and in the inventories of estates that had books, this was the one most commonly owned.⁶⁹ Originally intended for clerics, Books of Hours soon became texts mainly aimed at and consumed by the domestic market, with Michael Clanchy noting that the base for the rising literacy that the later-middle ages witnessed, was precisely 'this domestication of the liturgical book'.⁷⁰ In fact, as Claire Sponsler has written, the 'blurring of boundaries between religious and lay, public and private [...] was a central feature of the subjectivities constructed by and through consumption in Books of Hours.'⁷¹

Usually anonymous, they consisted of a simplified copy of the Divine Office of the Breviary by offering eight short offices (incorporating that of the Virgin Mary) intended to be recited during the eight canonical hours of the day.⁷² They typically included a calendar of feast days, the Seven Penitential Psalms, the Office of the Dead, the Hours of the Cross, the Hours of the Holy Spirit, pericopes of the Gospels, and the Psalter. Prayers to the Virgin (such as the *Obsecro Te*, the *O Intemerata*, and the *Stabit Mater Stella Coeli extirpavit*), the Trinity, and other Saints were frequently inserted into their pages alongside handwritten prayers, advice, and devotions (such as those to the Passion, Veronica's veil, and the name of Christ). While early manuscript versions allowed a greater degree of flexibility in terms of customising Books of Hours (an Italian one dating

Zemon Davis, ed. Barbara B. Diefendorf and Carla Hesse, 30-53 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 22.

⁶⁹ Regarding their popularity, see Milway, 'Forgotten Best-Sellers', 132. While Medici's texts may have been copies solely of the Office of the Madonna, the one invariable feature of Books of Hours was the inclusion of the Virgin's Office, and the common habit of *Pupilli* officials as redacting the former as the latter (and vice versa) suggests the impossibility of any clear distinction between them.

⁷⁰ Michael T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 12, as quoted in Judith Bryce, 'Les Livres des Florentines: Reconsidering Women's Literacy in Quattrocento Florence,' in *At the Margins. Minority Groups in Premodern Italy*, ed. Stephen J. Milner, 133-161 (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 141.

⁷¹ Claire Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance: Bodies, Goods, and Theatricality in Late Medieval England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 109.

⁷² For a detailed history of the origins and contents of Books of Hours see Edmund Bishop, 'On the Origin of the Prymer,' in *Liturgica Historia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918), 211-237; Wieck, *Time Sanctified and Painted Prayers*, passim; Pierre Salmon, *Les Manuscrits Liturgiques Latins de la Bibliothèque Vaticane*, vol.4, *Les livres de lectures de l'office. Les livres de l'office du chapitre. Les livres d'heures* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1968-72), and Victor Léroquais, *Les Livres D'heures*, 2 vols (Paris: Protat Frères, 1927). In addition see Susan Groag Bell, 'Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture,' *Signs* 7 (1982): 742-68; Paul Saenger, 'Books of Hours and the Reading Habits of the Later Middle Ages,' in *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Roger Chartier, 141-173 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

c.1470 idiosyncratically formulated the calendar in terms of the Zodaic, see fig. 4.11),⁷³ the marginalia and ephemeral one page-broadsides or ‘fogli volanti’ of prayers attached inside later printed editions exemplify the way in which the contents and format of *libri di donne* were easily refigured by their owners to meet their own specific demands and requirements.⁷⁴

Bec’s reasons for ignoring them were that they functioned as precious objects for females, passed down as part of the *corredo* of the dowry, rather than as texts intended to be read.⁷⁵ This is a point agreed with by Luisa Miglio in a specific article on these books, who further qualified that as they were mostly written in Latin, very few women would or could have read them.⁷⁶ This sweeping dismissal of the book most likely to be found within Florentine houses of a broad social range as never or rarely read is troublesome, especially given that an investigation into this book and its reception can help shed light on domestic reading habits and Ecclesiastical censorship.

The logic that Books of Hours were perceived of primarily as artistic objects rather than texts is partly correct and attested to by the numerous and usually art historical studies of such famous examples of *Horae* as those owned by the Farnese or the Visconti.⁷⁷ Some examples were primarily conceived of as works of art. Such was the beauty of Giulio Clovio’s Book of Hours for Cardinal Farnese that Vasari declared it a divine rather than human work (see fig.4.12). Clovio (1498-1578) had in fact laboured for nine years producing Farnese’s book, and this Sistine-like effort alongside the *inventione*, *disegno*, and *varietà* of his miniatures were to earn him a place in *Le Vite* as ‘a small and new Michelangelo of our times’.⁷⁸ While Farnese’s Book of Hours was exceptional, many examples listed in the *Pupilli* inventories were described as illuminated (‘miniato’), covered or worked in gold, silver, velvet, or silk, and adorned with costly materials or elaborate locks and clasps. For example, Piero di Bernardo di Christoforo Carnesecchi’s Little Office of Our Lady was described in 1479 as ‘covered with crimson and gold brocade, [decorated] with a twine of pearls and with silver bindings [*fornimenti*]’, while Ubertino di ser Atto di Giovanni

⁷³ See Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 34.

⁷⁴ On the inclusion of various apotropaic prayers within Books of Hours see Bozóky, *Charmes et priers*, 52 & 64; while for the habit of attaching various printed ephemera to the books see Gigliola Fragnito, ‘Censura ecclesiastica e identità spirituale e culturale femminile,’ *Mélanges de l’école française de Rome* 115 (2003): 287-313, 305, n. 53. Most recently see Eamon Duffy, *Marking the Hours: English People & their Prayers 1240-1570* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2006), particularly ch.2, 23-52 which discusses the additions owners made to their Hours.

⁷⁵ Bec, *Les Livres*, 25: ‘[...] de nombreux ‘libricciuoli di donna’, livres d’oraison pour les femmes, qui sont plus des livres-objets précieux que des livres proprement dits, traditionnellement offerts en dot, et que nous n’avons pas pour cette raison inclus dans notre enquête statistique.’

⁷⁶ Luisa Miglio, ‘Un Mondo a Parte’: libri da Donne, libri di Donne,’ in *La Religione domestica (medioevo - età moderna)*, 219-272 (Verona: Cierre Edizioni, 2001), 225.

⁷⁷ See for example James J. Rorimer, ed., *The Belles Heures of Jean, Duke of Berry, Prince of France* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1958); Jean Porcher, ed., *The Rohan Book of Hours* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1959); Webster Smith, ed., *The Farnese Hours* (New York: George Braziller, 1976).

⁷⁸ *Le Vite Giuntina*, 6: 217: ‘Onde possian dire che don Giulio abbia, com si disse a principio, superato in questo gl’antichi e’ moderni, e che sia stato a’ tempi nostri un piccolo e nuovo Michelangelo’. On the Farnese hours, see Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 98.

Gherardi da Pistoia's small Book of Hours was lovingly recorded in 1484 as 'in vellum, handwritten, illuminated, and gilded, covered in turquoise brocade, at the top of which are designs of pearls;- that is, the [designs] are made of pearls, and it has a silver clasp and chains'.⁷⁹ Such elaborate decorations doubtlessly lent these books a monetary and artistic value in excess of the textual. Extant examples of those owned by the Florentine Patriciate, like Cristoforo Majorana's (documented 1480-1494) and Alexander Antonii Simonis' *Horae* for Lorenzo Strozzi (see fig.4.13), Laudomia de' Medici's example, or those belonging to the Adimari and Pitti-Taddei de' Gaddi families (figs.4.14a-b, & 4.15), are intensely beautiful testaments to the personal value, and costly and painstaking detail that these customised versions could hold. These customisations did not just include specific prayers, the patron's name, coats-of-arms or portrait, but also provided the user with wider civic and historical references with which to frame their devotion. For example, forming the setting for the Visitation in Laudomia's Book of Hours is an early sixteenth-century view of the Medici palace of via Larga and the church of San Lorenzo (replete with fictive façade and *palle* positioned on the pediment) (see fig.4.16).⁸⁰ Laudomia's book shows how religious experience was located *a priori* within the boundaries constructed by her family. Similarly conscious of the Medicean landscape of quattrocento Florence were the Adimari and Pitti Hours. Both included unusual illustrations of a triumphant David to mark the beginning of the first penitential psalm (attributed to David) (see figs.4.15 & 4.17), with the illustration in the Adimari version by Attavante degli Attavanti (1452-c.1520) explicitly based on Andrea del Verrocchio's statue.⁸¹ The Medici, Adimari and Pitti examples show the way in which broader cultural, social, and specifically Florentine currents informed the contents of Books of Hours and everyday devotion.

Although these jewel-like books could be described as objects of material culture promoting a pleasure that was based on the visual and on ownership rather than on literary values, it

⁷⁹ See Verde, 'Tra le parete', 83 & 108 respectively. Such examples are also found in later inventories, such as ASF, MAP 189, inv. of Bastiano di Francesco Marsanti (1521), f.76r: '1 libricino dofficio di donna choperto d brochetto rosso chon serame dariento chon uno bottone grande di perlle mesanette cho otto agnualetti 2 chon otto bottocchini di perle e di charta pecora'; ASF, MPP 2648, inv. of Filippo d'Ughuccino Capponi (1540), f.353v: 'un libricino da dona col una nappa di perle coperto col taffetta nera e trine d'oro'; ASF, MPP 2660, inv. of Lionardo di Simone Niccolini (1619), f.124r, in the *scrittoio* of the *casa da padrone* of S. Casciano is 'un uffitiolo della Madonna piccolo col coperta miniata d'oro'; inv. of Filippo di Dionigi Carducci (1621), f.625r: 'un libriccino della Madonna col coperta di telesta d'oro col fibbie d'ottone dorate, un altro libriccino della Madonna col coperta di raso nero, una fibbia et altre forchiette alle cantonate d'argento'; ASF, MPP 2661, inv. of Capitano Neri (1649), f.181v: '1 libricino chon coperto d'argento con fibbie d'argento'.

⁸⁰ Regarding the façade of the Medici palace and San Lorenzo, see Carol Herselle Krinsky, 'A View of the Palazzo Medici and the Church of S. Lorenzo,' *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol.28, n.2 (1969), 133-135.

⁸¹ For a succinct presentation of the period connotations that David held for Florentines during the fifteenth century, see Kent, *Cosimo de' Medici*, 283-286. On the Pitti-Taddei de' Gaddi Hours see Wieck, *Painted Prayers*, 94; on the Adimari see Laurence B. Kanter, Barbara Drake Boehm, Carl Brandon et al., *Painting and Illumination in Early Renaissance Florence* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), 352-356.

should be apparent that such modes of appreciation are not mutually exclusive, nor so easily distinguishable. Books of Hours were simultaneously vehicles and instruments of religiosity as well as art objects. In fact, it was their religious function that ensured their precious decoration and justified such magnificence.⁸² While their financial value could lead Books of Hours to be used as an economic source or insurance in guaranteeing a loan, they were also able to be acquired cheaply as smaller unbound octavo editions or from the second-hand market, and their presence within more modest households should serve as evidence that these texts were not solely ornamental nor the preserve of the wealthy. Books of Hours had been available in printed form in Italy since at least 1473, and the *Pupilli* inventories show how at the end of the fifteenth century, butchers, second-hand dealers, stocking-makers, tailors, and *stufaioli* all owned their own copies.⁸³ Ensuing print editions standardised their format according to manuscript traditions (small size, black and red ink, numerous pictures), and ensured that by at least the mid-sixteenth century, *libri di donne* with illustrations of remarkable sophistication were widely and cheaply available.⁸⁴ For example, the affordable price and miniature size of the printed Iowa *Officium* (its actual length would measure less than three inches) belies the pictorial complexity it offered to its user (figs.4.10 & 4.18).⁸⁵

These books owned in large numbers by seemingly all of the Florentine book-owning public were clearly used. The period marginalia and prayers inscribed in extant copies and their description in the inventories as *vecchio* or *usato* testifies to how books such as the Iowa *Officium*

⁸² For further examples of religious texts produced as artworks see the 'libriccino con coperta di raso chermisino, con dieci storiette miniate su la carta di capretto, di acquerello rosso lueggiante d'oro, della vita e morte del nostro Signore, di mano di Fra Giovanni Angelico' listed in Benedetto Gondi's art collection in 1609, reproduced in Gino Corti, 'Two Early Seventeenth-Century Inventories Involving Giambologna.' *The Burlington Magazine* CXVIII (1976): 629-634, 633. See also the 'breviario scritto a mano in carta pecora in tavolette con bottoni di oro di seta con una chiavetta ed dua femine senza riscontro di argento bello' noted in Cesare Nocetti da Bagnone's estate of 1572 in ASF, MPAP 2664, f.304r.

⁸³ For example, all owning *libri di donne* in the *Pupilli* inventories were Giovanni di Meglio di Masso *stufaiolo* (1474), Iacopo di Francesco di Cino *rigattiere* (1476), Michele di Mariano di Provinciale *bechaio* (1476), Domenico d'Antonio Maretti *rigattiere* (1479), Francesco di Domenico di Giovanni *chaltolaio* (1479), Michele di Giovanni di Betto *sarto* (1479), Gilio di Gherardo di Bartolo *maestro di murare* (1486), and Giuliano di Giovanni *richamatore* (1496). See Verde, 'Tra le parete', pp. 62, 70, 70, 83, 91, 91, 111, and 171. Grendler suggests the first Italian *Officium Beatae* was published in Rome by Theobald Schenkbecker in 1473, see Grendler, 'Form and Function', 468. Italian versions such as *Il Libro della Madonna e l'ufficio piccolo in onore di S. Maria Vergine e le profezie di S. Brigida* (Ripolina, 1478), *Libro dell'Ufficio della B. Vergine Maria* (Florence, 1482), and *Officio della Vergine Maria* (Venice, 1488) seem to have been available since the late 1470s, see Schutte, *A Finding List*, 249, and Verde, 'Tra le parete', 121.

⁸⁴ On the rationale behind font type and format, see Grendler, 'Form and Function', 469-470.

⁸⁵ Regarding their use as an 'economic pledge', Miglia cites the example of a *libro di donna* belonging to Girolamo d'Antonio Panciatichi which at the time of his death was 'tra le cose che sono al Monte della Piata [sic]', and Ciappelli notes the fifteenth-century example of Francesco di Matteo Castellani who sent his 'libricino dell'oficio di nostra Donna con una federa di velluto chermisi ricamata d'argenteria e di perle e coverto di brochato d'ariento con '1 bruciolo di perle per le cordelline' as security of five *fiorini larghi* to Francesco Alassandri. See Miglia, 'Un mondo a parte', 224 and Ciappelli, 'Libri e letture', 280. Their economic value was often also highlighted in the *Pupilli* inventories, as in an inventory of Ser Antonio di Bartolo di Pierdo d'Andrea di Volterra of 1476 which records '1 libriccino di Nostra Donna chostò fl.12' and '1 libriccino di Nostra Donna di pretio i ducati 4', see Verde, 'Tra le parete', 68.

were actively consumed.⁸⁶ In fact, period texts extended St. Jerome's advice to women by stressing the importance of reading in particular *libri di donne*: both as a means of learning to read and learning religion themselves, as well as providing the foundational text by which they were to teach their children such skills.⁸⁷ Such recommendations were hardly abstract, and Books of Hours were often noted in inventories alongside psalters or 'Donadelli da fanciullo' showing that they were actively employed in home education.⁸⁸ A book on how to learn Greek by Aldus Manutius makes this clear. Manutius's text relied on the familiarity that all literate Italians had with *libri di donne* by simply printing the standard Latin texts present in Books of Hours alongside their Greek counterparts (fig.4.19).

Books of Hours role in lay and monastic dowries and as wedding presents, with their elaborate and rich covers, may have established a type of prestigious female patrimony by which the books were passed down from one generation to the next. Such a function surely confirmed the importance of women's intended roles as the moral and spiritual guardians of the new household, and how this could be aided and achieved by attentiveness to the texts the books themselves presented.⁸⁹ This is the intention that lies behind numerous pictures of the Virgin reading or aligned with her *libriccino*, whether by herself or in scenes of the Annunciation, (see for example figs.4.20-4.23), or united with St. Anne or St. Elisabeth over the contemplation of a book within a recognizably contemporary domestic interior (figs.4.24 & 4.25).⁹⁰ Similar pictures of the Annunciation were commonly and self-referentially included within Books of Hours throughout the time period, as in a 1510 edition printed in France or a combined English and Latin version of 1669 (see figs.4.26 & 4.27). These images in tandem with their texts acted as mirrors that the reader was

⁸⁶ Among the numerous examples of books of hours described as used or worn within inventories, see ASF MAP 189, f.454r & MPAP 2665, f.35v, and Bec, *Les Livres*, 195.

⁸⁷ For example Bernardino da Siena advised females to '[...] impara l'Uffizio de la Donna, e con esso ti diletta', see Bernardino da Siena, *Prediche volgari sul campo*, 862. *Il Libro delle lodi delle donne* advised females to '[a]vézegli ogni dì, così la matina come la sera, a dire orationi et come sanno leggere facino ch'eglino dicano ogni dì l'ufficio di Nostra Donna [...], while widows in particular should 'sa legere dica l'ufficio della Donna', *Il Libro delle lodi delle donne*, ed. G. Lombardi, Manziana, 1999, 106, as quoted in Miglio, 'Un monde a parte', nn. 10 & 11. On female literacy and the role of mother's as educators to their young children see Bryce, 'Reconsidering Women's Literacy', esp.136-68.

⁸⁸ For the English context, see Patricia Cullum and Jeremy Goldberg 'How Margaret Blackburn Taught her Daughters: Reading Devotional Instruction in a Book of Hours,' in *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne et al (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 217-36, particularly 231-4.

⁸⁹ Numerous examples of *libri di donne* forming part of female's *corredo* from the fifteenth century can be cited, such as that of Paolo Niccolini's wife Maria in 1457, see Ginevra Niccolini di Camugliano, *The Chronicles of a Florentine Family* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1933), 141. They also appear to have been included during the sixteenth century, with one recorded in Maria di Messer Pandolfo della Stufa's trousseau in 1578, see ASF, GCS, *filza* 93 (insert 93.18.18), f.2v. The inventories themselves record their importance to females, as in the 'libricciuolo d'ufficio di donna, fu dato alle figluole' noted in Piero di Bernardo di Christoforo Carnesecci's 1479 estate, or the 'libriccino di donna coverto di raso azzurro' amongst 'le cose che toccorono alla Maddalena e Lucrezia' in Antonio di Niccolò di Tommaso Scarlattini's estate of 1481/2: see ASF, MAP 177, f.84r & f.201r respectively.

⁹⁰ In addition see figs.1.22-27; 1.30a; 1.56; & 2.37, 2.38.

to model their own devotions on. In providing such a close association between the Virgin and her Office, they also helped establish the *Libro della Madonna* as a visual metaphor for Mary's devout nature and role as moral instructor of the family. This rationale explains numerous female portraits of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as Agnolo Bronzino's, Alessandro Allori's, and Santi di Tito's paintings of gentlewomen (figs. 4.28-4.32) that show their sitters similarly holding onto, reading, or associated with what are in all probability Offices of the Virgin.⁹¹

Both Bec and Miglio appear reliant on a rather narrow conception of what constitutes reading. It is an understanding that is problematically gendered by assuming firstly, that Books of Hours were intended solely for women, secondly that they were in fact in Latin and therefore incomprehensible, and thirdly, that female illiteracy was all but a given. This is despite the fact that the inventories themselves show how women could be the owners of books and, following Bec's own logic of using book's ownership as an indicator of cultural *mentalités* through presumed readership, the primary consumers of them.⁹² Recent work has shown how gendered religious books could be, with women not just authoring or inspiring texts but also acting as their producers (such as the nuns' printing presses of San Jacopo a Ripoli and Monteluce in Perugia), patrons and readers.⁹³ However, as a reference to a Book of Hours 'for the use of Messer Antonio' in inventory of 1471 highlights, we should not be led astray by a literal interpretation of what the phrase *libri di donne* or *libri da donne* can mean and suppose that they were solely part of the female domain.⁹⁴ Although commonly deployed as props for female portraits and sometimes specifically aimed at female readership, period evidence demonstrates how Books of Hours were bought and read by lay people of both genders. This broad appeal can be ascertained from a letter sent to Rome by the Nuncio of Venice, Giovanni Antonio Fachinetti, which notes that 'these offices of the Madonna [...] are popular not only with the religious orders, but also with every other person, the laity,

⁹¹ In addition see figs. 1.29; 1.40-42; & 1.60.

⁹² Bec himself notes '1a Fioretta di Bibbia [...] era di monna Ghostanza' in an inventory of 1426: Bec, *Les Livres*, 158.

⁹³ On the press at Ripoli see Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse, *Cartolai, Illuminators, and Printers in Fifteenth-Century Italy: The Evidence of the Ripoli Press* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1988). An invaluable resource on the gendering of religious literature in the sixteenth century is Gabriella Zarri, ed. *Donna, Disciplina, Creanza Cristiana dal XV al XVII secolo: Studi e Testi a stampa* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1996); while an equally important bibliographic resource of women's patronage, production and consumption of literature is available in Katherine J. Gill and Lisa M. Bitel's co-edited website: <http://monasticmatrix.usc.edu/bibliographia>. Although there are now a number of substantial individual studies of literate Florentine females, such as Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, Magherita Datini, Alessandra Scala and Giuglielmina della Stufa, for female literacy in general see the seminal article by Groag Bell, 'Medieval Women Book Owners', 742-68. For the Florentine context specifically see Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, 'Le Chiavi fiorentine di Barbablù: l'apprendimento della Lettura a Firenze nel XV secolo,' *Quaderni Storici* 57 (1984): 765-792 and Bryce, 'Reconsidering Women's Literacy'.

⁹⁴ ASF, MAP 173, inventory of messer Antonio di Betto da Pescia (24 March 1471), f.289v: '1° libriccino da donna con serrami, coverte nere, a uso di messer Antonio.'

women and children.⁹⁵ As the examples of the illustrations in Laudomia de' Medici's and the Adimari's books suggest, the remit of Books of Hours was not curtailed to one gender or individual. Work done by Kathleen Ashley on French Books of Hours has shown how from the end of the fifteenth century, rather than simply being the sole property of one individual, these books had become important sources of family history with records of births, deaths, genealogies, and significant events inscribed in the margins or next to specific prayers.⁹⁶ That they were employed to create a collective identity and act as a repository of spiritual ancestry highlights how devotion and family commemoration were essentially one and the same during the Renaissance and early modern period, and that the value and function of these books cannot be easily dismissed by a restrictive gendered analysis.

Even disregarding the adjective 'usato' that qualified *libri di donne* in inventories and suggests their commonplace consumption, it is important to stress that texts could be read and appropriated in manifold ways. Five *libri di donne* were found in the household of Giulio de' Medici and six in Francesco Inghirami's in 1472 (and that numerous other households possessed substantial numbers of these books), highlighting that the same text could be read and used in a different manner by different users, whether individually or collectively.⁹⁷ Even though the majority of remaining fifteenth-century Books of Hours were written in Latin (sometimes with smaller vernacular sections corresponding to the changes from vocal prayer to silent meditation during Mass), some were in Italian. Several examples from the inventories make this clear by specifying that the books were 'in volgare'.⁹⁸ The fact that it was possible to acquire them in cheap printed versions by the beginning of the fifteenth century, and that the upsurge of vernacular translations in the middle ages exactly parallels the development of Books of Hours, further warns against assumptions that these texts were only available in Latin.⁹⁹ It seems equally clear that just because many Books of Hours were in Latin, it does not mean they were not read. Literacy could in

⁹⁵ '[q]uesti offitiouli della Madonna [sono] comuni non solo a' religiosi ma ad ogni altra persone, laici, donne e putti.' Letter dating 9 August 1572, Venice, from ASVR, Segretario di Stato, Filza 12, f.47, as quoted in Grendler, *Books and Schools*, 468.

⁹⁶ Kathleen Ashley, 'Creating Family Identity in Books of Hours,' *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32 (2002): 145-165.

⁹⁷ Listed in Inghirami's estate were '1 libriccino di Nostra Donna chovertato di raso paghonazo, fornito d'ariento con più mini forestieri', '1 libriccino in charta pecora da donna, bello, basso, letera parigina, con fibia e puntuale d'ariento dorato', '1 libriccino da donna, al'Antonia, chon serami d'ariento, vechio', '1 libriccino da donna ala Lisabetta, chon uno serame d'ottone, vechio', '1 libriccino ala Fiammetta, da donna con due serrami d'ottone'. See ASF, MAP 173, ff.266v, 296r, 270r-v.

⁹⁸ For example, Zanobi di Piero Ciesini's 1420 estate contained a 'libriccino di dona in volghare', ASF, MAP 153, f.59v, while Bec notes another 'libriciuolo di donna, volgherezatto' in 1424, see Bec, *Les Livres*, 157. Driver notes how despite being ostensibly in Latin, editions of Books of Hours intended for the English market would incorporate vernacular prayers, calendars, captions, rubrics and instructions for use, see Driver, 'Pictures in Print', 237.

⁹⁹ Groag Bell, 'Medieval Women Book Owners', 747 & 758; Milway, 'Forgotten Best-Sellers', 132. Groag Bell notes that of female book owners, of which the book of hours was the most commonly owned text, 67% of them owned what were clearly vernacular translations, *ibid.*, 747, 758, 760.

a sense be paralinguistic. It could be oral and somatic. It could also be primarily visual, based on the illustrations within books which, as Martha Driver has written, acted as ‘invitations to literacy.’¹⁰⁰ Literacy could be mnemonically structured by learning Latin or Italian texts by rote and understanding them in varying degrees. That languages themselves are easily (even if incorrectly) appropriated, is a point that helps explain the continual presence of and demand for Latin Books of Hours in Florentine homes. Although the proportion of the laity who learnt Latin in Western Europe was probably relatively high in Italy during the early modern period, Latin could be ‘understood’ by both men and women otherwise lacking any classical education.¹⁰¹ Lay folk were as accustomed to saying prayers in Latin as they were to hearing mass in it, and as John Byfleet noted in his book *A brief explication of the Office of the Blessed Virgin Marie Mother of God* (1652) regarding the recitation of prayers in Latin, ‘[...] there is scarce one to be found so stupide, but that he doth conceive in generall termes at the least, what is intended in the sayed office’.¹⁰² As the bastardisation of the *Ave Maria* and *Pater Noster* in Inquisition files makes clear, stock Latin-phrases or a type of pseudo-Latin were often interpolated with Italian (or other languages) to form prayers, incantations, and magical rites by the laity and clergy alike.¹⁰³ The rationale behind this, and doubtless the appeal of Books of Hours in Latin for the laity, was that its recitation invoked a powerful sense of authority and, through its very lack of understanding, the strong conviction that ‘such praier are pleasing to God, delightful to the Angells, and terrible to the devill’.¹⁰⁴ Reassuring the reader that the Virgin diligently recited the Psalms even though she understood them not,¹⁰⁵ Byfleet further explained that

[...] pious Idiots who have a good will and simple intention, doe many tymes draw as much spiritual sweetnes from their diligent attention to the gravitie and decencie of Ecclesiastical ceremonies, and divine praises; as the greatest number of those, whoe are skillful in the Latin tongue. For such as well seene of the plained and grammatical sense of the words, does not gather the choice and fruit out of the Canonical bowers, but such as penetrate the mysteries and secret sense of the Scriptures, of which number who is he, that will presume to arme himself?¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰ Driver, ‘Pictures in Print’, 238.

¹⁰¹ The literacy rate for Latin in Italy, was according to Robert Black, much higher than elsewhere in Europe because Latin was used as the primary means of learning to read and write within the peninsula. Information from personal communication with Dr. Simon Ditchfield, 31 May 2007, regarding a paper given by Dr. Robert Black at the Yorkshire Forum for Early Modern Studies ‘Religion and Reading’ conference held at the King’s Manor, University of York, 24 June 2006.

¹⁰² John Edward Byfleet, *A brief explication of the Office of the Blessed Virgin Marie Mother of God together with a sum treatise concerning the institution thereof &c* (Douai: Lawrence Kellam, 1652), 27.

¹⁰³ See, for example, AAF, TIN 39.11, doc.1 & 39.4 (unpaginated).

¹⁰⁴ Byfleet, *A brief explication of the Office of the Blessed Virgin*, 24.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 27.

If Byfleet's exegesis appears as an apologia for the Church's insistence on textual orthodoxy regardless of incomprehension, it nonetheless stressed a belief both in the latent power possessed by Latin and that its comprehension was less likely to reveal eternal mysteries and secrets than intention and sheer effort. His treatise continually draws attention to the way these prayers were said rather than simply read. The common qualifier in inventories that Books of Hours were 'da dire' demonstrates how these books, like catechisms, could inculcate a type of literacy dependent on utterance.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, books were 'read' by being listened to aloud, whether it was by servants and mistresses listening to their masters within the domestic sphere, or the public listening to and later recalling the preacher's sermons to the inhabitants back home.¹⁰⁸

However, it is clear that by the sixteenth century Books of Hours, and other common texts derived from the Sacred Scriptures like the *Vangeli e Pistoli* were read widely, whether in Latin or vernacular versions. This popularity and the way in which they located the sacred within the profane, was to draw them into a complex and confusing battle of ecclesiastical censorship that lasted from the middle of the sixteenth century until recent times. It is to this issue of censorship and the attempted Tridentine restriction of important religious texts like the Office of the Virgin to Latin-only versions that the chapter now turns in order to further understand domestic reading practices.

CENSORSHIP AND READING VERNACULAR BIBLICAL LITERATURE

In the mid-1560s, Cassandra di Jacopo de' Fratelli da Verona and her husband Leonardo Gasparo de' Franceschi da Venetia were interrogated by the Florentine Apostolic Nuncio's court regarding their reading practices and Christian beliefs.¹⁰⁹ The interrogation is an early and revealing documentation of the Church's concern with gender roles, private devotional practices and household books. The recorded testimony also marks the shift in status of works such as Books of Hours due to the censorship that had begun with the promulgation of the first Universal Index in 1559.

Cassandra and Leonardo had relatively recently settled in Tuscany after continuously travelling since leaving Venice in the late 1550s in order 'to work and to see the world'. The

¹⁰⁷ For example, 'un libretto da dire l'ufitio senza coperta' was listed in the *camera accanto alla cucina* of Francesco di Guglielmo del Riccio's estate in 1594, ACRF, Filza XVII (A), unpaginated.

¹⁰⁸ Canonization proceedings often draw attention to how individuals *heard* books rather than read them. For example, Julia Cresci testified to how she had heard of St. Andrea Corsini through preaching and 'l'ho anco sentito leggere dal mio Marito', while the servant girl Margarita di Giovanni da Casentino noted how 'il mio padrone alle volte leggeva la sua vita' to her, see ASV, Congregazione dei Riti, *Processus* 760, ff. 312r & 395v. Margherita di Tommaso Soderini's surviving diary of sermons that she had heard has been reproduced in part in Zelina Zafarana, 'Per la storia religiosa di Firenze nel Quattrocento,' *Studi Medievali* IX (1968): 1017-1114.

¹⁰⁹ ASF, Nunz. 842 (1565-1568), n.d. (c.1566), unpaginated.

couple's peripatetic ways obviously raised enough suspicion to bring them before the Nunciature's court. The transcript of their interrogation and that of the lodger who lived above them is concerned with establishing whether the couple maintained orthodox Christian practices by adhering to alimentary requirements, observing feast days, attending mass, regularly confessing, and what they were reading. Indeed, the questions focus primarily on Cassandra's movements and the books kept at home. This focus on Cassandra becomes clear when it is revealed that Leonardo is almost illiterate 'but his wife reads well', and that it is Cassandra who has not only brought and read prohibited books from Venice but has also borrowed texts from a nearby *bottega*.¹¹⁰ This appears to be an unorthodox household or a household turned upside down as it is the woman who is cast as the key consumer of texts and the disseminator of the information they held. The books that Cassandra had read included an 'Offitia della Madonna', a text by Machiavelli ('il machavello'), 'il petrarcha spirituale' (a relatively common text in the *Pupilli* inventories), and 'il interpretatione di sogni'. The Nuncio's court, however, was more concerned about Cassandra's possession of the first of these texts and any others she might have had that were derived from the Scriptures (such as whether or not she had 'any Latin book like a *sommario della scrittura* and other similar books'). This concern appears based upon Cassandra's ability to read and interpret freely these texts herself (regardless whether they were in Latin or the vernacular) and thereby form and disseminate heterodox opinions. As the popularity of texts such as the Office of Our Lady has already been noted, the Nuncio's concern extended far beyond Cassandra's collection.¹¹¹

The possession and digestion of prohibited books was self-evidently forbidden, but the confusion wrought by the first Universal Roman Index in 1559 (the Pauline or Inquisitorial Index) and its successors (the 1564 Tridentine Index and the 1596 Clementine Index) was large enough to justify Cassandra's comment that she didn't know that the books in her home were prohibited just as she didn't know at all which books were banned.¹¹² Cassandra's predicament was one that

¹¹⁰ Ibid. The lodger, answering questions regarding Cassandra, noted '[...] che [lei] sa leggere [...] che vi ha l'offitia della Madonna et il petrarcha spirituale et che si possono vedere quelli che ha in casa [...] che da poi che lei e li in casa non è uscita fuori se no tre volte, una volta alla confess.ne et una alla comunione et l'altra alla Madonna fuor della porte de rien.e.' and that while Jacopo doesn't read 'ma legge bene la sua donna'. Jacopo's interrogation reveals 'che non sa che vene [i libri] sieno [proibiti] che non sa quasi leggere', responding 'la sua donna' to the question 'che legge e libri che egli ha in casa?'

¹¹¹ Ibid., 'se ha nessuno libro latino come sommario della scrittura et altri libri simili?'. On *Il Petrarca Spirituale*, first published in Venice in 1536 and written by Girolamo Malipiero, see Amedeo Quondam, 'Riscrittura, citazione e parodia. Il *Petrarca Spirituale* di Girolamo Malipiero,' in *Il Naso di Laura. Lingua e Poesia Lirica nella Tradizione del Classicismo*, 203-62 (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1991). Regarding the 'pestifero libretto intitolato *Summario de la sacra scrittura*', see Silvano Cavazza, 'Libri in volgare e propaganda eterodossa: Venezia 1543-1547,' in *Libri, Idee e Sentimenti Religiosi nel Cinquecento Italiano*, ed. Adriano Prosperi and Albano Biondi, 9-28 (Modena: Edizioni Panini, 1987), 9-10, and Susanna Peyronel Rambaldi, *Dai Paesi Bassi all'Italia: Il Sommario della Sacra Scrittura, un libro proibito nella società del Cinquecento* (Florence: Leo. S. Olschki, 1997). A modern edition of the *Sommario* has been edited by Cesare Bianco as *Il Sommario della Sacra Scrittura* (Turin: Claudiana, 1988).

¹¹² ASF, Nunz., 842 (1565-1568), n.d., unpaginated: [Domanda] 'se sa quali libri sieno proibiti?' [Risposta] 'che non sa quali libri proibiti o quali sieno.' The most detailed as well as carefully and

extended to and embraced not just the lay Italian populace but also those who were charged with implementing the indices. Local bishops or ordinaries and inquisitors often faced confusing and contradictory rulings regarding prohibited books sent from Rome, thereby lacking the precise knowledge of what books were prohibited at any given time or what the guidelines for expurgation were.

Unlike previous local indices and censorship that had been put in place by both Church and State, the post-Trent indices had a universal remit and extended censorship from clearly heretical writings and works containing subversive politics to embrace texts of more questionable spirituality, such as the *Sommario della Sacra Scrittura* over whose possession Cassandra had been questioned.¹¹³ In fact, while its primary concern may have been to stem the tide of heretical literature and protestant propaganda circulating within the Catholic realm and being kept inside ‘infected houses’, the 1559 Index had definitively banned the publication and possession of all vernacular versions of the Bible and most adaptations of the Sacred Scriptures. This was a ban that included the most popular and beloved household books aimed at spiritual meditation and instruction such as the Office of the Madonna and the *Vangeli*.¹¹⁴ The complete interdiction of many of the most commonly owned devotional books was mollified by Pius IV’s 1561 *Moderatio indicis librorum prohibitorum* and the *regula quarta* of the 1564 Tridentine Index (which shifted the power away from the Holy Office by granting bishops and inquisitors the discretion to issue licences for the reading of translations of the Sacred Scriptures to appropriately pious and devout persons). However, the 1559 Index was more than partially reinstated by the Clementine Index, the first since the creation of the Congregation of the Index by Gregory XIII in 1572, which was not successfully promulgated until 27th March 1596. The Clementine Index dispensed with the *regula quarta* and strongly restated the ban on breviaries and all complete translations, *compendi* and *sommari historici* of the Scriptures. As Fragnito, Grendler and others have noticed, the late-sixteenth century was marked by a stronger enforcement of the indices, and more particularly, an increased effort to implement the prohibition of the Bible and texts deriving from it in the

elegantly elucidated history of the Roman Indices, their application and their effects is offered by Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo*, and *Proibito capire*. Most recently on the Congregation of the Index is Vittorio Frajese, *Nascità dell’Indice: La censura ecclesiastica dal rinascimento alla controriforma* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2006). A complete facsimile of all indices of prohibited books is now available in the series of *Index des Livres Interdits* (hereafter *ILI*) edited by J. Martinez Bujanda and published by Sherbrooke-Genève: Editions de l’Université de Sherbrooke & Librairie Droz, 1982-2002.

¹¹³ See Barbieri, ‘Tradition and Change’, 113.

¹¹⁴ The *Instructio circa indicem librorum prohibitorum*, published February 1559, specifically banned ‘missae omnes vulgari Idiomate inter horas beatae virginis insertae, sive quomodocunque aliter impressae vel conscriptae’ and broadened the remit to ‘horariis precibus, quae in Ecclesiis latine decantari solent, si in vulgarem linguam conversae’, see *ILI*, 8:104. On the trope of using an analogy between houses infected with the plague to houses infected with heretical literature, see the 1559 letter of the Florentine ambassador to Rome, Bongianni Gianfigliuzzi, reprinted in Antonio Panella, ‘L’introduzione a Firenze dell’Indice di Paolo IV.’ *Rivista Storica degli Archivi Toscani* I (1929): 11-25, 17.

vernacular.¹¹⁵ That these three universal indices were in theory understood as the benchmark for censorship on a local level is attested to by the decrees and edicts of Florentine synods that laid in place a system of examinations and protocols to be followed.¹¹⁶

The attempts by the Church through the bodies of the Inquisition, the Congregation of the Index, and local dioceses to control vernacular devotional literature, and moreover literature derived directly from the Sacred Scriptures, can be seen as an attempt to remove theological and dogmatic interpretation and surmising away from the majority of the Italian populace. In Byfleet's words, it was preferable for the masses to remain well-intentioned 'pious idiots'. The censorship aimed to limit people's direct access to the divine by requiring the mediating power of the clergy or at least an approved edition that clearly explained textual meanings and thereby ensured orthodox opinions, proper devotional routines and the correct celebration of the sacraments. Such censorship was partly based on the belief that one of the continuing causes of Protestantism lay in unregulated lay access to the Scriptures, and partly because, as already demonstrated, biblical adaptations such as Offices of the Madonna often merged sacred and profane elements together and were commonly employed in superstitious rites and therefore helped inculcate heterodox beliefs and practices. The decrees of Florentine synods made this connection explicit. For example, the 1619 synod published an edict in Italian warning laypeople that 'those having ardour to read, or to communicate to others, or to keep to themselves writings full of sententiousness, or of words appropriated from the sacred scripture to [use for] dishonest things or incantations or superstitions or impious adulations [...] will be excommunicated from us.'¹¹⁷ Eliseo Masini went so far as to posit that, as much as owning a heretical book, the recitation of the Office of the Madonna without knowing Latin and without correct intentions was one of the ways of spotting a formal heretic and an apostate of the Catholic faith.¹¹⁸ In reality though, it was probably not so much secret or avowed heretics and apostates who were affected by the Church's stance on vernacular texts derived from the Bible, but devout members of the laity and particularly females like Cassandra. While the initial reluctance of the

¹¹⁵ Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo*, 111-42, Grendler, 'The Roman Inquisition', 60, John Tedeschi, 'Florentine Documents for a History of the *Index of Prohibited Books*,' in Eadem, *The Prosecution of Heresy* (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1991), 274.

¹¹⁶ 'De Libris prohibitis' in *Decreta Dioecesanæ Florentinæ Synodi Celebrata Ab Illustris Ac Reverendiss D.D. Alexandro Medice S.R.E. Cardinali & Archiepiscopo. Florentino* (Florence: Bartholomæum Sermartellium, 1589), 20; 'De Libris prohibitis' in *Decreta Synodi Dioecesanæ Florentinæ* (Florence: Bartholomæum Sermartellium & Fraires, 1619), 16-17.

¹¹⁷ *Decreta Synodi Dioecesanæ Florentinæ* (1619), unpaginated insert at back entitled 'Editto di quello che Dsono [sic] osservare il secolari [sic] per il Sinodo dell'anno 1619'.

¹¹⁸ Eliseo Masini, *Sacro Arsenal*, 226, includes within the form of sentencing against a formal heretic, the following formula: 'Che havessi detto ad alcune persone, quali recitavano l'Officio della Beatissima Vergine, non sapendo esse latino, che non giovava loro il dirlo, mentre non intendevano quello, che leggevano; adducendo sopra ciò alcuni, benche inetti, essempli, & quella volgata autorità, *legere, & non intelligere, negligere est*'; and p.241 for the form of sentencing against an apostate the declaration that '[c]he havessi con gran temerità viturperato l'uso di recitare la Corona, & l'Officio della Beatissima Vergine'. Cf. Byfleet, *A brief explication*, 24.

Florentine state to concede censorial rights to the Church (a process that has already been well explored elsewhere), was based primarily on the detrimental effect that the Roman Indices could have on the local publishing industry, the advancement of scientific and medical endeavour, as well as Tuscan literature and language, several Tuscan ecclesiastics had from the very beginning expressed serious concern over what would be the effect of robbing the devout of their beloved devotional texts.¹¹⁹ Clerics and inquisitors alike were quick to recognise that a ban on vernacular religious literature would be injurious to the large part of the Italian populace designated as 'semplici' and above all to women; and moreover, that such a ban would be extremely difficult to enforce. The Florentine vicar Antonio Benivieni strongly lamented the decisions of the Congregation of the Index to ban popular religious texts in the vernacular, complaining to Rome of 'this scandal' that would deprive and turn the simple and the good away from their religious solace.¹²⁰

The enforcement of the prohibition on certain devotional texts was made more difficult by the endless exceptions and seemingly continual changes made by the Congregation of the Index to the lists of banned works, as well as the usurpation of the Congregation's authority by the Holy Office. To mollify the severity of the 1596 Index and placate the concerns of Bishops a belated provision to allow licences to read certain religious texts in the vernacular was made. This license was to be issued by ordinaries or inquisitors and based upon character references of the applicants and 'the conscience of their prelates'.¹²¹ In addition to this escape clause, specific editions of

¹¹⁹ For the history of censorship in Florence see Rastrelli, *Fatti attententi all'Inquisizione*, 128-32; Panella, 'Introduzione a Firenze dell'Indice'; Panella, 'La censura sulla stampa e una questione giurisdizionale fra Stato e Chiesa in Firenze alla fine del secolo XVI,' *ASI* XLIII (1909): 140-151; Antonio Rotondò, 'Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'Indice dei libri proibiti (1572-1638),' *Rinascimento* 2 (1963): 145-211; Berta Maracchi Biagiarelli, 'Il Privilegio di stampatore ducale nella Firenze Medicea,' *ASI* 123 (1965): 304-70; Tedeschi, 'Florentine documents'; Michel Plaisance, 'Littérature et censure à Florence à la fin du XVI^e siècle: le retour du censuré,' in *Le Pouvoir et la Plume. Incitation, contrôle et répression dans l'Italie du XVI^e Siècle*, ed. A. Rochon, 233-52 (Paris: Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1982).

¹²⁰ ACDF, Index III/I, Letter from Antonio Benivieni from Florence to Rome, 26 October 1596, f.352r: '[...] e il desiderio che e in questo popolo et in queste monache di potere tenere e leggere i vangeli vulgari, e lo scandolo ch pigliano i semplici e buoni di esserne privati e vanno dicendo che leggerà non la Quaresima il Boccaccio et il morgante e che possono fare senza andare a Prediche perché non le intenderanno [...]'. The Bishop of Colle di Val d'Elsa in Tuscany, Usimbardo Usimbardi, complained similarly that '[...] ho private molte persone pie et veramente catoliche delli contenuti nell'inclusa nota contanta loro malagenoleza che non bastare per esprimerla ma con promessa di far ogni opera che gli siano restituti, ond'io supplico la SVI di vederla et di madarmene quella facultà che perciò mi bisogni sicuria [...]', *ibid.*, unpaginated. See also Panella, 'L'Introduzione a Firenze', 20.

¹²¹ Several examples of supplications for licences and licences conceded made directly to the Congregation of the Index can be found in ACDF, SO, Decreta 1596, ff.134r; 134v; 136v; 140v. Correspondance from the Holy Office in Rome to the local inquisitors is often dotted with references to the regulation of licences, with a letter dated 4 May 1630 from Antonio Barberini (1569-1646), the cardinal of Sant'Onofrio, making clear the rules: 'Molto Reverendissimo Padre, essendosi visto per esperienza che le licenze di libri proibiti che si concedono da questa Sacra Congregazione ò non si portano in coteștiatti à registrate conforme alla clausola messe ò sperato il tempo della concessione, non consegnano i libri come si ordina nelle medesime licenze ò morendo avanti che spero il tempo della facultà concessali, restano in mano degli Eredi, che non hanno licenza di tenerli, nè leggerli con danno e pregiudicio delle conscienze loro. Volendo però la santità di Nostro Signore

pericopes, psalms, and the Gospels and Epistles such as those by the authors Remigio Nannini, Vincenzo Bruni and Francesco Panigarola were in fact allowed. But given that the issuing of licences was in direct contradiction to the *Observatio circa quartam regulam*, permissions were habitually revoked, approved editions were sometimes mistakenly sequestered and burned, and, as Fragnito has noted, by the time the more moderate stance was conveyed throughout Italy, many personal copies of books had been confiscated or destroyed.¹²² Even as late as the mid-seventeenth century, confusion over the status of vernacular religious texts remained widespread. For example, the vicar of Fivizzano, Francesco Montichiari, wrote to the Inquisitor of Florence to ascertain if it was in fact true that Remigio Nannini's translations of the *Evangelii* were permitted (they were), and whether Vincenzo Bruni's *Meditations on the Life of Jesus* were prohibited in accordance with the regulations laid down by the Index of Prohibited Books (it was not).¹²³ In terms of Books of Hours, prohibition should have been more straightforward. Pius V had specifically issued a bull in 1571 *Sopra la recitatione dell'Ufficio della B. Vergine Maria* that banned them and other offices or litanies in the vernacular outright, while numerous guidelines regarding the expurgation and banning of *libri di donne* were published and distributed informing the populace of the news (the

provvedere alle sopradette cose ha risoluto col'parere di questi miei SS. Illustrissimi che da qui avanti le licenze e confirmatione che da questa Sacra Congregazione si daranno d'libri proibiti à cotesta giurisdittione si invveno in mano di VR per consignarle à chi si concedono, dopo che da lei saranno state per extensum registrati in cotestiatti e si sieno obligati con giuramento avanti il Not.e testimoni di consignare à VS detti libri finito il tempo della licenza sudetta quali ricuperati li terrà elle in luogo sicuro ben custodisti ò non ubbidendo essi, possa (come e ch ragione) altengerli, ò ricuperarli in caso di morte da eredi, dadone qui' conto avido se le possa ordinare quello ne dovrà fare. E per haver VR notitia di quando verrà il caso della morte, ordinerà a Parochi, ch ne le dia avviso [...]', AAF, TIN 7.21, doc.28, letter 4. Despite the fact that Barberini's correspondance shows that several licences to Florentines were conceded in 1630, on the 22 May 1632 the Florentine Inquisitor was informed that '[...] la Santità di Nostro Signore ha rivocato con sua particolare constitutione tutte le licenze di leggere libri proibiti di qualsivoglia sorte, e qu'annesso nesicesserà VR in esemplare che le mando, acciò elle habbi notitia di quanto dispone essa constitutione[...]', *ibid.*, letter 17. Regarding the 'conscienza de' lor Prelati' and position during the 1570s whether people could own vernacular copies of the Psalms, the Office of the Madonna, the Bible, the New Testament, the *Fioretti della bibbia*, and the *Miracoli della Madonna*, see the letter dated 25 April 1576 from Fra Damiano Rubeo to the Inquisitor of Bologna as quoted in Rotondò, 'Nuovi documenti', 156-7. See also the letters reprinted pages 162, 171, 190, 191.

¹²² The *Observatio circa quartam regulam* was inserted into the Clementine index at the insistence of the Holy Office, negating the rights of diocesan superiors or regulars and inquisitors to concede licences for the vernacular Bible: *ILI*, IX, 446 & 929. On the burning and seizing of approved texts and the damage wrought by over-zealous inquisitors, see Gigliola Fragnito's 'Introduction' in her *Church, Censorship, and Culture*, 9, and Danilo Zardin, 'Bibbia e Letteratura Religiosa', 603.

¹²³ '[...] Di grazia mi faccia sapere questo et se io possi dare licenza di leggere libri sospesi *donec corrigantur* [...] Darò conto delli libri prohibiti che mi capiterano, et credo che ne verano molti su questo principio perché terrò l'ufficio con tremore [...] Qui ci sono alcuni che hanno libri di evangelii vulgari tradotti dal Padre Remigio fiorentino che le sue annotationi; dicono che V.P.Rev.ma scrisse l'anno passato che questi si potevano tenere. Desidero sapere se è vero [...] Una persona divota mi ha mandato tre libri di meditazioni del Padre Vincentio Bruno hiesuita, nelle quali ci sono evangelii vulgari, et quanto all'osservatione fatta sopra la quarta regola de' libri prohibiti sono prohibiti, tuttavia la prego farmi sapere se per tali si hanno da tenere.' The letter is reproduced in Appendix II of Prospero, 'Vicari dell'Inquisizione', 179-80.

Inquisitor of the Estensi dominion produced two thousand copies of these *avvisi* alone).¹²⁴ Similar to the ban on vernacular texts drawn from the Scriptures however, a reformed 'Little Office of Our Lady' (*Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis nuper reformatum*) was available, although ostensibly only in Latin. The reformation of the Horae was part and parcel of the wider regularization of the liturgy, which sought to standardise the prefatory rubrics and hagiographical readings, as well as provide a more consistent internal structure that ensured that the number of hagiographical, scriptural or homiletic readings were directly proportional to their subject's or saint's importance.¹²⁵ The large print editions from 1572 onwards show how this reformed Books of Hours, albeit in Latin, continued to have a wide market and remain present within houses.¹²⁶ Certainly, the fact that Books of Hours and other similar texts continued to play an important role in the moral makeup of the house's inhabitants, accounts for their inclusion as props within female portraits well into the seicento and their continued use to this day.

Trying to untwist the rules of censorship is almost as difficult as trying to establish the effect that such censorship had on everyday reading patterns and book ownership. The evidence is itself contradictory. The Church's constant tergiversations of which books were prohibited and to which class of ban authors were to be assigned created a perpetual confusion for regional inquisitors, ordinaries, and the average parish priest (not to mention the average layman) in recognizing which books were prohibited and what actions they were therefore to take. Further adding to this muddle was the fact that the rulings of the Council of Trent and the universal indices were only allowed to be published in Latin, while who had the right to concede licences was unclear. For example, the Florentine bishop and local inquisitors alike came under attack by Rome at the end of the sixteenth century for releasing permissions to read books when they apparently lacked the authority to do so.¹²⁷ Such difficulties were added to by the lack of an efficient and standardized system of expurgation, the personal predilections of inquisitors and ordinaries, the shortage of funds and men with which to enforce universally the mechanisms of censorship, and the lack of control over booksellers and printing presses. This last point is made clear in a *comparsa* of the Florentine Inquisition of 1638 claiming how the publisher Landini printed 750 copies *in nero* of

¹²⁴ On the prohibition of prayers see Giorgio Caravale, *L'Orazione proibita: censura ecclesiastica e letteratura devozionale nella prima età moderna* (Florence: Leo. S. Olschki Editore, 2003), while on the publication of expurgation guidelines for *Officii*, see also Fragnito, 'Censura ecclesiastica', 296, n. 28.

¹²⁵ Dr. Simon Ditchfield, private correspondence, 31 May 2007.

¹²⁶ Grender cites the example of the Aldine press who, granted the exclusive Venetian privilege to the reformed Office, printed 20,000 copies in just over seven months during 1572: Grender, 'The Roman Inquisition', 60.

¹²⁷ Vittorio Frajese, 'Le licenze di lettura e la politica del Sant'Uffizio dopo l'Indice Clemantino.' In *L'Inquisizione e gli storici: un cantiere aperto*, 179-220 (Rome: Accademia dei Lincei, 2000), 193.

an 'Officio' by deliberately backdating the publication year in order to circumvent prohibition.¹²⁸ Such vicissitudes in dealing easily with 'pestiferous opinions' through censorship were in turn compounded by a public who at best remained unaware of the particular rulings of Rome, and at worst maintained a strong anti-clerical resistance towards ecclesiastical censorship. Even though Lelio Ottolini's yells at a parish priest that he was a 'coglione' and should 'va in culo' whilst boasting that he had no qualms about reading prohibited books may have been extreme, Ottolini's attitude was probably shared by many Italians.¹²⁹ Given that recent work has already demonstrated how people continued to read banned works by Machiavelli, Aretino, Erasmus and other heterodox religious books, it seems plausible to suggest that they also continued to read, circulate and keep hold of old editions of the *Evangelii* and Offices of the Madonna, particularly given the aesthetic workmanship, family ties and monetary value that such books could hold. Indeed, Zardin has noted the continued presence of vernacular versions of the Gospels in both lay and religious houses during the seicento, and the Inquisitor's 1610 inventory of the Medici library noted (despite the presence of a copy of the 'Index librorum prohibitorum') over 100 prohibited books, including vernacular versions of the Bible, the breviary, the Office of the Madonna and the *Fioretti della Bibbia*.¹³⁰ Similarly, Niccolò di Carlo Benini stored together both old and new versions of the Office of the Madonna in his *scrittoio* in 1575, while Neri di Jacopo Neri had two copies of the Bible in the vernacular c.1597.¹³¹ If we return to the deposition of Domenico Bondicchi, who admitted lending a copy of the 'evangelii volgare' to a neighbour in the Borgo del Certaldo, it becomes transparent that vernacular versions of texts derived from the Bible were circulating in parts of Tuscany during the mid-seicento.¹³² That Italian editions of the Gospels and various other Scriptural histories should have continued to be present in households is also not surprising given the multitudinous editions of them that were in reality permitted and printed, and in truth, these approved versions

¹²⁸ AAF, TIN 39.23 (17 December 1638), *comparsa* of Philippus q Silvestri de Papinis. See also the 1560 case against the *libarino* Francesco Andrea di Chiari accused of selling 'libri suspecti di heresia' in AAF, CCR, PP 08.15: Chiari Francesco (1560).

¹²⁹ 'E vero, che io ho detto alcune volte con li miei compagni ch non mi faccio scrupolo di legger libri phibiti bench vi sia la phibitione [...], AAF, TIN 54.2, doc.5, *Processo* of Lelio Ottolini di Città di Castello regarding *libri prohibiti* (1651), unpaginated. On anti-clericism in Italy see Ottavia Niccoli, *Rinascimento anticlericale: infamia, propoganda e satira in Italia tra Quattro e Cinquecento* (Rome & Bari: Editori Laterza, 2005).

¹³⁰ Zardin, 'Bibbia e lettura religiosa', 604, n.11. The Medici library inventory is reprinted in Leandro Perini, 'Contributo alla ricostruzione della biblioteca privata dei Granduchi di Toscana nel XVI secolo,' in *Studi di storia Medievale e moderna per Ernesto Sestan*, 571-667. Florence, 1980.

¹³¹ ASF, MPP 2665, Inv. of Niccolò di Carlo Benini (1575), f.35v: 'due offitiuolo uno del carta pecora e laltra in quoio uno di nuovi et uno vecchi'. He also owned a 'libro legato in asse vecchio pistole e evangelii', f.34v. On Neri di Jacopo Neri see Bec, *Les Livres*, 308 & 309.

¹³² Bondicchi, stated that '[...] se havessi creduto che fossero prohibiti l'averai abbrugiati [...] o mandati al S^o Officio ne io q^o havuta creduta credenza di senza alcuna [...]', AAF, TIN 39.31, doc.1 (15 November 1642), unpaginated.

probably just sustained traditional reading habits albeit in a slightly modified form.¹³³ Even Italian versions of the Office of Our Lady, replete with indulgences and *privilegi*, continued to be printed during the seicento and were widely available in the settecento.¹³⁴

In contrast to these points that suggest that the mechanisms of ecclesiastical censorship had a relatively limited effect and limited time period, other factors highlight how censorship influenced traditional religious reading habits. A large number of household books certainly were destroyed, expurgated, and taken away from homes. Under the auspices of the Holy Office and with permission from the Tuscan State, bonfires of prohibited books were organised in order to make a public spectacle that would impress on people's minds who had the ultimate control over the word. For example, book burnings took place in the *piazze* of San Giovanni and Santa Croce in 1559, and while these fires may have been token gestures counselling caution and demonstrating the allegiance of State with Church, they were notable enough to have been recorded by the diarist Lapini.¹³⁵ According to Inquisitorial correspondence the same techniques were being used some forty years later. A 1598 list sent to Rome by Fra Antonio Topi (a vicar of the Holy Office in Montepulciano under the remit of the Florentine Inquisition) noted how, among numerous other texts, twelve copies of the Bible in the vernacular, eighty of the 'Pistoli et vangeli', sixteen of the New Testament, and twenty-five 'offitioli della Madonna antichi' were burnt in front of the church of San Francesco during the celebration of mass.¹³⁶ As inquisitors increasingly gained rights to search and seize bookshops and houses, and as confessors increasingly gained (and then threatened to convey) knowledge over personal habits, the effectiveness of book censorship in part depended more on denunciations, custom checks and an accepted and expected understanding that existed between self, censorship and the Church. Whether through destruction, expurgation, or forceful suggestions, the Holy Office doubtless did deprive some of the faithful of their most beloved

¹³³ In addition to Nannini's version noted above, lists by Fragnito and Zardin reveal the wide range of approved vernacular Gospels that were in fact available: see Fragnito, *La Bibbia al rogo*, 202-4, and Zardin, 'Bibbia e letteratura religiosa', 604.

¹³⁴ For example an *Ufficio della gloriosissima Vergine Maria con l'esposizione italiana del r.mo mons.r Battistia Valentini [...]*, (Rome, appresso Iacomo Mascardi, 1618), is available in BAV, Barberini. CIII.47; while the British Library holds an *Offitio della gloriosa Vergine Maria secondo la riforma di Pio v. Con quello che corr nella Settimana Santa [...] spurgati utlimamente da infiniti errori dal sig. Giulio Malatesti [...] Con l'Indulgenze, nuovo calendario* (Rome, Alfonso Ciaconne per Stefano Paulino, 1608), and an *Officium B. Mariae Virginis. Nuper reformatum, & Pij v. Pont. Max. iussu editum [...]* *Co i Salmi de i Vesperie delle Dominiche e delle Compiete di tutto l'anno, e il Rosario della Madonna* (Venice, Franciscum Pratum, 1619).

¹³⁵ Panella, 'Introduzione a Firenze', 23.

¹³⁶ ACDF, Index, Vol. XVIII/I, Miscellanea Rerum ad Congr.Indicis.Spectant. nd, f.79r (in the 1551 census, Montepulciano contained 780 families, see *Repetti*, no. scheda 34170/3122). See also the list of books sequestered by the Holy Office in Florence (c.1598), which notes a similar range of books, *ibid.*, ff.77r-78r, as well as f.206r which listing solely *evangeli, salmi, fioretti della bibbia*, and bibles all in Italian constitutes a 'Nota di libri dequali Il Vescovo di Colle desider poter far la restititione a quelli a quali gl'ha levati in virti dell'Indice con la licenza di poterli leggere et valersene a consolatione loro come hanno fatto per il passato [...] levate persone pie e catolichi le quali in leggerli havevano particular consolatione, et si terrebbono con la restititione contentissimi.'

devotional texts and thereby intruded on personal reading habits. Indeed, the fate of the Italian Bible stands as evidence of how effective Tridentine censorship could be. Although in earlier inventories vernacular editions of the Bible were not as common as the more popular anthologies or paraphrases that derived from it, easy access to copies was effectively denied from 1567 to 1758 when Benedict XIV lifted the ban on Italian publications of the Bible.¹³⁷ Finally, the evidence from the inventories does show a quite dramatic fall in the possession of *libri di donna* and *vangeli*. Books of hours were listed in 36% of book-owning households in the 1540s. By the 1620s this number had decreased to 17%. Similarly, the presence of the *Gospels and Epistles* had declined from 19% in 1560 to just 3.4% of literate households for the same timeframe.

CONCLUSION

The Ecclesiastical censorship of traditional devotional and secular literature in the vernacular has been credited with adversely affecting not just reading habits and therefore household book collections, but also the relationship that readers had with their religious and cultural patrimony. Yet as already noted the evidence of how much impact it really had is equivocal and ambiguous, and may well remain so. The effectiveness of book censorship by the Congregation of the Index and the Inquisition in Italy never rested on destroying every single copy of prohibited texts, or prosecuting every bookseller who sold them and every reader who read them. Such a Sisyphean task was rendered and recognised as impossible by the way that words and the ideas that bind them spread. The increasing power of the printing press and new methods of distribution made sure that, as Roberto Bellarmino noted in 1614, 'from day to day the number of infectious and pernicious books grows always more'.¹³⁸ Instead, the effectiveness of censorship resided not solely on the eradication of 'pestiferous texts' but in instilling an understanding that personal reading habits would be subject to the moral guardianship of the Church.

On 15 May 1631 the Florentine Giovambattista di Filippo di Giovambattista Strozzi noted in his diary that the Reverend Inquisitor 'conceded to me the right to keep and read the book of The Art of War by Niccolò Machiavelli that belonged to my great-grandfather Lorenzo di Filippo di Lorenzo Strozzi'.¹³⁹ The inclusion of this event in Giovambattista's remembrances is salutary. The notice highlights the longevity of texts within families and the way that books could be intimately

¹³⁷ Nonetheless Barbieri points out how inventories of seized books sent to Rome show that Italian editions of it were still circulating at the end of the sixteenth century, 'Tradition and Change', 125-7.

¹³⁸ Rotondò, 'Nuovi documenti', 196, letter to the Inquisitor of Modena dated 26 July 1614.

¹³⁹ ASF, CSV 1253, *Quaderno di ricordi di Gio:Batista di Filippo di Gio:Batista Strozzi* (1629-1639), unpaginated.

entwined with issues of family identity and ownership even when those texts had been prohibited for over seventy years.¹⁴⁰ In addition, the memoir draws attention to the way that permission to read prohibited books was part of everyday life, that knowledge of which authors and texts were banned was becoming increasingly widespread, and that the indices and regulations issued from Rome were in fact subject to local discretion. However, it also shows that such discretion was primarily reserved for patricians like Strozzi and members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, prompting the assertion that reading post-Trent may have become an activity gradually more demarcated by class.¹⁴¹ Perhaps most importantly though, Giovambattista's note points out that like inventories, official sources can provide an unreliable source of evidence to form firm conclusions regarding reading habits or the function of censorship. Conceding licences to read Machiavelli's works was officially the personal prerogative of the pontiff alone, and Vittorio Frajese found only one Roman concession to read the Florentine secretary's work in 1626 despite numerous requests.¹⁴² The issues raised by this *ricordo* entry are equally applicable to devotional texts.

While the inventories are too often silent on the precise nature of the texts kept at home, they nonetheless demonstrate that devotional texts and prayer books were the ones most commonly owned. From the fifteenth to seventeenth century, these books remained everyday objects for personal meditation. In addition, authors like Razzi and Granada peddled a successful formula by writing books in a simple conversational style and affective tone which were intimately entwined with the construction of day-to-day realities by offering a paradigm of religious behaviour that had scriptural basis. It would be a grave mistake to assume that the only religious text available to the Italian populace for centuries was the catechism or Latin Offices, and that these call-and-answer or supplicatory texts automatically denied individual understanding.¹⁴³

The fact that even today Italy remains fundamentally and strongly Catholic highlights the success that the Church's stratagems of censorship and the Roman Inquisition had in limiting the appeal and impact of Protestantism and its derivations. The persistence of the liturgy in Latin until 1965 (when Paul VI conducted the first official mass in Italian) and the Church's promotion of Latin catechisms as the primary means of elementary and religious instruction, may have to some degree distanced or dissuaded the Italian populace away from what Fragnito has termed the 'experience of a conscious faith' and an active and individual understanding of that faith.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ All works by Machiavelli, including his *Seven Books on the Art of War* (first published 1520) were prohibited by the 1559 Index.

¹⁴¹ According to Frajese, permissions released by Rome to acquire, read or possess banned texts during the first twenty years of the seventeenth century were limited both in number and in remit towards important members of clergy, the patrician class, and 'professioni' (above all judges and doctors): Frajese, 'Le licenze di lettura', 191 & 210.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 218.

¹⁴³ See Anne Jacobson Schutte's review of *La Bibbia al rogo* in *Sixteenth Century Journal* 28 (1997): 1408-1410.

¹⁴⁴ Fragnito, *Proibito capire*, 8 and *passim*.

Nonetheless, as the discussion of Books of Hours has shown, it is overly simplistic to assume that the exclusion of vernacular Offices or the Scripture alongside the *continuance* of the liturgy in Latin excluded the laity from actively understanding their religion. It has demonstrated how reading and comprehending texts cannot be understood in a restrictive way. Fragnito's comments highlight the danger of privileging texts above other means of accessing religion, and overstating a belief that somehow access to religious books in the vernacular, and particularly the Bible (or texts derived from the Bible), would automatically produce a more profound and self-aware religiosity. The failure of this access (and the success of the Church's censorship) would result in an unquestioning populace ultimately dependent on clerical intermediaries in order to only ever partly understand their beliefs. As suggested by the previous three chapters, the contents of the house show how Catholic beliefs could be approached and understood through a myriad of diverse means and to diverse ends. The occlusive nature of the inventories regarding religious books merely serves to highlight how many more ways remained hidden at home and between the lines.

Chapter Five

DOMESTIC ORATORIES AND CHAPELS

INTRODUCTION

Francesco di Giorgio Martini's late-quattrocento architectural treatise *Trattati di architettura, ingegneria e arte militare* (1492) included domestic chapels in his houses for princes and governors. These chapels were situated in places next to *camere* and *sale* to enable both devout and social exchanges, showing how they had a private or 'segreto' nature as well as a 'pubblico' one.¹ Di Giorgio's tract emphasizes the complex nature of domestic chapels, illustrating how they had to function as exclusive spaces for religious devotion at the same time as they gave public visibility and status to personal piety. In his treatise these chapels act as concrete reminders of the symbiotic relationship between temporal and divine authority, even while mapping out formalized routes between the sacred and the profane by providing an architectural framework that allowed for, and helped shape, a ritualized nexus of comportment and display. However, in the long list of requirements Francesco di Giorgio gave for the *palazzi* of nobles, domestic chapels were conspicuously neither suggested nor referred to.² In di Giorgio's division of society into six classes and his provision of six house types appropriate to each of them, a private chapel is only included for those at the very pinnacle of the social hierarchy. Similarly, Sebastiano Serlio's sixth book on architecture (written c.1545), which formulated architectural habitations suitable to a hierarchical division of society into five classes, only noted domestic chapels in the house plans designed for an 'illustrious prince.'³ Francesco di Giorgio and Serlio's tracts would seem to bear witness to fifteenth and early sixteenth-century Florentine practices.

¹ Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Trattati di architettura, ingegneria e arte militare*, ed. C. Maltese, 2 vols. (Milan, Edizioni il Polifilo, 1967), 72-74, 350. See also the descriptions pp. 70-71, where in the sala for the 'case reali e signorili' there is 'una cappella laddove el signore publico e in segreto per due connesse camere che all'altre corripodenti seranno', while at the front of the palace overlooking a garden there is also 'una devota cappella, se a sua devozione alcune volte stare o messa far dir volesse [...] presso al cattedral tempio e luoghi publici come se d'uffizi e altri luoghi mercantili della città'.

² Martini, *Trattati*, 344-351.

³ Sebastiano Serlio, *Architettura civile. Libri sesto settimo e ottavo nei manoscritti di Monaco e Vienna*, ed. Francesco Paolo Fiore (Milan: Edizioni il Polifilo, 1994), 72. On both Serlio's and di Giorgio's class divisions see James S. Ackerman & Myra Nan Rosenfeld, 'Social Stratification in Renaissance Urban Planning,' in *Urban Life in the Renaissance*, eds. Ronald F. E. Weissmann and Susan Zimmerman, 21-49

While many domestic spaces could be used for devotion, formally articulated chapels in fifteenth-century urban houses were the exception rather than the norm, required as in di Giorgio's and Serlio's tracts, only by the secular or spiritual leaders of the city populace.⁴ Papal indulgences bestowed altar rights on leaders of state and canon law automatically allowed consecrated chapels for cardinals, those princes of the church, as well as for bishops and prelates.⁵ That they were required for rulers, goes some way to explain the existence of Gozzoli's frescoed chapel for the Medici's quasi-public palazzo (see fig.5.1): a chapel whose description by Filarete acknowledges its uniqueness.⁶ Indeed, Leandro Alberti's account of the Medici palace made clear its pretensions, noting it was a 'building certainly fit for a King, and not a private *cittadino*'.⁷ However, by the early sixteenth century, and the time of Giorgio Vasari il Giovane's utopian architectural treatise *La Città Ideale* (1598), domestic chapels were, if not common, then at least not in short supply among the urban elite who helped comprise Florence's grand-ducal court.⁸ Vasari il Giovane's floorplans of

(Newark: University of Delaware Press & Associated University Presses, 1989), and Myra Nan Rosenfeld 'Social Structure in Book VI: The Historic and Economic Background', in Eadem ed., *Serlio on Domestic Architecture*, ch.IV, 41-48 (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1996).

⁴ The only documented quattrocento urban domestic chapels in Florence were the Medici's, the Minerbetti's, and that of Bartolomeo Scala, who was granted the right to build a chapel with an altar by Archbishop of Florence in 1475. Although according to Philip Mattox, the 1502 inventory of the Palazzo Minerbetti also contained an 'oratorio'. Mattox's view that urban domestic chapels were profuse throughout this period only subsequently obscured by their renovation in conformance to Tridentine guidelines: Mattox, 'The Domestic Chapel in Renaissance Florence' (PhD thesis, Yale University, New Haven, 1996), esp. 476. Unfortunately, Mattox uses Francesco Sassetti's two chapels at his villa La Pietra as an urban example, while the 'hypothetical chapel' of the Rucellai, for example, remains just that. Mattox's recent article shows a more nuanced approach by positing that through portable altars, architecturally undefined chapels were more common than previously thought in Florentine homes during the quattrocento, see Philip Mattox 'Domestic sacred space in the Florentine palace,' *Renaissance Studies* 20 (2006): 658-673. In contrast, this chapter is concerned with tracing chapels as separate rooms or structures. On the Scala chapel see Anna Bellinazzi, ed., *La Casa del Cancelliere. Documenti e studi sul palazzo di Bartolomeo Scala a Firenze* (Florence: Edifir-Edizioni, 1998), and Linda Pellecchia, 'The Patron's Role in the Production of Architecture: Bartolomeo Scala and the Scala Palace,' *Renaissance Quarterly* 42 (1989): 258-291.

⁵ *CE*, s.v. 'Chapel' and 'Ecclesiastical Law as to Chapels'; Giovanni Battista Gattico, *De oratoriis domesticis et de usu altaris portatilis juxtà veterem ac recentem Ecclesiae disciplinam* (Rome: ex typographia Generosi Salomi, 1746), passim.

⁶ Antonio di Piero Averlino, *Filarete's Treatise on Architecture*, trans. John R. Spenser (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 324-5. Filarete's description of the chapel as 'più che gli altri luoghi è hornato,' likewise suggests its valued position within the spatial hierarchy of the palace. Significantly, Filarete's treatise, which uses five class divisions, makes no reference to a private chapel other than for the prince.

⁷ Leandro Alberti, *Descrittione di Tutta Italia*, 1568 (Bergamo: Leading Edizioni, 2003), 48: 'opera certame[n]te da Re, & no da privato cittadino'. Most recently on the Medici chapel see Amanda Lillie, 'The Patronage of villa chapels and oratories near Florence: A typology of Private Religion,' in *With and Without the Medici: Studies in Tuscan Art and Patronage 1434-1530*, eds. Ekart Marchand and Alison Wright, 19-45 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), and Lorenz Böninger's articles, 'Diplomatie im Dienst der Kontinuität. Piero de' Medici zwischen Rom und Mailand (1447-1454),' in *Piero de' Medici*, eds. Beyer and Boucher, 39-54, and "'Altare portatile" e "cappella privata": il caso dei Medici,' *MKIF XLIV* (2000): 335-337.

⁸ Giorgio Vasari il Giovane, *La città ideale. Piante di chiese [palazzi e ville] di Toscana e d'Italia* (Rome: Officina Edizioni, 1970). On Vasari il Giovane see Loredana Olivato's articles 'Profilo di Giorgio Vasari il Giovane,' *Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell'arte XVII* (1970): 181-229; 'Giorgio Vasari il Giovane. Il funzionario del "Principe",' *L'Arte IV* (1971): 5-28. On the Florentine elite see R. Burr Litchfield, *Emergence of a Bureaucracy, The Florentine Patricians 1530-1790* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton

palaces and villas included domestic chapels for not just the prince, but also for ‘i ricchi Gentilhuomini.’⁹ Even the ‘Cittadini mercatani [sic]’, while advised they should not be building in the manner of the gentlemen of the court, were given a choice between a place for a chapel or a fountain in Vasari il Giovane’s design in order to live at their appropriate level or *grado* (see fig.5.2).¹⁰ Although his text appears to deal with a fictive utopia, the greatly increased class range and number of people who should possess their own private chapel in Vasari il Giovane’s work corresponds to an expanding number of those who actually did. The archival survey constructed for this chapter shows that between 1590 and 1625 there were at least one hundred domestic chapels within the centre of Florence alone.¹¹ Of these, where dates of construction are given, nearly all were formed within the last decades of the sixteenth century and the first two of the seventeenth. Records from the inventories of the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* confirm the rising popularity of personal chapels for this period. The inventories show that the percentage of properties in possession of a domestic chapel or oratory had risen from 1.4% from the period 1464-1562, to 2.14% between 1573-1602, up to 7.5% during the years 1617-1655.¹² Such a proliferation indicates nothing less than a chapel boom, which, as the first four chapters have shown, corresponded to a timeframe that witnessed an exponential increase in the number of religious objects, images and books collected in Florentine households.

Despite obvious continuities in social and kinship practices and affective relationships, a comparison of the role of the domestic chapel in Francesco di Giorgio’s and Vasari il Giovane’s treatises indicates that not only had cultural, social and religious structures undergone a profound transformation between their periods (c.1490 – 1600), but so too had the expectations for domestic space. The morphology of domestic architecture through the development of the apartment and the increasing room specialization that took place during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, may well have refigured daily practices by developing specific locations for specific objects within a codified architectural typology and mapped out boundaries for certain individuals and privileged activities. The evolution of the formalized architectural space of a private chapel or oratory within the house is a case in point, and Patricia Waddy has noted that it had become an essential element in the Roman apartment by the mid-seventeenth century.¹³ While the function of the chapel within the

University Press, 1986), and Roslyn Pesman Cooper, ‘The Florentine Ruling Group under the “governo popolare” 1492-1512,’ *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 7 (1985): 69-181.

⁹ Vasari il Giovane, *La Città Ideale*, 124.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹¹ Information from AAF, *Oratori* files 2, 3, & 4. This number indicates separate locations of chapels rather than individual licence holders.

¹² Data taken from ASF, MPAP 186; 189; 2645, and MPP 2648 (1538-62); 2651 (1557-62); 2709 (1569); 2664 (1573-8); 2655 (1581-88); 2657 (1598-1602); 2660 (1617-22); 2661 (1644-1655).

¹³ Patricia Waddy, ‘The Roman Apartment from the Sixteenth to the Seventeenth Century,’ in *Architecture et vie sociale à la Renaissance. L’organisation intérieure des grands demeures à la fin du Moyen Age et à la Renaissance*, ed. Jean Guillaume, 155-65 (Paris: Éditions Picard, 1994).

home will be examined later, it is important to note here that, by altering architecturally indistinct areas of worship into an officially articulated room devoted to the Eucharist, the dynamic relations between users, space, religion and its practice invariably shifted. The publication of the 1517 Florentine synod called attention to this in its discussion of private altars. Previous Florentine synods had been more concerned with the proper performance of mass, but the 1517 synod registers a shift towards a new concern with *where* mass was being performed, implicitly recognizing how space constructed meanings and behaviors. The synod lamented that '[n]ow we find the corruption has invaded the province of Florence by which mass is commonly celebrated in houses, in bedrooms and where the sexual act is carried out, where games and other bodily necessities are effectuated.'¹⁴ The spatial distinction of a private chapel or oratory demarcated a conceptual segregation between everyday activities and a religious sphere. The spatial distinction it provided within households thereby also ensured a degree of regulation, and the ostensible separation between sacred and profane habits.

The same concern regarding mass said in secular homes that was expressed in the 1517 Florentine synod, provided the impetus for session twenty-two of the third meeting of the Council of Trent. This session attempted to put an unequivocal end to an easy reconfiguration of domestic space into sacred space. Recalling a long history of the church's attempt to control the celebration of mass in private houses that goes back to the Quinsext Council's decrees of 692, session twenty-two held on the seventeenth of September 1562 dealt with the teaching and canons on the sacrifice of mass, and decreed that the celebration of mass 'by any secular or religious priests whatever in private houses' was strictly forbidden.¹⁵ Trent's refusal to allow mass in domestic homes demonstrates a fundamental ecclesiastical concern with demarcating the boundaries of authority between the secular and the sacred in order to assert the church's intercessory role between man and God. Alongside the rulings on marriage and baptism, this Tridentine decree exhibits not just the early modern Catholic Church's desire for a more disciplined and uniform code of religious practice which would see the parish church as the centralized point of focus, but also more obviously demonstrates its fight for control over private space and the powers of the familial group. By denying the Eucharist to private houses, the decree in one sense stressed the 'secularity' of the domestic sphere. Through legislations against domestic participation, the 'counter' aspect of the counter-reformation, as John Bossy has observed, seems strikingly evident and reactionary to a Protestant sacralization of the domestic sphere.¹⁶ However, as the first four chapters have demonstrated, through material culture religion had become more available within the domestic

¹⁴ As quoted in Trexler, *Synodal Law*, 57.

¹⁵ Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2: 736-7. On the early history of the domestic chapel see Gillian Mackie, *Early Christian Chapels in the West: Decoration, Function, and Patronage* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

¹⁶ Bossy, 'The Counter-Reformation and the People of Catholic Europe.'

sphere post-Trent. In fact, the growing number of domestic chapels at a time of their increased supervision, if not complete prohibition, signifies there was a large lapse between prescription and practice, and that the divisions between private and public, or spiritual and secular were only ever faintly adumbrated if at all. Regarding the lapses between precept and practice, that arch exemplar of a Counter-Reformation Bishop, Carlo Borromeo himself noted that '[a]ll rules must allow exceptions to the cases, the times, and the persons.'¹⁷ That domestic chapels were also in practice largely exempt from ecclesiastical regulations, even while, as in the decrees of Trent, they were conspicuously incorporated into them, shows the singular position they held for both Church authorities and their private owners.

The regulation of domestic chapels in both Tridentine and local synodal decrees, as well as their ubiquitous presence in the Tuscan countryside (figs.5.3 – 5.8) attests to the significance that these structures held (figs.5.3-5.8). Despite this significance, domestic oratories and chapels themselves have usually been left by the wayside by both historians and modern users. Only a handful of urban domestic chapels from the sixteenth-century survive within Florence (namely the Medici, Salviati, Ricasoli, Ridolfi, Zanchini, and Niccolini chapels), the rest have either been destroyed or are now serving a different function within a changed architectural framework.¹⁸ Both urban and rural examples, like other specific domestic spaces and their social functions, have been largely ignored. While account books can provide evidence of construction and its costs, few extant sources directly document their use and meanings. However, the *Oratori* files of the Archivio Arcivescovile di Firenze, described in the Introduction, provide an important source for the reconstruction and interpretation of these spaces. This chapter has concentrated particularly on files two (1591-1613), three (1614-27) and four (1628-43). File five (1644-1660) has also been consulted, as has the more irregular and incomplete first file (1405-1785) which consists mainly of supplications and visitations from the late-seventeenth to mid-eighteenth centuries. In addition to these files, other sources including the *Pupilli* inventories, synodal decrees, pastoral visitations, and extant oratories have been employed to provide a more comprehensive examination into domestic oratories.¹⁹

¹⁷ The quote regards the justification of the Pope's election of the thirteen year old Ferdinando de' Medici (later Grand Duke) and sixteen year old Federico Gonzaga to the cardinalate, and finishes 'and you see well whether these are not the times to give such princes this honourable satisfaction.' Borromeo to Delfino, Rome, 6th February 1563, Steiner, 3:176, no.66, as quoted in Robert Trisco, 'Carlo Borromeo and the Council of Trent,' in *San Carlo Borromeo. Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*, eds. John M. Headley and John B. Tomaro, 47-66, (Washington DC & London: Folger Books & Associated University Press), 59.

¹⁸ At the time of research for this chapter, extant sixteenth-century Florentine chapels were the subject of a doctoral dissertation by Martin Hirschboeck, conducted under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Schlink at Freiburg University.

¹⁹ Regarding Florentine synods, from the closing of the Council of Trent in 1563 up until 1645, eleven were held in Florence. Five of these took place between 1610-1629 under the impetus of Archbishop Alessandro Marzimedici. For a comprehensive listing of the synodal decrees see Silvino Da Nardo, *Sinodi diocesani*

Primarily using these sources, this chapter sets out to explore formalized private devotional space, looking not just at domestic oratories and chapels as adjuncts to other well-established forms of pious giving, but as important family and local institutions in their own right. It has been constructed from the above observations regarding the proliferation of chapels in Florence during the late-sixteenth century, their simultaneous outlawing by Trent, and the importance of space in defining self and social relations. The chapter begins by briefly drawing attention to who had a domestic oratory and how many of them they had. It then concentrates on rural examples in order to examine the ways in which they constructed identities, and social and spiritual networks. Exploring their audiences, uses, architecture and decoration, it moves on to investigate who officiated in them and how, and to whom they were dedicated. We are left though with the rather paradoxical question: if Trent banned them, why did they boom in its aftermath? While attempts to resolve this will be made, this chapter is less concerned with attributing causes for the proliferation of domestic chapels, assuming that motivations lay somewhere between piety, domestic spatial developments, and the social expectations of Florentine elites under the Grand Duchy.

OWNERS

Domestic chapels and oratories were exceptions, in that they were owned by a small, yet disproportionately powerful, elite. Both urban and rural domestic chapels were, as in Serlio's, Francesco di Giorgio's and Vasari il Giovane's texts, very much status specific. Individually, only the rich could afford them, and only the influential could receive rights (preferably through a papal brief) for mass to be celebrated. A scroll through the names of the supplicants and owners of private chapels and oratories reads like a 'who's who' of the Florentine elite, combining long established families with the up-and-coming 'new men' of the court, high-profile Catholic converts such as the Duke of Northumberland, Robert Dudley, and out-of-town diplomats, such as the

italiani. Catalogo bibliografico degli atti a stampa, 1879-1960, con un'appendice sui sinodi anteriori all'anno 1534 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1960); Modesto Rastrelli, *Concili e Sinodi tenuti in Firenze dall'anno MLV all'anno MDCCLXXXVII* (Np, nd), and Luigi Santoni, *Notizie storiche riguardanti le chiese dell'arcidiocesi di Firenze*, 1847 (repr. Florence: Arnaldo Forni Editore, 1974), 413. The Pastoral Visits for Florence are described in Gilberto Aranci, ed., *L'Archivio della Cancelleria arcivescovile di Firenze. Inventario delle Visite pastorali* (Florence: Giampiero Pagnini, 1998), and more specifically by Rossella Tarchi, 'Per un'indicizzazione computerizzata degli atti delle visite pastorali della diocesi di Firenze. La visita di Alessandro de' Medici del 1589,' in *Visite pastorali ed elaborazione dei dati: esperienze e metodi*, eds. Cecilia Nubola and Angelo Turchini, 81-140 (Bologna: il Mulino, 1993). No equivalent 'Oratory' font exists in the Archivio Vescovile di Firenze, although the pastoral visits for this separate diocese so meticulously indexed by Mons. Giuseppe Raspini provide an important source for gathering data on domestic oratories. AVF, *Visite Pastorali*, 14 (1615-19), 17 (1634-1641), & 18 (1646-7) were consulted, and appear to confirm the trends noted in the Florentine diocese.

Lucchese ambassador Filippo Mei.²⁰ Occasionally women were recorded as licencees. For example Eleonora Montalvi, the wife of a Siense politician and an important patron and female mystic in her own right, was recorded in 1636 as having obtained a papal brief from Rome to celebrate mass at her newly built palace in the quarter of San Lorenzo.²¹ In 1647 she was granted a license to celebrate in a purpose built oratory and house in via dell'Amore, San Lorenzo, for an institution she had founded and dedicated to the 'fanciulle ancille della Santissima Vergine'.²² However, Montalvi was exceptional in both her gender and ambition as the vast majority of supplicants for licences to celebrate mass (87.8%) were men. At least eighty-five of these individuals had the status of senators, although many others listed were titled, held some sort of political office, or were the recipients of some sort of honorary order. Indeed, the visitation files reveal that chapel ownership was deeply embedded in social status. For example, Giovanni Batista Gianfigliuzzi's oratory of the Coronation of the Virgin raised the comment from the visiting priest that 'one can imagine it [belonging] to any similar gentleman of the same status [*da simil gentilhuomo di fabrica*].'²³ Another priest noted approvingly how GiovannAntonio Ciccii's oratory at Sant'Andrea a Comaggiano was exactly befitting a 'person of such good quality'.²⁴ Such comments highlight how these spaces advertised either the aspirant or established owner's social position and were instrumental in both establishing and maintaining reputations.

The visitation files chart not only the owners over time and therefore the inheritance pattern and distribution of property, but also the extent of that property. For the very wealthy, a range of private chapels in both domestic or public spheres allowed different religious spaces to be distinguished from one another even as it showed off the space's patron as both distinguished and religious. Antonio di Filippo Salviati, for example, was granted the faculty in 1610, and again in 1617, by the Archbishop of Florence to celebrate daily masses at the chapels in his Florentine residences in via del Cocomero (now via Ricasoli) (fig.5.9) and via del Palagio (now via Ghibellina), as well as his oratories in Vico, Valdimarina and Calenzano, and his villa in Fiesole.²⁵ These domestic spaces of worship need to be placed alongside Antonio's continuing patronage within Tuscan churches and monasteries, such as the chapel of Sant'Antonino that he and his brother Averardo had built during the last quarter of the sixteenth century in San Marco, reputedly

²⁰ On the 'Duci Nortumbria' Robert Dudley see AAF, *Oratori* 2, 26 September 1623 and 4 December 1625. Dudley rented Villa Corsini-Rinieri (San Michele a Castello) which had been sold to Cosimo II in 1618. On Mei's chapel within the *sala* of his rented Florentine palace see AAF, *Oratori* 4, 22 June 1631.

²¹ AAF, *Oratori* 4, 16 January 1637. See also fig.2.21 which was dedicated to Eleonora Montalvi.

²² AAF, *Oratori* 5, 1 September 1647. Baldinucci, *Notizie* 1681, 13 records that the Villa la Quiete was conceded to Montalvi for the 'abitazione delle virgini di suo Istituto.'

²³ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 20 May 1595.

²⁴ AAF, *Oratori* 5, 4 July 1646.

²⁵ Pinchera, *Lusso e decoro*, 181. For the concession of licenses see AAF, *Oratori* 2: 3 August 1610, 16 October 1603; and *Oratori* 3: 20 July 1615. On Salviati's Oratory of the Visitation at his villa of Collina which was decorated by Giovan Maria Butter and Giovanni Bizzelli, with an altarpiece attrib. to Leonardo Mascagni, see Cristina Acidini-Luchinat, ed., *I dintorni di Firenze* (Milan: Mondadori, 2000), 101.

at a cost of 80,000 *scudi*.²⁶ While Salviati's collection of five personal oratories may seem extraordinary, several other individual patrons possessed not only separate oratories for their villa and town residences but also had one or more places of worship within the same compound. Senator Lorenzo Franceschi appears to have had no less than three distinct religious spaces attached to his villa Loretino at Sant' Andrea a Rovezzano (see figs.5.76a & b). One was a Marian oratory founded in 1612, while the two other adjacent and discrete *cappelle* (both dating from the early seventeenth century and both the same size) were dedicated to St. Francis and St. Lawrence respectively.²⁷ Roberto Bali Pucci had two chapels at his villa near San Martino a Montughi, as well as two consecrated altars for the celebration of mass at his villa of Oliveto, located between Castelfiorentino, Montespertoli and Certaldo, and originally built in 1424 (see figs.5.10-5.14).²⁸ Pucci had refurbished his Oliveto oratory around the beginning of the seventeenth century. Located at the end of the castle's courtyard (fig.5.13), the Oliveto chapel had nonetheless at least four separate entranceways (see figs. 5.12 - 5.14, and 5.16). Luxuriously fitted out in blue and gold marble and encrusted with the Pucci insignia, the chapel (fig.5.15), according to the visitation records, drew a large audience from the surrounding countryside. This congregation would have been easily accommodated within the chapel's relatively spacious environs, although an overhanging balcony allowed extra room and presumably a degree of separation for the family and their guests from the *contadini* (fig.5.17). However, hidden behind this main oratory and accessible through a door at the back of the chapel (see fig.5.16) was a 'tiny secret chapel' (*cappellina segreta*) that contained a large crucifix 'miracolosamente tenuta' (see figs.5.18 and 5.19).²⁹ This hidden chapel had an altar erected in 1541 in honour of a visit by Pope Paul III (1468-1549) and could have held only a few devotees at any one time. The chapels in Pucci's Oliveto villa recall the existence of two distinct religious spaces within Francesco Sassetti's villa La Pietra and the Medici palace during the second half of the fifteenth century as examined by Amanda Lillie.³⁰ As Lillie's discussion has highlighted in regard to the Medici and Sassetti examples, the presence of several rooms dedicated to religion within the same domestic sphere show how a range of different spaces could be constructed to serve different needs. Indeed, Pucci's two distinct altars and Franceschi's three oratories, suggest the spatial inscription of power relations, and the subtle graduations between what is public and what is private that existed within the diverse parameters of piety. It is significant however, that the examples of both Pucci and Franceschi were rural examples, a fact to which the chapter will now turn.

²⁶ Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie storiche delle chiese fiorentine* (Florence: P.G. Vivani, 1754-1762) III:145. See also Codini and Sbrilli, *Il Quaderno della fabbrica*.

²⁷ AAF, *Oratori* 4, 3 August 1643.

²⁸ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 17 July 1606. On the villa and its history see Socrate Isolani, *La Villa di Oliveto in Valdelsa* (Castelfiorentino: Tipografia Giovannelli e Carpitelli, 1928).

²⁹ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 29 August 1610.

³⁰ Lillie, 'Patronage of villa chapels', 18-20, 29-30.

RURAL AND URBAN ORATORIES

Despite Richard Trexler's belief that the medieval and early Renaissance Florentine *contado* was desacralized as religious prestige became increasingly imported into and appropriated by the urban sphere, evidence suggests otherwise.³¹ Even today a barrage of roadside shrines, tabernacles, and oratories supplement parish churches, and demonstrate the complex itinerary of a countryside whose very nature is imbued with religion. That this was the case four hundred years ago is attested to by the numerous recordings (both visual and written) of pilgrimages, feast days and processions that inscribed religion into the calendar of rural daily existence and created an extremely localized topography of devotion. For example, the maps of the *Capitani di Parte Guelfa* (1580-1595), demonstrate the way in which the Tuscan landscape was carved up according to the jurisdiction of *pievi* (see fig. 5.20), and how *maestà* (literally 'majesty', a roadside 'maestà' can be best translated as a small roadside shrine usually bearing an image of Christ or Mary enthroned), tabernacles and other churches (and their patrons) formed key markers to help navigate it (see figs. 5.21 and 5.22). Significant amounts of time and money were spent building, maintaining, furnishing and providing audiences for rural places of sanctity, allowing impoverished areas capillary structures whose focus, but not sole function, was religion. In 1514 one half of all the *pievi* and parish churches throughout the diocese of Florence were under the patronage of families and individuals. This figure attests to a deep-seated private commitment to religion in the countryside, and one that was only heightened with increasing rural investment by urban elites during the Renaissance and early modern period. Escaping from the myth that the villa was a largely secular building type, most major country estates in fact incorporated, or were situated beside a chapel, church, or oratory. In the case of Filippo Strozzi's country estates, Lillie has shown how all were adjacent to pre-existing ecclesiastical foundations, and that the motivation of religious patronage was itself a key factor in his choice of villa sites.³² While oratories significantly outnumbered parish churches in the countryside, the reverse was true in the city.³³ An average of

³¹ Trexler, *Public Life*, 3-7. Through 'central place theory', Trexler claims that the religious significance of the countryside necessarily declined in order to allow the city to become a 'sacred asylum' whereby religion helped to legitimise centralised control and to structure civic authority. While he sees a modification of this 'desacralized' rural landscape in the fifteenth century through both a more 'tolerant governmental attitude' towards the dominion and its rural shrines, as well as a larger patrician investment in villa building with its concurrent rural religious patronage, we are assured that 'this highly concentrated urban life went hand in hand with extensive rural and subject areas poor in shrines.'

³² Lillie, 'Patronage of villa chapels', 38.

³³ Writing in 1847, Luigi Santoni listed 28 parish churches to 145 oratories within the suburbs of Florence, which means that for every parish church there were at least 5 oratories, while in the rural countryside there were almost twice as many oratories than parish churches (785 oratories to 412 churches). By comparison the city of Florence had 55 parish churches to 49 oratories. It is safe to assume that the number of rural oratories listed by Santoni represents a very conservative figure, limited as they are to the more important examples and those within the irregular boundaries of the Diocese of Florence: see Santoni, *Notizie*, 100, 131, & 407. Cf. Roberto Bizzocchi, *Chiesa e potere nella Toscana del Quattrocento* (Bologna: il Mulino, 1987), 14.

72% of all private chapels or oratories listed within *Oratori* files two, three and four, were in rural areas, while the small number of domestic oratories or chapels listed in the *Pupilli* from 1464 - 1562 are *all* located within country estates. This rural monopoly of formalized domestic religious spaces attests to the historic differences between rural and urban domestic religious experience and requirements.

In contrast to their urban counterparts, rural domestic oratories and chapels could usually be identified from the exterior of the house. Domestic oratories or chapels were either internal to the house with no external access; structurally attached to or inside the domestic compound but with a public entrance (see figs.5.23 - 5.26); or completely detached and located on a road, crossroads, square or meadow leading to the villa or another similar position that bore a significant visual relationship to the home (see figs.5.27 & 5.28). The vast majority of rural oratories or chapels fell into the last two categories, with their site/sight acting as overt markers to advertise the inhabitant's piety and the spectator's entry into the family sphere. Sketches by priests in the *Oratori* files took pains to point out the relationship between the villa complex and the chapel. Camilla di Lelio Strozzi's *cappella* in San Gavino a Cornocchio was situated between the house and the loggia, and accessible from the public road (fig.5.29). Niccolò Albizzi's at Vagliano, and Pietro di Lionardo Tempi's at San Giovanni a Sugana were similarly shown to be structurally connected to the villa complex (figs.5.30 and 5.31), while Andrea del Frate's *cappella* at San Giuliano a Settimo acted as a marker for the beginning of his family's property (fig.5.32). Although Niccolò Berardi's chapel (fig.5.33) was described as 'in isola', the priest's drawing shows that nonetheless it would have been clearly visible to visitors and easily accessible.³⁴ All these sketches highlight the way in which rural domestic oratories mediated between public routes and private properties, and in doing so became signifiers for the propaganda of the devout family who resided alongside them. Indeed, for those who possessed more than one villa chapel, a hierarchical relationship was formed through the proximity the oratories had to the house. For example, Capponi's chapel of the Annunciation (fig.5.34), one of four surrounding his property of Petrognano (see figs.5.35-5.38 and also 5.69-5.72, 5.83), was described by the visiting priest as more lavishly decorated precisely because it was closer to the *palazzo* than his three others.³⁵

Compared to their rural counterparts, domestic chapels within the city of Florence were often subsumed within the architectural fabric of the home and thereby hidden or only semi-visible places. The *Oratori* files record that while some were placed on ground floors, off entranceways and loggias or set into gardens, an equally large number were situated on the first or second storey and thereby reaching into the more private areas of the household. Either way however, urban

³⁴ *Oratori* 3, 3 August 1615, villa at Palazzuolo al Noce, Val di Pesa.

³⁵ *Oratori* 4, 6 September 1636: 'per essa comodo e più vicina al Palazzo è più adornata dell'altre'.

chapels were essentially internal structures and the visual acknowledgment of these sites was reserved for those who had already entered within the domestic compound.

Florence contained some fifty-five parish churches and thirty-four convents or monasteries within a relatively small radius, meaning that a public place of religion and sociability was never far away.³⁶ It was these collegial, parish or conventual churches whose close proximity allowed an obvious and prestigious focal point for religious patronage. In the 1460s just under a quarter of all city parish church patronage rights belonged to individuals or private families, by 1514 one fifth of all city churches were completely under *ius padronatus*.³⁷ These figures need to be adjusted to take into account the even greater number of churches with partial patron rights: Creighton Gilbert has estimated that in the quattrocento six hundred chapels were distributed throughout Florentine churches and a large proportion of these chapels were individual or familial.³⁸ The Florentine elite's formation of private property within liturgical space was, by the sixteenth century, adjoined to another tier of religious structure as they began to form liturgical space within their own urban private property. However, as urban domestic chapels proliferated from the mid-cinquecento onwards, the importance of religious patronage in neighborhood churches by no means diminished in Florence, but instead retained its central role in publicly highlighting loyalty to an ancestral area or entry into it. For example, after returning from Rome, Senator Giovanbattista Capponi built his palace without a chapel in the late sixteenth century, for the most part conspicuously concentrating his religious patronage on the Capponi chapel in nearby Santa Felicità.³⁹ GiovanBattista di Lorenzo Strozzi only incorporated a chapel into the structure of the Strozzi palace in 1633, at the same time he was constructing the chapel of St. Filippo Neri in San Pier Maggiore.⁴⁰ Before the 1630s, the urban religious patronage of the Strozzi palace branch of the Strozzi clan was directed largely towards the Strozzi chapel of Santa Maria Novella and the church of Santa Maria Ughi, whose

³⁶ Santoni, *Notizie*, 100. Dallington in 1595 listed 44 parish churches, 12 priories, and 76 monasteries and convents: Robert Dallington, *A Survey of the Great Duke's State of Tuscany in the Year of Our Lord 1595* (London: Edward Bloom, 1605), 11; Bizzocchi noted 2,100 parish churches and almost 300 *pievi* throughout the Florentine Republic's dominion in the first half of the fifteenth century: Bizzocchi, *Chiesa e potere*, 14.

³⁷ Figures from Roberto Bizzocchi, 'La dissoluzione di un clan familiare: I Buondelmonti di Firenze nei secoli XV e XVI,' *ASI CXL* (1982): 3-45, 14, and David S. Peterson 'State-building, church reform and the politics of legitimacy in Florence, 1375-1460,' in *Florentine Tuscany*, eds. William J. Connell and Andrea Zorzi, 122-143 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 126.

³⁸ Creighton Gilbert, 'The Patron of Starnina's Frescoes,' in *Studies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Painting in Honor of Millard Meiss*, eds. Irving Lavin and John Plummer (New York, 1977), vol. I, 189, as quoted in Goldthwaite, *Wealth and Demand*, 123.

³⁹ From the building accounts of Giovambattista Capponi, ARCF, file reference lost.

⁴⁰ See AFF, *Oratori* 4, whose visitation of 23 December 1633 records the newly built chapel by Giovanbattista Strozzi, as well as 'Inventario fatto per Ordine della S. Maria Strozzi di tutti i mobili esistenti nel Palazzo di Firenze adi 24 [Novembre] 1646', ASF, CSV 1430, *Inventari dal 1602 al 1681* (unpaginated). Goldthwaite repeatedly and incorrectly confuses the city palazzo with the Strozzi villas and refers to two chapels within the Strozzi palace by 1611: Goldthwaite, 'L'Interno del palazzo', 165; *Wealth and Demand*, 235. On the construction of the chapel dedicated to St. Filippo Neri, see ASF, CSV 1165, *Materie Ecclesiastiche*, filza 4.

façade bore the Strozzi arms in the painted lunette of the Madonna and child by Ghirlandaio over its entrance.⁴¹ Santa Maria Ughi was situated on the Strozzi piazza, diagonally opposite and facing the palace, at most 20 metres away. The example of Giovan Battista Strozzi's shift from traditional religious patronage and loyalties, shows how the building of a private chapel within urban *palazzi* was only beginning to establish itself as a typical practice for the elite in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries, and that it should be read as complementing other forms of religious patronage. The *Pupilli* files confirm this timeframe for chapel building: it was as late as the period 1644 to 1655 before urban domestic chapels began to balance the number of rural ones in patrician inventories.⁴²

Despite the more general building boom of the mid-sixteenth to early-seventeenth centuries which accompanied the Tuscan elite's increasing return to the land (and which would see the construction of numerous villa oratories), domestic chapels in the *contado* were already an established phenomenon as they could claim to more obviously serve a practical purpose than their urban counterparts.⁴³ The causes justifying the need for a personal chapel or oratory that the rural visitations list generally relate directly to the problems of distance between the parish church and the inhabitant's country estate. Significantly, even though the demand for reasons why people needed their own *chiesina*, *cappella*, *cappelletta*, *cappellino* or *oratorio* slowly and significantly gets dropped from the visitation requests by the archbishopric's office, rural visitation reports without fail continue to list the distance from the nearest parish church. The stress on distance from the parish church in the *Oratori* files demonstrates that the relationship between private oratory and public church was a constituent element in constructing these spaces' identities. The distances themselves were generally within a range of between one quarter to one and a half miles, although the distances registered included: five miles, *un tiro d'archibuso*, the absurdly detailed 1875 *passi*, and the strenuous twenty *passi*. Impassible roads and rivers; extremities in climatic conditions; old age; illness; obesity; numerous young children; poor, crippled *contadini* (or just *contadini*); and irreligious shepherds are also commonly listed in causes for the need to have a private rural oratory. Females were one of the most common justifications for needing a domestic oratory, a fact perhaps

⁴¹ At Santa Maria Ughi, the Strozzi possessed patronage rights to the main altar, and had also installed two stained glass windows with the arms of the Strozzi and Adinari (Filippo di Matteo's wife was Fiammetta Adinari) in 1472. On Santa Maria Ughi (destroyed in the nineteenth-century redevelopment of Florence) and Ghirlandaio's altarpiece see Eve Borsook, 'Documenti relativi alle cappelle di Lecceto e delle Selve di Filippo Strozzi,' *Antichità Viva* IX (1970): 3-20; John Russell Sale, 'The Strozzi Chapel by Filippino Lippi in Santa Maria Novella.' (PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania, 1976), esp. 19, 20, 61, 62; on Lecceto see Borsook above, Lillie, 'The Patronage of Villa Chapels', and Burke, *Changing Patrons*, chapter five 'Patronage Rights and Wrongs: Building Identity at Santa Maria a Lecceto', 101-118.

⁴² ASF, MPP 2661 (1644-1655) lists three urban and three rural domestic chapels in fifty-eight inventories sampled.

⁴³ While there was a well-documented return to land, I do not intend to imply that such a phenomenon was concomitant with a retreat from market investment, see Samuel Berner, 'The Florentine Patriciate in the Transition from Republic to *Principato*, 1530-1609,' *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* IX (1972): 3-15.

unsurprising given that noblewomen spent a large proportion of their time in villas (six months a year was not uncommon), and according to supplications for licenses, in an exhausting state of near continual pregnancy. Ginevra Giudotti's private chapel of the Nativity in Santo Stefano a Gabbiola demonstrates the occupancy of villas by females as the key reason a chapel was necessary 'because Signora Ginevra is so often to be found at the villa'.⁴⁴ Numerous visitations note how domestic oratories and chapels were installed not just for the convenience of female members of households, but also because of the belief that females were more spiritually inclined. Francesco Capponi's oratory at San Marco Vecchio had been constructed 'for the love of the women', while Luigi Ardinghelli's villa chapel at San Donato a Rignano was needed because 'the women want to have mass nearby'.⁴⁵ These comments allude to both the instrumental role females may have held in the construction of domestic chapels, and the importance of female agency in both domestic and lay devotional matters more generally. Nonetheless, the reasons why domestic chapels were needed show quite clearly that access to the divine could be a question of pragmatics, and to justify how a domestic chapel could be a practical necessity in the countryside.

However, domestic chapels and oratories served other functions than just reducing the number of miles walked and appeasing religious anxieties. As the references to *contadini* and shepherds alert us, they were a practical way to consolidate and govern rural social structures. They also helped to create and promote a sense of virtuous familial and personal identity explicitly linking the domestic with the spiritual sphere. The ownership of a private chapel or oratory could advertise and actively construct a prestigious place within a hierarchical structure, instilling and reinforcing further loyalties of class, kinship, and servitude under the rubric of religion. As already noted, the typical visibility of oratories within the domestic compound overtly signaled the pious religious identity of the patron's household, establishing it quite literally as a conduit for salvation. Yet various other devices were also used to assert and construct different forms of kinship or individual identity through these spaces.

ORATORIES AND IDENTITY

Despite Savonarola's cry against its idolatrous practice, one of the most common of these devices was by aligning the patron's identity with the architectonic structure of the chapel through the time-honored visual display of coats of arms, flags and inscriptions.⁴⁶ Taddeo d'Agnolo

⁴⁴ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 10th October 1610.

⁴⁵ AAF, *Oratori* 2, licences for Francesco Capponi 2 November 1610, and Luigi Ardinghelli 19 August 1610: both Marian oratories. See also *Oratori* 3, 4 August 1615, visitation by Benedetto Toti.

⁴⁶ Girolamo Savonarola, *Prediche italiane ai Fiorentini*, 3 vols. (Perugia: La Nuova Italia, 1930-35) I: 391-92: 'Guardi per tutti i luoghi de' conventi: tutti gli troverai pieni d'arme di chi ha murati. In alzo el capo là sopra quello uscio; io credo che vi sia un crocifisso ed el v'è una arme; va più là, alza el capo, el v'è un'altra arme. Ogni cosa è piena d'arme. Io mi metto un pazamento; io credo ch'egli sia un crocifisso dipinto; ella è un'arme, e sia che egli hanno poste l'arme dietro a' paramenti, perché quando el prete sta allo altare si vegga

Buccetti inscribed the words 'AD Taddeo Buccetti 1599' above the exit of the oratory of the Annunciation he had built, and in doing so asserted not only his role in constructing the space but further recast the space as a memorial tribute to himself, just as Giovanni Rucellai had done on a rather larger scale with his patronage at Santa Maria Novella.⁴⁷ Gualtier d'Agostino Biliotti's 'beautiful and large' oratory dedicated to San Matteo had his arms inscribed on the stone doorposts similarly over the exit.⁴⁸ Vincentio Alessandri's family oratory at San Piero a Riottoli had a *dossale* (altar frontal) of wood painted with Jesus' name in the middle and the Alessandri family arms overhead, and Antonio di Ruberto Galilei's villa oratory had a brass *palla* bearing the crucifix and his arms on the roof, as well as an arm-encrusted golden wall hanging of leather that was deployed on special feast days.⁴⁹ Girolamo Del Nente's oratory of San Girolamo had his family arms incorporated into the altar fresco depicting Christ's crucifixion witnessed by St. Francis and its titular saint.⁵⁰ The chapel of the Strozzi's Pradolinesque villa il Boschetto at San Piero a Monticelli (see figs.5.39-5.44) is a testament to quite how many family arms could be displayed in a relatively small space. Begun in 1602 by Filippo di GiovanBattista Strozzi, the chapel was frescoed by Poccetti, with help from Camillo Ginganelli and Giovanni Masini drawing on designs by Cigoli and a façade painted by Bernardino Monaldi.⁵¹ Account books and photographs of the chapel show the way that the Strozzi arms were incorporated into the *pietra serena* borders, pendants, pediments and pilasters of the chapel, as well as acting as frames for the entrances and exits of the chapel and the altar and altarpiece (figs.5.39 and 5.40).⁵² In addition, the Strozzi crescent moons were intertwined and repeated within the frescoed grotesques and lunettes (see figs.5.42 and 5.43), and, according to the visitation reports, in the floor of 'invetriata' earth that formed the base of the chapel.

Coats of arms were key signifiers of the patron's rights of control, not just over the material fabric of the place, but also the attendant control for the space's use: who officiated and how, who attended and when could they attend. Like the problems associated with *ius padronatus* in parish

bene d'arme da tutto il popolo. Questi sono adunque li idolo vostri, a' quali voi destinate questi vostri sacrifice.'

⁴⁷ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 5 November 1601, San Lorenzo alle Ruore & Santa Maria Impruneta, Ribuoia.

⁴⁸ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 25 August 1610 & *Oratori* 3, 20 July 1615, Santa Maria a Celucianoli.

⁴⁹ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 11 November 1610; n.d. 1601, Santa Maria al Fezzana.

⁵⁰ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 16 September 1610, San Piero a Ema.

⁵¹ AAF, *Oratori* 3 (12/8/1615) & 4 (24/9/1639). I have drawn heavily on the work of Stefania Vasetti regarding il Boschetto, see Vasetti, *Bernardo Poccetti e gli Strozzi. Committenze a Firenze nel primo decennio del Seicento* (Florence: Opus Libri, 1994). For an account of the Salviati palace chapel, see her 'Alcune puntualizzazioni sugli allievi di Bernardino Poccetti e un inedito ciclo di affreschi,' *Annali. Fondazione di studi di storia dell'arte Roberto Longhi III* (1996), 69-98.

⁵² Vasetti, *Bernardo Poccetti*, 25-6, quotes from the account book of Filippo di GiovanBattista Strozzi payments to Barbetelli and the 'scapellino' Ludovico Del Fantasia 'due porticelle con dua finestre sopra la nostra arme [...] una porta con suo fodere [...] et 8 peducci per la volta integliati con l'arme [...] detti lavori sono tutti in pietra serena gentile', ASF, CSV 207, ff.154r; 229r 40v. On the altarpiece of Saint John baptizing Christ by Jacopo Vignati see ASF, CSV 1253, *Quaderno di Ricordi di GioB di Filippo di Gio: Battista Strozzi*, 1629-1632), f.13r, 'Nota de quadri ch si sono fatti dal di 1627 in qua' cioè tutto dicembre 1629.'

churches, where coats of arms may have been employed in part as a 'quasi-legalistic' signal of patronage rights, the coats of arms on domestic chapels and oratories clearly demonstrate possession and, just as importantly, responsibility.⁵³ In the *contado*, the wealthy landowner was responsible not just for the physical well being of his workers, but was also liable for their spiritual education, or so the reasons for building chapels listed in the *Oratori* files would have us believe. The coats of arms attached to rural oratories can thereby be read as a visual contract for the legitimacy of relationships between patrons, their workers, and their land, whereby the owner assumes not just an authoritative role for temporal intercession but a spiritual one as well. However, arms did more than this. They acted mnemonically and metonymically, establishing the patron's pleas for intercession on his behalf, and working as cues to inspire benefaction from other attendees. Their usual position above entries and exits was significant in that it not only simply denoted the patron's control and appropriation over sacred space, and therefore the space's secularization, but it could also, conversely, show personal space appropriated by the liturgical, promoting the sanctification of the family. Positioning arms and inscriptions over oratories' and chapels' doors or windows, was the direct counterpart of the common practice of placing saints' busts and religious inscriptions above exits and entrances inside the home, particularly over the *sala* exit. It was also not uncommon to find interior domestic chapels signaled by a cross above the entrance door, with coats of arms positioned on the inside.⁵⁴ These markers highlight the complex interactions and interdependences between the domestic and the sacred, with the locus of the exit/entrance not only marking spatial transitions but further serving to highlight the permeability of these boundaries.

Patrons' arms could also be engraved onto the many moveable objects needed for religious ceremonies, like the silver chalice in Strozzi's il Boschetto chapel recorded during Bartolomeo Monti's visitation, which according to a 1602 inventory was valuable enough to warrant its own custom-made case.⁵⁵ Liturgical objects provided an impressive number of portable surfaces for the display of arms and ancestry, as well as another means to demonstrate a patron's largesse and piety. Even the most basic list of objects required for the celebration of mass would have had to include at least one chalice, chasuble, altar frontal, pall, alb, cruet, asperge, maniple and several candlesticks. Il Boschetto in fact had, among other things, two chalices, at least three chasubles, nine *purificatoi*, a *spegnitoio*, two gilded reliquaries, a costly reliquary cross of gold and silver containing the relics

⁵³ The phrase is from Burke, 'Form and Power', 97. See also Trexler, *Synodal Law*, 14, quoting from the Synod of 1336 that when laymen want to gain control over a benefice, they 'invade and despoil the church. They post their arms there to prevent those to whom the church belongs in law from taking possession.' On the benefice of *ius patronatus* and its patrimonial dissemination see A. Giuffreda, 'I benefici di giuspatronato nella diocesi di Oria tra XVI e XVIII secolo,' *Quaderni Storici* XXIII (1988): 37-71.

⁵⁴ E.g. ASF, MPP 2661 (1644-1653), 1650 inventory of Cav. Vincenzio di Giovanni Bardi's Florentine house in via de' Bardi, f.399r.

⁵⁵ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 8 December 1615; ASF, CSV 1430, unpaginated, inventory of il Boschetto's chapel taken in 1602: '1 calice d'argento colla patena e sua cassa rossa'.

of SS. Ilario and Carlo, and an elaborate bronze holy water container bearing a figure of Christ in ivory.⁵⁶ The importance of these objects is in fact underlined by their inclusion within the frescoed ceiling grotesques at il Boschetto: set up from the Strozzi motifs and encased within decorative borders were pictures of the chapel's ewer, holy water bucket and asperge, incense boat, *gémellion*, missal, thurible, pyx, and presumably a reproduction of the chalice that Monti had described (figs.5.39, 5.41 – 5.44). Remaining examples of religious objects (see figs.5.45a-d, and 5.46a-e) correspond to the elaborate examples entwined within il Boschetto's frescoes and recorded within its inventories. These chalices and other objects show how richly decorated and insignia-encrusted such items could be, as does a rich green silk damask chasuble (c.1601-1613) embroidered with the Bardi di Vernio and Strozzi arms to mark a marriage alliance between the two families (fig.5.47).⁵⁷ As the most elaborate and visible of all liturgical garments (see for example fig.5.48), the chasuble provided an important surface that was decorated, in Patricia DeLeeuw's words, 'to suit the meaning of the mass and the means of the church community'.⁵⁸ For the priest wearing the Bardi-Strozzi example, and the parishioners watching him, it meant that the meaning of the mass was explicitly tied to the two families who had given the means to celebrate it. In the visitation files the meaning and means provided by the sumptuous array of liturgical goods in domestic chapels were something that the priests themselves clearly appreciated. Costly ecclesiastical vestments made of silk and satin alongside objects constructed from precious materials such as silver, crystal, gold, stained glass, ivory, porphyry, marble, alabaster, were often admiringly referred to and their possession (with or without emblem of identity inscribed) further connoted the temporal and spiritual wealth of both the owners and the community at large.⁵⁹ Moreover, the growing number of these items listed in the files, and their increasingly elaborate nature (which would have visually

⁵⁶ ASF, CSV 1430, unpaginated, inventory of il Boschetto's chapel taken in 1602.

⁵⁷ For the Bardi-Strozzi *pianeta* see Caterina Caneva (ed), *Museo d'arte sacra di San Francesco a Greve in Chianti* (Florence: Edizioni Polistampa, 2005), 55-56.

⁵⁸ Patricia DeLeeuw, 'Fragments of Ritual: The Liturgical Use of Objects in the collection of Alexander Schnütgen,' in *Fragmented Devotion*, eds. Nancy Retzer and Virginia Reinburg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 35. More widely see Herbert Norris, *Church Vestments: Their Origin and Development*, 1949 (repr. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2002).

⁵⁹ See for example AAF, *Oratori 2*: Isabella Carnesecchi né Carbini, 26 November 1610; Carlo Magalotti 29 October 1610; Francesco Rinuccini, 13 January 1610; Lorenzo Antinori, 1 October 1610; Francesco & Lorenzo Salviati, 13 December 1595; Bali Baldassari, September 1595; Piero Bonsi, September 1595; Piero and Neri Alberi, September 1603; Vincentio di Giovanni Borgherini, 20 September 1595; from *Oratori 3*: Niccolò Pucci, 11 September 1615; Luigi Capponi, 25 August 1615; Senator Luigi Altoviti, 19 October 1622; Giuliano Serragli, 16 August 1615; Cav. Duccio Manicini, 27 July 1615; Geri Spini, 16 August 1615; Antonio Salviati, 20 July 1615; Marco Martelli, 12 October 1626; GiovanBattista Strozzi, 12 August 1615; Andrea Pazzi, 26 April 1626; from *Oratori 4*: Camilla Strozzi, 14 April 1635; Senator GiovanBattista Dini, 22 March 1629; Magdalena Martelli, 4 March 1632; Senator Riccardi, 16 October 1636; Lorenzo Antinori, 22 June 1634; GiovanBattista and Piero Bini, 10 December 1629; Piero and Alessandro Vettori, 15 December 1630; GiovanBattista Scarletti, 30 September 1632; Giulio Vitelli, 1630; Marchese Vincentio Salviati, 7 April 1635; Leonardo and Lorenzo Morelli, 4 May 1638; Senator Lorenzo Franceschi, 3 October 1634; Marchese Ruberto Capponi, 12 September 1636; Marchese Taddeo Del Monte, 26 April 1637; Benedetto Comparini, 24 January 1631; Filippo and Giuseppe di Battista di Marco Bistini, 5 June 1640.

drawn and conceptually held the spectator's focus on the altar), signaled not only a liturgical emphasis on the Eucharist and the prominent intercessory role that the priest and the patron had in activating sacral space, but the deeply material nature of spirituality.

Personal and ancestral identity was embedded in these spaces in other ways. Captain Pierfrancesco Pieri simply installed his own portrait above the inside door of the oratory he had built in the mid-seventeenth century, explicitly reminding visitors who to thank for any spiritual exchanges that took place inside. The Captain's portrait was the only secular one in the chapel, residing among a rather idiosyncratic collection of intercessors including St. Francis, St. Louis IX of France, St. Elizabeth of Portugal, St. Carlo Borromeo, and what appears to have been St. Agapetus.⁶⁰ Rather than having their family identities distinct from the saints, Cosimo Strozzi's and Caterina Davanzati's family were incorporated into the paintings of the chapel at their villa di Casenta. As the visiting priest Andrea Grassi noted in 1612, on the right-hand side wall of the chapel was 'the representation of the Wedding at Cana in Galilee and at the banquet tables are portraits of all the people of the Strozzi household'.⁶¹ The Pieri and Strozzi examples both show a key way in which images allowed individual or collective reputations to be preserved and presented within domestic oratories.

Girolamo Del Nente's eponymously entitled oratory of St. Girolamo was another common method for inscribing identity in domestic oratories. Large numbers of private oratories or chapels that were dedicated to a single saint were done so in homage to the patrons' or their ancestors' name saints, or the patron saints of the family. For example, the detached domestic oratory of Andrea del Frate (see fig.5.32) was dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene for the devotion that the family had always held for her as an 'advocate of their house'.⁶² Building a chapel or oratory and dedicating it to a name, household or patron saint linked religious intercession, spiritual, personal and familial identities and dynasty to a historically located space, reality and figure. These spaces could create and promulgate a particular saint for devotion within a specific area, thereby furthering domestic or local identity and causes.

Other oratories listed within the files, show the desire for an even closer relationship between family identity and biblical history within an age of competitive devotion. As noted in Chapter Three, the Bishop of Arezzo Antonio Ricci's chapel in his Florentine palace contained

⁶⁰ AAF, *Oratori* 5, 31 January 1650, villa la Calcinaia, at San Lazzero: 'Ha numero otto quadri di santi cioè S. Franc^o, S. Lodovico Re di Francia, S. Lisabetta Rigina di Portogallo, S. Bastiano, S. Carlo, Il miracolo quale fece detto Carlo in tempore Pestilentie, la vigna di Nabochi [Nabucco] col Re Agapico, e la Regina Iszable, S. Lucches, et il Ritratto dell'istesso Capitano Pieri sopra la Porta dentro alla Chiesa.'

⁶¹ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 13 November 1612, '[...] nella facciata la rappresentatione della nozze di Cana di Galilea e all mensa ritratti al nivo [sic] tutti personaggi di Casa Strozzi e alla mano sinistra à dirimpetto à Beato misterio è dipinto l'andata et uscita de Magi al Presepio [... la palla è] San Giobattisa quando batesse Christo tutte pitture al' nature di mano del Bronzino vecchio et detto Capitano fece fare Monsignor Alexandro Strozzi Vescovo di Volterra.'

⁶² AAF, *Oratori* 3, 7 September 1615, San Giuliano a Settimo.

relics that included 'those of the deceased *Beata Santa Caterina de Ricci*.'⁶³ In 1619 PierMaria di PagolAntonio de' Pazzi's city palace on the Strozzi piazza contained in the *sala terrena* a painting of the 'Santissima Maddalena de' Pazzi' in a gilded frame.⁶⁴ Surrounded by paintings of a 'Madonna with child in arms, St. Francis and St. John the Evangelist', a 'tondo in a gilded frame inside which is the Madonna, Our Lord, St. John the Baptist and two Angels', another painting of the Madonna with three other figures, and a mounted crucifix, the family's candidate for sainthood was inserted into an impressive biblical narrative and history that suggested her logical belonging in such a canon to any audience.⁶⁵ The combination of paintings also suggested those found within the palace's own chapel, and thereby further installed not just a sense of domestic sanctity but a sanctity that was domesticized.⁶⁶ Another example can be found at the Corsini family's villa le Corti. Attributed to Santi di Tito (1536-1603), le Corti had been built at the beginning of the seventeenth century and included a second storey chapel frescoed by Poccetti. Poccetti's vaulted ceiling bore painted ovals of the four Evangelists (figs.5.49a-d), and appropriately enough for a rural setting, a depiction of the Adoration of the Magi and Shepherds (fig.5.50). However, the patron of the chapel was Bartolomeo di Bernardo Corsini (1545-1613), and it was his namesake, St. Bartholomew 'in which name [was] entitled this chapel'. Based on Andrea del Sarto's *Madonna delle Arpie*, Santi di Tito's altarpiece replaced the original figures of St. John the Evangelist and St. Bonaventure with those of St. Bartholomew and the Blessed Andrea Corsini (the Corsini's fourteenth-century ancestor and Carmelite bishop of Fiesole) (fig.5.51).⁶⁷ Both St. Bartholomew's and the Blessed Andrea's identities were unambiguous as their names were helpfully written above their respective figures in block capitals. On the competitive track towards canonization, the inclusion of Andrea Corsini in the altarpiece, the relics of Caterina de' Ricci, and the painting of Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi all mark one strategy in a conscious attempt to advertise and institutionalize the figure's sanctity within the corporate household identity of the Corsini, Ricci and Pazzi families respectively. The very invocation of the words 'santa', 'santissima' or 'beato' to describe Caterina, Maddalena and Andrea which the visitations and the inventory record, shows that such strategies had to a degree succeeded as their sanctity was already established in the household imagination. At the time of these records, not one of them was a saint. Caterina de' Ricci was only beatified in 1732 with her canonization not confirmed until fourteen years later by Benedict XIV, despite the official *processus* for her sanctity commencing as early as 1614, and her *vita* by Serafino

⁶³ AAF, *Oratori* 4, 1 August 1631. On Saint Caterina de' Ricci (1522-1583) see Serafino Razzi, *La vita della reverenda serva di Dio suor Caterina de' Ricci* (Lucca: Vincenzio Busdraghi, 1594); *Bib. Sanct.*, s.v. 'Caterina de' Ricci'.

⁶⁴ ASF, MPP, 2660 (1617-1622), Inventory of PierMaria di PagolAntonio Pazzi ff.339r-54r, f.347v.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, f.347v.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, f.339r. On Maria Maddalena né Caterina de' Pazzi (1566-1604) see *CE*, s.v. 'Saint Magdalene de' Pazzi'; *Bib. Sanct.*, s.v. 'Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi'.

⁶⁷ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 9 August 1615, S. Piero di sopra di San Casciano. On Andrea Corsini, see *CE*, s.v. 'Saint Andrew Corsini'; *Bib. Sanct.*, s.v. 'Andrea Corsini'.

Razzi published in 1594. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi's trial for beatification was begun shortly after her death in 1610 under Paul V and finalized by Urban VIII in 1626, but she was not bestowed the title of sainthood until 1669. Andrea Corsini, despite the almost immediate posthumous and authorized public cult that arose around him, and the politicization of that cult through his twice yearly incorporation into elaborate Governmental processions during the Republic, was not inserted into the Roman Martyrology until 1627, with his bull of canonization signed finally in 1724 by Benedict VIII. Regarding le Corti's chapel, despite the fact that it was on the *secondo piano*, the 1615 visitation records reveal that it was in fact large enough for sixty people (a number that may surprise modern visitors to the space).⁶⁸ That the visiting priest judged the room capacious enough for such an ample audience, suggests that ample audiences might well have come to the chapel and, assembled on the deceased candidate's day of death, have taken note of the painted advertisements for the Corsini's would-be family saint. The potential dimensions of le Corti's chapel, and indeed the spaciousness of other examples, like its near contemporary the chapel at Villa Collazzi Bombicci (see figs.5.52-54) complicate our notions about the privacy of the domestic sphere and its functions, whilst revealing the instrumental role domestic chapels held. It also introduces the question of their size, their users and uses, and their regulation, issues to which the text will now turn.

THE SPACE, AUDIENCE, AND SERVICES OF DOMESTIC CHAPELS

Oratories and chapels varied widely in their size. Some interior ones, like the chapel of le Corti, were substantial spaces. Maria Serristori's chapel in her late husband Giuliano Serragli's Florentine palace, was listed as large enough for more than fifty people, and was situated inside the palace on the same floor as the *sala* and above the *loggia* – probably the *piano nobile*.⁶⁹ Usually though, the dimensions given for Florentine chapels in the *Oratori* files are smaller than Serristori's, and fall typically between a length and width of four to nine *braccia* (2.3 – 5.25 metres), emphasizing how chapels often had to be carved out from within pre-existing structures.⁷⁰ Rural examples range from seven *braccia* long by five wide, up to thirty *braccia* long by eighteen wide (approximately seventeen and a half metres by ten and a half). Adjoining sacristies were normally a third or a quarter of the oratory's size. A predominant number hover around twelve square *braccia*, thereby seeming to conform to Carlo Borromeo's prescription that oratories be not less than twelve *braccia*.⁷¹ What the visitations often stress though is how roomy or 'capace' these spaces are, able

⁶⁸ The text reads 'capace per circa 60 persone', AAF, *Oratori* 3, 9 August 1615.

⁶⁹ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 16 August 1615, via de' Mozzi, Florence.

⁷⁰ Dimensions are recorded for ninety-nine distinct oratories within the *Oratori* files and the data given is the mean recorded from those.

⁷¹ Carlo Borromeo, *Instructionum Fabricae*, 147.

to fit all the *popolo*.⁷² Carlo Tucci's detached oratory at San Cristofano a Viciano, which housed a Madonna by Ghirlandaio, is described as comfortably seating twenty people, although its door opened onto a meadow allowing a further hundred people to hear mass.⁷³ The vast number of rural oratories were noted as being situated in meadows, at the top of a piazza or similar site, thereby enabling a far larger audience than the oratories' actual size would have permitted.⁷⁴ In combination with provisions of loggias and courtyards, the supposition that sites were partly chosen to allow for maximum external audience and participation as much as for convenience seems certain.

In fact, the large number of people that oratories could accommodate, and the wide variety of masses and offices that they proffered, shows the problematic definition of these spaces. Their ambiguous status as not-a-parish church yet essentially serving the parish can be inferred from the confused terminology used to describe them. This terminology often confounded the presumed superiority of town over country. Agostino Malenotti and the canon Mannucci wrote how Giovanni Sommai's oratory of the Assumption was like a 'Chiesa', while Giulio Rossi described Marchese Ruberto Capponi's four oratories surrounding his villa Petrognano as chapels belonging more to the urban than the rural sphere, writing that '...according to my judgement, I would assess them as chapels belonging to the city more than the villa [*sieno Cappelle più dalla Città che dalla Villa*].'⁷⁵ Filippo Fiorini's chapel at Borgo San Lorenzo was described as so adorned inside that it warranted a place in the city, and Niccolò Calvadoni's oratory at Sant'Andrea a Mosciano, built in 1601, was

⁷² For example, Francesco Sassolini's oratory at San Niccolò a Pisagnano is described as 'capace di popolo', AAF, *Oratori* 2, 6 October 1610, visitation by Piero Ticci; while Cav. GiovanBatista Rondinelli's oratory at San Bartolomeo a Sovigliana is recorded as 'così spatiosa che ella riceverà tutto il popolo', *Oratori* 2, 5 August 1595, visitation by Sebastiano Tano. See also the visitation for Carlo Tappia's chapel in his palace at San Felice a Piazza, whose space is described as small but 'sì potrà udire più di fuori che dentro', AAF, *Oratori* 2, 25 December 1595. Piero Mascagnini's oratory was 'poco capace che ne giorni festivi il Popolo la maggior parte sta di fuori di detta Cappella a sentire la Santa Maria che potrebbero venire alla Chiesa a udirla con maggior loro soddisfazione et senza serupoli et per la commodità maggiore vogliono più presto la persona stare per la strada quando si dice la Messa in detta Cappella et non vogliono capitare alla Pieve per esser cosa serupolosa a detto popolo a udirla Messa in detta Cappella nel modo predetto per li giorni festivi se loro sentiranno in detta Cappella la Messa dopo esser detta alla Pieve non ci sarà inconveniente alcuno', *Oratori* 3, 16 February 1615, visitation by Piero Ticci.

⁷³ *Oratori* 4, 27 January 1632, visitation by Giovanni Ciecinielli. The measurements given are eight *braccia* long by six wide by eight high.

⁷⁴ For example Baccio di Papi Frillicroci's family oratory at Santa Maria alla Quericiola was at a place 'più tosto simile ad una Piazza ad via [...] con una loggia', AAF, *Oratori* 3, 23 October 1616, visitation by Giuliano Biachi; Priest Giovanni Lioncini's was 'situata in capo ad una Piazza da non spieghare per la sua capacità et vaghezza', *Oratori* 4, 12 January 1635, visitation by PierFrancesco Gucci. Ruberto di Niccolò Medici's was positioned on a 'piazza pubblica dove anticamente si faceva il Mercato e si ragunava tutto il popolo e ci si è durato udir messa vi quella forma pubblicamente ciro a che ne entrano in possesso le presente havendove detto in Ruberto ottenuto licenza anco dopo la prohibitione', *Oratori* 3, 30 August 1617, San Martino in Mugello.

⁷⁵ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 19 July 1615, Sant'Ilario a Colombaia, and *Oratori* 4, 12 September 1636 respectively.

recorded as being able to hold its own in any city.⁷⁶ Cristofano Rinuccini's oratory had 'the form entirely of a church with a bell tower above the roof holding a big and good bell,' and GiovanBattista Rondinelli's was 'closer to a church than an oratory'.⁷⁷ Tommaso di GianFrancesco Medici's oratory of Sant'Antonio at Santa Felicità a Lasciano was described as 'like a beautiful church with a portico and a bell-tower...[that it is] honourable enough for the city, and that in truth, one can effectively see that it is like many parish churches [*molte chiese curate*].'⁷⁸

Tommaso de' Medici's 'church' raises the question of who formed the audience or the congregation for spaces like his, and quite how these spaces were used. Licenses for the right to celebrate mass were generally conceded to heads of households and usually extended to cover their spouses, children, domestic servants and the *famiglia*. The responsibility towards servants and workers is underlined in the visitations, and an often repeated theme is that the chapel is not just for the patron's own devotion but also 'for the large household of servants and workers for which this amenity will better properly serve both their spiritual needs and necessities as well as their temporal ones' or 'for the comfort and spiritual utility of the *popolo*'.⁷⁹ Oratories that were structurally separate from the domestic compound or adjoined to it but accessible from the exterior, served not only inhabitants within the home, but those from neighboring houses, *contadini* and an assortment of guests, passersbys and pilgrims, thereby providing a nexus that linked the individual with the community and the periphery with the center. Lucantonio Ubertini's detached oratory next to his villa il Poggio at San Giovanni a Sugana, provided mass for the entire Parish on feast days when the erstwhile *parrochiano* disappeared to the *pieve* and left the parish church empty, while Vincentio Manieri's attached oratory was perceived as an 'aid to the populace as a place of religion.'⁸⁰

Some oratories were clearly places of spiritual significance, drawing a congregation to them because of a miraculous memory embedded into the site and structure of the building itself. Sheathed in a protective shield of divinity and the memory of Semifonte, the oratory of San Niccolò located at the Southern gate of Petrognano (see map of the estate, fig.5.38) had, according to the

⁷⁶ '[...] et è talmente adornata di dentro che è recipiente per qual si voglia luogo d Città,' AAF, *Oratori* 3, 20 July 1615, visitation by Jacopo Alfei, and *Oratori* 3, 4 August 1610, visitation by Jesuits Girolamo Costa & Giangiorgio respectively.

⁷⁷ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 20 July 1615, Santo Stefano in Pane, visitation by GioSimone Tornabuoni; and the description as a 'Chiesa più presto ch'Oratorio' in *Oratori* 2, 5 August 1595, San Bartolomeo a Sovigliana, visitation by Sebastiano Tano.

⁷⁸ 'si bene come una bella chiesa, sportico e campana sopra il tetto col suo capanilino, porta di pietra concie e sue colonne dell'istess alla loggia [...] orrevole per la Città in vero effettivamente si puo vedere tale ch vi sia molte chiese curate', from AAF, *Oratori* 2, 16 September 1610, visitation by Bastiano Civis.

⁷⁹ See for example the comments that the oratory was 'per la molta famiglia di serve e servitori de quali col questa commodità propria meglio allevarli sovenerli a i loro bisogni et necessità tanto temporarli quanto spirituali' in AAF, *Oratori* 2, 14 July 1610, visitation to Piero Gerini's Florentine chapel; or priest Bernardo Vallensi's comments regarding Lorenzo Guasconi's less than a quarter mile from San Piero a Cirignano that it was 'per comodo ed utilità spirituale del popolo' in *Oratori* 3, 20 July 1615.

⁸⁰ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 26 September 1620, visitation by Piero Ticci; 'un aiuto al popolo come luogo di religione', AAF, *Oratori* 3, 30 September 1615, visitation by Antonio Vannini at San Romolo a Colonnata. Manieri's oratory was in fact less than one third of a mile away from San Romolo.

visitation priest and popular lore, alone resisted the complete destruction of the medieval town by Florentine troops in the thirteenth century. GiovanBattista Capponi ensured that the sanctity and memory of this 'miraculous chapel' was given a befitting home and reputation by enlarging and embellishing it during his renovation projects in the late-sixteenth century.⁸¹ However, it was generally items of material culture rather than site itself that generated piety and devotion in the wider community. The large number of oratories and chapels recorded as being of 'universal and popular devotion' because of the images, figures or objects contained within them make clear the important role images and objects themselves had as religious aids and physical manifestations of the spiritual.⁸² It is important to note that the images that inspired such veneration were largely Marian, as was the case of the Cavalieri Francesco and Hieronimo Bartolini's oratory at San Piero a Sieve and San Michele a Lezzano that housed a marble bas-relief of a Madonna. Indeed, the description of the Bartolini's Madonna as so miraculous that a continuous stream of people came specifically to visit it, suggests a sort of domestically orientated and condensed pilgrimage.⁸³ As noted in Chapter Three, oratories also included large numbers of relics elaborately housed and displayed, engendering a very somatic type of devotional memory and veneration specific to the place.⁸⁴ Holy relics could, also beneficially to their owners, offer further remunerations through indulgences that promoted the saints as divine intercessors and structured relations between God and the faithful as a type of reified 'gift exchange'.⁸⁵ Like relics, and in line with a shifting theology of death as a cult of remembrance that took on a very material quality, oratories housed

⁸¹ AAF, *Oratori* 4, 6 September 1636, visitation of Marchese Ruberto Capponi villa de Petrognano by Giulio Rossi: 'Questa è una Cappella miracolosa poi che nella demolizione del Castello di Semifonte non mai possibile lo spianarla è stata adornata aggrandita e abbellita dal già Signor GioBattista Capponi di larghezza 14br di lunghezza 30.'

⁸² AAF, *Oratori* 2: 12 August 1610, oratory of Jacopo Borgo at Sant'Andrea a Guignano; April 1604, oratory of Francesco di Luca Guidi at Castello di Vicchio, San Giusto Montelassi; 11 September 1610, oratory of Tommaso de' Medici at Santa Felicita a Lasciano; *Oratori* 3: 1 June 1616 oratory of Filippo Lottini at villa di Tigliano, Sant'Andrea a Doccia; 25 June 1621, oratory of Andrea de' Medici at San Piero a Sieve; 23 August 1615, oratory of Francesco Bartolini at San Piero a Sieve; 25 August 1622, oratory of Pietro di Lionardo Tempi; *Oratori* 4, 2 June 1629, oratory of Francesco Salvetti at Borgo al San Lorenzo; 6 August 1633, oratory of Francesco Bonsi at Borgo di Brozzi.

⁸³ AAF, *Oratori* 3: 'una Maddonna di 1/2 rilievo di marmo dicano miracolosa per il soccorso del popolo ch vi va alla visita di cotinovo.' Holy crosses were the second most likely object to be miraculous, with, for example, the confraternity of *Santissima Gratie* of Florence building an oratory to house 'uno San.m^o Crocefisso anticho quale di contenevo fa miracioli.' From *Oratori* 4, 3 January 1642.

⁸⁴ AAF, *Oratori* 2: Maria Gaddi nè Strozzi, 27 July 1610 Florence; Donna Beatrice Ghevara & Carlo Tappia, 25 December 1595, Florence; Cav. Medici, 17 August 1610, Sant'Andrea a Monte Giovanni; Niccolò Malegozzelli, 15 July 1610; Vincentio Manieri, 30 July 1615, San Romolo a Colonnata; Vincentio Salviati, 24 November 1625, Santa Lucia a Collina. AAF *Oratori* 3: Isabella Capponi, 8 March 1626; Selvo Bonso, 2 August 1615, Florence; GiovanBattista di Jacopo Quaratesi, 22 October 1625, San Martino a Rovezzano; MarcAntonio Nobili, 20 July 1615, San Bartolomeo a Barberino; Illarione Martelli, 4 August 1615 Florence; Andrea Pazzi, 26 April 1626, Santa Brigida a Lubaco; Marchese Vincentio Salviati, 24 November 1626, Santa Lucia a Collina; Bart^o di GiovanBattista Concini, 4 September 1615, Santa Maria a Coverciano; Filippo Valori, 11 August 1615, Sant'Angelo a Empoli Vecchio; Vincentio Manieri, 30 July 1615, San Romolo a Colonnata; Mario Acciaiuoli, 28 August 1620, Santo Stefano a Paterno, Baroncelli.

⁸⁵ Goldthwaite, *Wealth and Demand*, 23. More specifically on indulgences, see Lepicier, *Indulgences*.

whole bodies. These bodies could be relics, such as the corpses of SS. Felicissimo and Benedetto stored at the seventeenth-century chapels at the Della Rena's (now Frescobaldi's) villa le Lame and the Martelli's villa at Gricigliano respectively. However, Filippo Machiavelli's oratory at Sant'Andrea a Bibbiana contained the unspecified body of a buried pilgrim, while Lionardo Buontalenti's oratory of SS. Cosmos and Damian at his villa La Torre in San Giuliano a Settimo housed the mysterious body of Capitano Martini.⁸⁶ Joined to the Villa Albizzi-Pucci at Santa Maria a Monte was the seventeenth-century church of San Pietro in whose grounds were placed the tombs of members of the Albizzi and Pucci families.⁸⁷ These corporeal remains without question contributed towards a pious and a self-reflective atmosphere of piety. While the visitations of Machiavelli's and Buontalenti's oratories do not detail how the bodies were entombed, nor what relationships they represented to the oratories' owners or locality, their inclusion into the framework of domestic oratories makes them illustrative of what John Bossy has described as 'the sense of family property in the dead... a sort of enclosure movement in the territory of the dead.'⁸⁸

Even those who lacked a body, holy body-part, or miraculous image did not necessarily have to look far. Francesco Bonsi obtained a pre-established image of popular devotion by simply taking a highly venerated Madonna from the public street and building his own private oratory to house it.⁸⁹ Bonsi's actions had precedent: the Nasi family had similarly converted a highly venerated tabernacle into an equally venerated Oratory at their villa Pratella in Bagno a Ripoli. The Bonsi's conversion created a place that became the local focus for the procession of the Holy Cross that carried relics and offerings of *primizie* to their oratory from the *pieve* of San Pietro.⁹⁰ Obviously possession of a popular, and preferably well-established and miraculous devotional image, object or relic was a marker of social status, which helped to establish the private oratory's or chapel's right and rites in the neighborhood. Such ownership established private oratories or chapels as protectors of local veneration as much as they were protected by it. However, Bonsi's actions show that the building of private oratories was not necessarily an imposition of patronal desires and individual causes to create devotion, but was also a response to pre-existing patterns of local devotion. In Bonsi's case, the reciprocity that private oratories engendered is made evident, and we can interpret the move of the Madonna into Bonsi's own space as either the privatization of

⁸⁶ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 20 July 1615, visitation by Michele Borghi: 'Vi è sepulchra di un peregrino il parcovi sottera'; *Oratori* 2, 3 September 1610: 'in detta Cappella ci è disposto di pietra che dicono esservi dentro il corpo del Capitani Martini.'

⁸⁷ Maria Adriana Giusti, *Le ville del Valdarno* (Florence: Edifor Edizioni, 1996), 110.

⁸⁸ Bossy, *Christianity in the West*, 33.

⁸⁹ AAF, *Oratori* 4, visitation by Neri Jacopi: 'si è trasportato L'Immagine della Santissima Madonna venerata per spatio di tempo immemoriabli nel Borgo di Brozzi.'

⁹⁰ On the Nasi Oratorio del Crocifisso del Lume, which was substantially renovated by the Capponi in the seventeenth century, see Acidini-Luchinat, ed., *I dintorni di Firenze*, 158. Florio, s.v. 'primitie', defines *primizie* as 'the firstlings of yearly fruites'. The Marian chapel of villa Manfredi lo Strozzi was also based on the seigniorial translation of a street tabernacle: see Mannini, 217.

local religion, or an official recognition and institutionalization of it. How much effect (imaginative or otherwise) the devotional image, relic or body could have was of course linked to how it was to be accessed, and the number of services the domestic oratory provided was crucial to this. The text will now examine what services were offered or what masses were celebrated at these spaces and with what frequency.

For a number of oratories, mass was celebrated at least once a week. However, the visitations often record mass being celebrated daily, suggesting how communion was becoming a part of habitual quotidian behaviour. These daily or weekly masses were in addition to the other feast days celebrated by the oratory, which were usually determined by the saint or biblical episode to which it was dedicated. Mass could be used very deliberately to reaffirm a dedicatory saint's position of importance for an area, as in the case of Matteo Cini's oratory of St. Francis which celebrated his feast not just on his name day but on 'every workday'.⁹¹ In addition, offices for the dead were held, so that at Neri Capponi's oratory at his villa alla Torre, every feast day was celebrated specifically in memory of his brother Gino, while many other oratories were also noted as having their own 'quaderno per le messe de morti' or *pianete* or other *drappi da morti*.⁹² Oratio Gianfigliuzzi's oratory at his villa la Volta in Val di Pesa founded in the 1550s, celebrated mass weekly, but the feast day of the Nativity was celebrated with six priests, who also performed an office for the dead the day afterwards, specifically for the 'help of their own souls'.⁹³ Such endowments for commemorative masses in combination with specific feast days show how personal and ancestral memory was deeply embedded within the Catholic calendar, and how mass could develop a profound mnemonic associative effect and meaning for its spectators that reinforced both the patron's role and the intercessory role of saints within a specific locus. Similarly, private oratories could offer services that responded to a religiously inscribed memory of place, as in the example of Jacopo Buonconti's oratory of Santa Maria del Castel di Mercetto. The oratory was built in memory of a long since disappeared church in the parish of San Giusto a Faltignano and for that reason specifically celebrated Marian masses.⁹⁴ Similarly, in Tommaso di Gianfrancesco Medici's oratory of Sant'Andrea at Sant'Andrea a Monte Giovanni, the priest noted how 'each year many masses are celebrated for the honour of that Saint and in memory of the ruined church [that was there] previously'.⁹⁵ Conversely, the large number of patrons who petitioned for rights to celebrate mass when they were absent from their villas, shows how continual mass was used to

⁹¹ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 9 October 1617, visitation by Buongiani Granfigli.

⁹² AAF, *Oratori* 2, 2 August 1610. For vestments and books *da morti*, see for example the description of the *Signori Cattani's* oratory in San Silvestro a Barberino in *Oratori* 5, 11 April 1645, or that of Pierfrancesco Pieri's, 31 January 1650.

⁹³ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 4 September 1610.

⁹⁴ AAF, *Oratori* 3, nd.

⁹⁵ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 17 August 1610.

reinforce and establish the oratories' own place as a significant memory within the countryside, as well as reassert the presence of the absent landowners.⁹⁶

As suggested, a wide variety of services were held at these domestic oratories.

GiovanBatista di Jacopo Cennini's oratory at Settignano had been celebrating solemnly for 'time immemorial and with the large devotion of the *popolo*' the feast days of Corpus Domini and the Office of the Magdalene.⁹⁷ The *Oratori* records show that the feasts of the Holy Cross, Epiphany, Corpus Dei, Nativity, Assumption, and Ascension were popular over and above oratories' dedicatory saints.⁹⁸ A large number of oratories presumably hosted either confraternal processions or ones related more specifically to the oratory itself. For example, Carlo Magalotti's oratory held a large 'procession of ancient devotion on the morning of the Ascension of Our Lord every year with the *popolo*.'⁹⁹ While specifically forbidden by Church regulation, it also appears that Easter was celebrated at certain private oratories and the sacrament of confession given.¹⁰⁰ For example, the previously cited example of Tommaso de' Medici's 'church' of Sant'Antonio (at Santa Felicità a Lasciano) allowed the 'spiritual contentment' of the *popolo*, and engendered their devotion to St. Anthony as a local intercessionary figure. On the feast day of the saint, large numbers of children came bearing gifts of wax *ex-votos*, some of which, reflecting local agricultural concerns, were of animals. Not only did Tommaso de' Medici's oratory offer just five or six masses on St. Anthony's

⁹⁶ See particularly the supplications by Vice Piovano Duranti Pinelli on behalf of Lionardo Ginori at Santo Stefano a Baroncelli, AAF, *Oratori* 4, 17 September 1630; Priest Niccolò Galletti for GiovanBattista Martelli, *Oratori* 2, 2 August 1610; as well as the one for Cosimo de' Medici, *Oratori* 2, 21 July 1610.

⁹⁷ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 11 November 1610.

⁹⁸ E.g. AAF, *Oratori* 3: 29 August 1615, oratory of Horatio Strozzi in Santo Stefano in Pane; 4 August 1615, oratory of Francesco and Cosimo Medici at San Piero a Sieve; 19 November 1616, oratory of Adamo Alammani at San Niccolò a Pisignano.

⁹⁹ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 29 October 1610, visitation by Giovanni Cortisi Lonchio, oratory at Sant'Ilario outside the gates of San Piero Gattolini. Magalotti's oratory was established 'al tempo del Primo Duca di Firenze.'

¹⁰⁰ On Easter see, for example Ulisse Gianelli's visitation to Palmiere Palmieri's oratory at Santo Stefano a Vicchia in AAF, *Oratori* 3, 31 July 1619. Gianelli records that Palmieri 'non potessi venire per Pasqua alla Chiesa' from which it seems safe to infer that Easter was celebrated by Palmeri in his oratory. On confession, see AAF, *Oratori* 2: oratories of Tommaso de' Medici at Santa Felicità a Lasciano, 11 September 1610; Antonio di Ruberto Galilei at Santa Maria al Fezzana, 1601; Ottavio Galilei at Florence, 10 April 1595; Oratio Gianfigliuzzi at Santa Quirica in Collina, 19 April 1610; Matteo Lapi at San Piero a Ema, 22 October 1614; Giovanni Bardini at his villa di paradiso in Colle, 29 July 1615; and from *Oratori* 4, that of Capitano Pierfrancesco Pieri's at San Lazzero, 31 January 1650. Given the often large distances between rural houses and the nearest Pieve, the high infant mortality rate, the stigma of death prior to baptism, the number of on-site priests, it seems highly plausible that baptism was administered in certain private oratories or chapels. Waddy records how Anna Colonna Barberini's daughter was baptised in 1632 at the private chapel of Palazzo Baberini, see Waddy, 'Inside the Palace', 31. See also ASF, CSV 1253, *Ricordi di poco momento: Diario privato di Gio. Camillo Malatesti di Borgo S. Sepolcro, cameriere del Senatore di Lorenzo Strozzi, dal 1 luglio 1600 al 18 febbraio 1670*, 13v, which notes under the heading of 14 Tuesday March that the daughter of Duke Piccolomini and Marchese Bichi performed the ring ceremony of the marriage ritual in the Strozzi villa il Corno's chapel: 'sposo la nello [sic] nella Capella All'Corno a ore 17.'

feast day, and mass every morning with a large (if unspecified) number of priests, but it moreover offered confession.¹⁰¹

REGULATING DOMESTIC CHAPELS

The large number of people who went to private oratories, and the range of services offered there shows the problematic usurpation of the parish church and the difficulties of regulating what was essentially public domestic devotion. Clearly owners felt their own oratories at times to be more important than the local church, with patrons taking (or reclaiming) items from their parish church. Oratio Albizzi, for example, removed a painting from the parish church and hung it in his own chapel, leaving the local rector with a gap and a problem for celebrating feast days.¹⁰² The recording of instances of pilfering from the parish church stress not only the key role material culture had in liturgical practice, but also appear indicative of a changing value system that increasingly emphasized the importance, and to a large degree, the autonomy of the domestic sphere.

The priest Antonio Pippi's pitiful plea to regulate the newly built oratory of Santi and Simone di Desco Fabbri at their villa Schizzano in the Val di Pesa, shows how parish priests were reduced economically and functionally by private oratories. The Fabbri's oratory was five hundred *passi* from the parish church of Santa Maria a Pulica and just two hundred from San Donato, and was connected to both by 'a very good main road'. The oratory had been built from a bequest of twenty-five *scudi* left by their relation Filippo, and was described as spacious, containing an altarpiece by Alessandro Bronzino, and an elaborate 'sportico' and 'loggetta' of stone that matched the altar inside. Pippi however complained that not only was the Fabbri's oratory of St. Catherine of Alexandria of no use ('ne nasce piccola commodita'), but that it was actively robbing him of his flock and the confraternities of St. Antony of Padua and the Santissimo Rosario that had previously celebrated at his church. As a result his church was left deserted, his parishioners were reduced by a hundred, and the numbers for feast day communion had dropped from seventy souls to just 'ten poor sad people [*dieci poveri dorici persone*]'. In addition, the parish church's previous hierarchy on the processional route created by the confraternities had been diminished, and the Fabbri's live-in priest meant that the family were able to celebrate mass when and how they wanted.¹⁰³ Despite the fact that Pippi had already signalled to his superior 'this disorder' created by the Fabbri oratory, Pippi believed the 1610 Florentine synod's ruling which forbade the practice of celebrating mass in

¹⁰¹ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 11 September 1610: '[...] da lui pregato asi che il tanto ben accanto questi popoli in celebrassi sentovi sommo contento spirituale [...] anzi di gran devotione si perché i popolo di contado ne questo santo assai sue intercessione con corrano anzi nel aver'io [...] poich bisogna pigliarli come si possono avere col mio disagnio per esser lor lontanio li confessano corti [...]']

¹⁰² AAF, *Oratori* 4, 3 April 1640.

¹⁰³ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 27 July 1610. *Oratori* 2 also contains an earlier visitation by a priest of San Vincentio and a licence to celebrate mass was conceded in 1603 prior to the chapel's completion.

private oratories, in line with Pope Paul V's prohibition, would end all this confusion.¹⁰⁴ Needless to say it did not. While no mention of a licence being conceded was given after Pippi's visitation, there was a record of another visitation in 1615 by Tomaso Gentileschi after which a licence is conceded 'as usual' to Simone di Marco Fabbri. In contrast to Pippi's tribulations, Gentileschi quite happily (and doubtless with compensation) used the Fabbri's oratory to give mass to the sick and infirm as, according to his visitation record, it provided a convenient spot without which the 'the poor priest would find himself quite alone and in danger [*con pericolo*].' The Fabbri's aforementioned small loggia (now described as a 'veroncino') provided a place where the children of Simone would go 'after the Ave Maria to say their prayers, sometimes for the large number of the populace which come here for mass'.¹⁰⁵ Gentileschi's and Pippi's visitations provide proof of how regulated, or in this case how unregulated these spaces were, how they were used, and how much they could impact on parish life. The fact is that domestic oratories and chapels provided not so much a substructure to pre-existing churches, but rather a different tier altogether.

As Pippi's visitation record shows, and the references to the 1610 synod outlaw of domestic altars in other records demonstrate, it was a tier whose ambiguities of spatial norms and social functions provoked concern. As already noted, while ecclesiastical law in theory allowed private chapels as a right of status to cardinals, bishops, and regular prelates, consecrated altars for the laity were only to be permitted by a papal or Episcopal indult for exceptional causes.¹⁰⁶ Causes, as has been explained, were easier to find in the countryside where the very real problems of distance to the parish church and physical ill health could make regular attendance at mass difficult. However, the exceptions in allowing permission were numerous and inevitably this portrays the rather ambiguous if not self-contradictory regulation of these spaces. Writing from Rome to his vicar general in Milan, Niccolò Ormaneto, the Archbishop of Milan and Cardinal Carlo Borromeo noted that

[...] in the case of domestic oratories, [they need to be] completely separate from the household environment. In short, they should aim to give social value and function to sacred ceremonies, and [not allow people] to live anymore in isolation, locked inside one's own personal spirituality, but rather in close communion with all of God's people.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ '[di un prete che essi tongono in casa ...] la compagnia del Sanctissimo Rosario dove si cantava una domenica del mese la messa conprecisione e da poi in qua che si è cominciato adir' la messa a detta villa non ci venendo persene trovarsi può cantar' la messa ne far' la precisione, ne cantar' il vespro il quale da quel tempo in qua non havendo chi si aiuti son' costretto adirlo legendo, i quali disordini Altre volte ho significato a Monsig. Vicario Avanti al Sinodo et hora veggendo che tutti gli convenienti considerati [sic] dal sinodo si applicano a questa Cappella non me pare con buona coscienza permettere che in detta Cappella si possa dire la messa trattandosi di levare tutta la devotione dalla mia chiesa parrocchiale, la quale rimande abbandonata [...]', AAF, *Oratori* 2, 27 July 1610.

¹⁰⁵ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 19 January 1615: 'doppo l'ave maria a dire il loro offitio qualche volta per il gran numero di popolo ch vengono qui vi alla messa'.

¹⁰⁶ Moroni, vol. 8, s.v. 'Cappella', 99.

¹⁰⁷ '[...] nel caso degli oratori privati, ben distinto dagli ambienti dell'abitazione; ed infine come mirasse a dare funzione e valore sociale alle cerimonie sacre, da vivere non più in privato, nel chiuso della propria

In registering a belief that domestic oratories were permissible provided they were not too 'domestic', Borromeo's letter is a salient example of the challenge they posed to the Church. By being too privately sited, they were out of the sight and control of Church authorities, and they potentially threatened to disrupt an ideal normative, centralized and 'open' religious practice. By being removed or distinct from the domestic sphere, Borromeo hoped that chapels would restore a social value to the sacred ceremonies, and replace the unruly equations of the home (namely privacy, secrecy, individuality and a degree of impermeability), with those of the more easily governable and surveyable public community. Nonetheless, the letter, as does another written to Ormaneto in 1564, implicitly recognized the difficulties facing the Church should they enact the suppression of these sites.¹⁰⁸ This second letter explicitly noted that it would be impossible to lift Papal dispensations for domestic chapels, and advised Ormaneto that the best thing was not to let them multiply too much, stringently check that they had an appropriate location within the house that allowed some interval of space from profane areas and ensure that whilst they resembled an image of a church as much as possible, the residents should always attend mass at the parish church on Sundays and principal feast days.

However, as seen above, one of the problems was that they clearly resembled the image of a church too much, to the extent that they robbed the flock of the parish church and occasionally its objects as well. In addition, a significant number of urban chapels and oratories were not only next door to bedchambers but were able to be accessed from the bed itself, thereby conflating the view of an image of a church with a more comfortable one of the house.¹⁰⁹ What is striking about Borromeo's comments and the priest Pippi's complaints, is the tension between the Church's position on domestic chapels: both banning them and at the same time permitting them. The 1610 synod called by Archbishop Alessandro Marzi-Medici (1605-1630) confirmed this ambiguous

personale spiritualità, bensì in stretta comunione con tutto il popolo di Dio', Arch.Arciv. Mil., sez.IX, *Carteggio Ufficiale*, vol.III, 63v/64r, as quoted in Aurora Scotti, 'Architettura e riforma cattolica nella Milano di Carlo Borromeo.' *L'Arte* 18 (1972): 55-90, 57.

¹⁰⁸ '[...] quanto alle Messe che si dicono nelle case private è molto difficile levare un Breve che dichiari sopra di questo il Concilio, però io non vedo alcuno miglior rimedio di fare che questa cosa non moltiplichi troppo, che mostrarsi alquanto rigoroso nella qualità degli Oratorii, con lo scudo del medesimo Concilio, perché essendovi quelle parole, ad divinum tantum cultum dedicata oratoria, ab eisdem ordinariis designanda et visitanda; in esecuzione di questo, molte saranno le condizioni che voi doverete ricercare in uno oratorio, cioè che sia un luogo capace, et non un nicchio et un buco, per dir così, che sia separato totalmente, che non serva per niun'altra con cosa; che quella tal camera sia in parte, che non subito levandosi dal letto, et così in vеста con pochissima riverenza si vada alla Messa, ma vi sia qualche intervallo di luogo, et vi si vada in habito decente in modo che ben si conosca che si va a servir Dio. Di più si tenga quell luogo ornato come conviene, et si riduca a una Imagine di chiesa più che si può, come levando camini se vi sono, et simili impedimenti; oltre tutto questo, poi che haverete disegnato et approvato l'oratorio, astringeteli però che nei giorni di domenica et feste principali vadino in ogni modo fuori alla chiesa [...]', *ibid.*, 57.

¹⁰⁹ For example AAF, *Oratori* 4, 1 November 1631, in which Attilio Incontri (a noble from Volterra) was recorded as 'può sentir e veder Messa dall'letto' in his chapel at San Giovanni a Remole; and from *Oratori* 2, 5 November 1606, the example of Alessandro del Serra's chapel of San Giorgio in Florence which 'viene nella Camera dove dorme Messer Alessandro.'

stance. As it noted in the synod's passage relating to the celebration of mass, the now widespread concession of licenses to celebrate mass in private oratories had:

[...] not increased devotion but has rather and to a great extent rushed it into contempt and irreverence [...and domestic oratories] oppose the salvation of souls and the sound conditions of parishioners drawing them away from the Parish Church, so that the sheep cannot be guarded by their proper shepherd in befitting surroundings.¹¹⁰

Because of these reasons, the passage continues, all licenses were to be revoked and invalidated. Nonetheless, this outlaw on celebrating mass in private oratories in line with Tridentine rules was clearly only conceived of as a temporary and somewhat ambivalent measure, as the decree recognized that such a ban was 'absolutely harsh and not in agreement with Christian piety.' The qualification that 'in the future some discretion may be had', was in fact given practical remedy by listing the ways in which private oratories were to be presently inspected in order that permission could be granted: they were to be appropriately designed and situated, and a clear reason was to be given for why they were necessary.

The stress that the synod laid on regulating these spaces through inspection is visible through the *Oratori* files themselves. Particularly for the first three decades of the seventeenth century, the files attest to a growing vigilance over these spaces, and a heightened concern to regulate them. Moreover, the visitation records document an increasing distinction made by owners between the sacred and the profane in the choice of where oratories and chapels were being built. Much like the changing atmosphere of churches which were being stripped of the plethora of ex-votos and extraneous objects, such a spatial distinction in enforcing the categories of propriety between the sacred and the profane doubtless affected not just an experiential understanding of religion but a conceptual one as well. The files occasionally record the rather pedantic enforcement of these distinctions through repeated visitations. For example, the license for Benedetto di Papi Comparini's oratory was suspended by the Archbishop's office in 1639 because a *forno* was attached to it. In order to regain a license, either the chapel or *forno* was moved twice to eventually allow 'at least one *braccio*' between them (the first move of three quarters of a *braccio* being deemed apparently insufficient).¹¹¹ If proximity to improper places lessened the sanctity of chapels, so did their proximity to improper people. The priest Michele Sordi in 1611 was concerned that Maria Gaddi's villa chapel had been 'profaned' because the villa had been in the hands of Jews (simultaneously and unintentionally revealing a lapse in the Tuscan ghetto's walls).¹¹² The

¹¹⁰ *Decreta Synodi Diocesanæ Florentinæ. Habite in Metropolitana Ecclesia VI. Kal Iunii. MDCX* (Florence, Michaelmangelum Sermartellium, 1610), 5-6. See Appendix F for the full text of this section.

¹¹¹ AAF, *Oratori* 4, 29 August 1639, Santo Stefano a Calcinaia.

¹¹² AAF, *Oratori* 2, 12 June 1611, villa il Pedone, in Santa Maria a Opinto: '[...] di poi essere stata detta villa in mano di Hebrei da quale per essere setta contraria alla fede nostra si può credere che sia stata profanata.'

visitation records also show an increased interest in whether ecclesiological aspects of the oratories were in conformity to regulations and many notations insisted that incorrect missals, altars made of wood or faulty *pietre sagrate* were replaced. The priest Finuccio Neri, for instance, thought that the altar stone in Isabella Capponi's villa chapel appeared too small and painstakingly included a drawing of it in order to show its feeble dimensions (fig.5.55). By the time of Priest Bigazzi's visitation a year later, Capponi's *pietra sagrata* had been replaced and now measured half a *braccio* wide by almost three quarters long.¹¹³ Comments such as these with their insistence on correct liturgical equipment, demonstrate a widespread belief in the key role that material culture played in creating a sacred space.

Although numerous supplications after 1610 did plead for permission to celebrate mass as before (thereby suggesting that the synodal rule had been enacted for a period), these same supplications usually show that a license was conceded just several days later.¹¹⁴ Reading the visitation files it becomes clear that although technically domestic chapels were not allowed, in practice the rule enacting their ban was only given force through exceptions to it. Like the case already given of the Fabbri's oratory at Schizzano in the Val di Pesa, the files occasionally record the desire of priests to assert their role and the parish church's primacy, querulously demanding support from the Archbishop's office to uphold the rules that the office and Papal court had made. Only very occasionally did the office uphold them, and usually only by restricting licenses for a short period, or by offering unenforceable remedies such as forbidding bells to be rung before mass had finished in the parish church.

In fact, bells were a perennial problem for Church authorities as was indeed 'noise control' of oratories more generally. While oratories could offer a clearly demarcated architectural space for worship and were therefore physically relatively easy to regulate, they could through sound transcend their own parameters: a fact made clear in the 1633 visitation of a newly built oratory at Porta a San Friano. This oratory possessed two small iron windows adjacent to which 'si può fare orationi' to the outside.¹¹⁵ Through utterance, the interior spiritual and patronal space infiltrated and laid claim to surrounding exterior spaces, expanding the owner's possessions and audience. The oft-repeated complaint in synods regarding ringing bells establishing a hierarchy of churches shows how the appropriation of space (and imaginations) through sound had always been a problem that church authorities found difficult to govern. The 1517 Florentine synod protested about 'the harm done to parish churches by the calling of the people to oratories.'¹¹⁶ Almost a hundred years later, the parish priest of San Jacopo a Voltignano, noted yet 'more cause of weakness' ('più causa di

¹¹³ AAF, *Oratori* 3, visitations of 1 January 1626 and 1627, San Quirico a Legnaia, called Torre Annunziata.

¹¹⁴ See for example the visitations of Filippo Mattioli's oratory at San Bartolomeo a Lozzole in AAF, *Oratori* 2, 5 February 1610.

¹¹⁵ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 1 December 1633.

¹¹⁶ From page 242 of Giulio de' Medici's provincial synod, as quoted in Trexler, *Synodal Law*, 31.

impotentì') through the usurpation of his church by Pucci's private oratory at Oliveto (see figs.5.15-17) through its bell tower (fig.5.12). The chimes from Pucci's *campanile* could be heard not only by the priest's entire congregation but also from more than two miles away, thereby risking the loss for the priest of even more of his own potential *popolo* to this noble's villa.¹¹⁷

The visitation of Priest Marcantonio Giuliano of San Donato a Torri regarding Girolamo Leopardi's oratory of Sant'Antonio in his parish is worth quoting, not just for showing how quickly synodal information was disseminated, but also for the way in which it highlights the importance held by specific feast days and the power struggles between rural parish priests and absentee landowners. Marcantonio declared that

[...] as to the reasons why [Leopardi] wants Mass to be said, I do not know his intention. I would say clearly to *Vostra Serenissima* that there is no reason, there is no one there who urgently must hear Mass: not the populace nor the Leopardi, because as to the populace the Parish church is more comfortable and larger, and as for the Leopardi, neither him nor his household hardly ever come here. In fact, he rents out the villa to one person or another because they don't have any reason to come here [...] This Chapel is opposite the Parish church and three hundred *passi* away from it, and it is situated more than two hundred *passi* away from the house. And I do not in any way intend to let them be able to say Mass there on feast days [...] and that they should not be able to celebrate any feast days, and particularly not that of St. Anthony without my express permission and wishes, as *Vostra Serenissima Illustrissima* has ordered in the synod.¹¹⁸

Like Antonio Pippi's injunctions, Giuliani's laments were unheeded. A license was approved by the Archbishop's office, and another issued two years later.¹¹⁹ By 1617 Giuliani was complaining of thefts that the 'molto magistrato' Leopardi had made from the parish church, and increasingly

¹¹⁷ '[sopra l'oratorio] è una campana con messa in un'campanile molto rilevato quale no[n] solo da tutta mia cura è sentita ma lontana più di 2 miglia si sente,' in AAF, *Oratori* 2, 29 August 1610.

¹¹⁸ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 19 November 1610: '[...] Ma quanto nelle cause perché lui vuole che vi si dica messa, io non so la sua intentione: dico bene a Vostra Serenissima ch non ce causa, nessuna urgente di doverci dir messa né quanto a populi né quanto al Leopardi perché quanto a populi li è piu comoda è piu capace la Parochia, quanto al Leopardi né lui, né sua famiglia non ci vengan quasimai, anzi tiene affitata la villa quando a uno è quando a un altro, per non aver occhasioni di vernirci et al presente la tiene il Signor Alexandro Guadagni questa Cappella è dirimpetto alla parochia, et lontana 300 passi et è in su un poggerello discosto alla casa del Leopardi più di 200 passi. Et non intendo in modo nessuno che indetto oratorio vi si passa dir messa i giorni di feste [...] et che non vi possinfar festa nessuna, et particolarmente quella di S. Antonio senza mia xpressa licentia et volunta si come Vostra Serenissima Illustrissima ha ordinato nel sinodo [...]'.

¹¹⁹ Cf. the first reference to Leopardi's chapel in the visitation by Girolamo di Thomaso: 'questo di sopradetto [Leopardi] serimasto dacordo che il parochiano di detta Chiesa di S. Donato come principale nelle feste sia sempre il primo Chiamato et le actione spirituale le deva tractare detto parochiano. Che i preti li chiami per la festa di S. Ant^o detto ms Girolamo come padrone del oratorio et lui espresarli, che l'oblacione sieno del detto parochiano, il detto parochiano si come nelle consitutione di Leone X appare nel capitolo 9 de celebratione missarum et detto parochiano deva dare a preti un giulio [...]', in AAF, *Oratori* 2, 14 January 1612.

citing the rules that the authorities themselves had made, but continued to ignore.¹²⁰ Another license was nonetheless issued, albeit conditionally and with the insistence that Leopardi return all possessions taken for feast days to the parish church where they belonged. If this episode exposes the powerlessness of the parish priest in face of a noble's authority, it also shows how small issues became wider contestations exposing ownership rights and the influence of social status.

However, Pippi's and Giuliani's voices are relatively anomalous within the files, in both their eloquence and their dissent. The greater proportion of parish priests as well as church authorities seemed content (and doubtless had vested interests in being so) with the practice of domestic oratories and chapels. The former would often stress how they were places of popular devotion and pointed out that not to celebrate in them would be 'a much greater disservice to everyone'.¹²¹ For an impoverished *contado* and the often even more impoverished rural parish priest, domestic oratories provided a very real and beneficial alternative to the inadequacies of the Church's stretched support (both fiscal and otherwise). As noted, the visitations and supplications after the 1610 synod show an increasing emphasis on what Borromeo had desired by stressing the public nature of the oratories and how open they were. By emphasizing that they were not in fact private, they were invariably and somewhat ironically allowed more self-governance. This openness, however, took different forms, and the chapter will now turn to examine the decoration, architecture, and sociable functions of domestic chapels.

ARCHITECTURE AND DECORATION

Villa chapels and oratories contributed to the nexus of sociability that villas themselves promoted and appear to have been often opened to visitors on 'villa tours'. Geri degli Spini's elaborate and costly renovation of his Florentine palace on the Lungarno and his villas at Santa Maria a Peretola and Grassina from 1606 onwards included the construction of three chapels, all decorated largely by Poccetti and Santi di Tito.¹²² The elaborate decorations of the chapel at villa

¹²⁰ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 10 February 1617: '[...] In prima domandò l'osservanza di quatro dispongano le constitutione Apostoliche di Leoni Decimo di celebrare Missaro Cap.9 etteso che detto Messer Girolamo e sua agenti più volte del anno 1601 in qua ha fatto raisere le oblationi di danari cere e altro fatto reverderendo i boti che erano qui vi offerti fatto vendere le candele et altre cose attenete alla detta parrocchia di S. Donato si come per il detto Capitolo dispone che particolare si e impadronito di un paliotto, una pianeta, calice, mantellino di taffetta per parare quale tutte robe sono state offrire per limosine a detto Oratorio da una compagnia dei Vetturiali. Quali paramenti et calice domandò al Signor Illustrissima che per buona devina stare in Chiesa mia et qui vi col serrati per arvire prima palmete a detto Oratorio [...]']

¹²¹ 'a ogni uno di scomodo più che grande', from visitation of Francesco del Bene's oratory at San Quirico, Val di Pesa in AAF, *Oratori* 4, 24 November 1630.

¹²² BNCf, Mss. Tordi 523, *Quaderno della Muraglia* (May 1606 – c.1610). Payments for decoration and construction of the chapels can be found dispersed throughout the account book, but specific mention is made in ff.31r & 41r. On Peretola see Marco Conti and Massimo Pecchioli, *Santa Maria a Peretola: e gli oratori nella sua giurisdizione* (Florence: F. & F. Parretti, 1979); and (from where the illustrations have been drawn) Maria Pia Mannini, 'Il patrimonio sconosciuto: Santi di Tito e Alessandro Allori nella villa Spini a Peretola,'

Peretola merited an especially detailed description by the visiting priest Francesco Razzi in 1615, and are worth examining closely.¹²³ The thirteenth-century fortified villa was completely reconstructed by Santi di Tito during the early-seventeenth century (see fig.5.56) and the detached chapel built as part of the modernization project to create a residence befitting a wealthy and powerful seventeenth-century merchant and courtier (see figs.5.57-60). The chapel was dedicated to SS. Jacopo and Filippo and above the *pietra serena* altar of the chapel was an altarpiece of the miracle of *The Feeding of the Five Thousand* by Santi di Tito (fig.5.61). At either side of the altar and above the sacristy's doors was a fresco of the Annunciation and the Angel Gabriel modeled on the frescoes of Santissima Annunziata in Florence. On the sidewalls were paintings, which Maria Pia Mannini has recently attributed to Alessandro Allori, of the Florentine St. Giovanni Gualberto at Vallombrosa (the eleventh-century founder of the Congregation of Vallombrosans) (fig.5.62) and the Miracles of the Blessed Filippo Benizi (the thirteenth-century Florentine General Prior of the Servites) at Mount Senario (fig.5.63).¹²⁴ At the top of the door was St. Francis at La Vernia, to either side of which were SS. Zenobius and Antonino, while the rest of the chapel was noted by Razzi as being frescoed with angels, archangels, cherubims, seraphims, and grotesques.¹²⁵ The miraculous scenes of saints on the *sacri monti* of Tuscany which had subsequently become pilgrimage sites was a choice clearly appropriate for a villa that offered itself as a type of rural refuge, and one that was situated in a valley within Vallombrosan territory. The iconographic cycle moreover deliberately referenced the Spini's Florentine chapel in Santa Trinità (which belonged to the order of the Vallombrosians) whose entrance arch bore a painting of the Annunciation and which, according to Vasari, depicted scenes from the life of St. Giovanni Gualberti, its dedicatee.¹²⁶ The Annunciation scene and the picture of St. Filippo Benizi, however, also clearly referenced the fresco cycles in the Servite church of Santissima Annunziata. The iconographic cycle of the chapel not only entwined both the rural and urban loyalties of the Spini family whilst displaying their tradition of religious patronage, but, as Mannini has noted, it also, and entirely appropriately for a

Arte Cristiana LXXXII (763): 271-278. Baldinucci notes Poccetti's work at Palazzo Spini in Florence in *Notizie*, III, 140-141.

¹²³ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 16 August 1615.

¹²⁴ Mannini, 'Il patrimonio sconosciuto', 275-6.

¹²⁵ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 16 August 1615: '[...] l'altare della quale è con ornamento di pietra serena, con tavola di pittura di buon Maestro, dentro vi è il Miracolo di Nostro Signore della Moltiplicazione del pane e de' pesci et è messo in mezzo da due porticelle, per una delle quali s'entra in sagrestia, e l'altra sta ferma, e chiusa, fatta solamente per accompagnarci l'altra della sagrestia, sopra le quali Porticelle è dipinto in fresco la Santissima Vergine, e l'Angelo Gabbriello, che l'annuncia. Nel mezzo delle due facce della Cappella sono alter due tavole di Pittura, pur' di buona mano, in una delle quali è un Miracolo di San Giovanni Gualberto a Vallombrosa, nell'altro è un Miracolo del B. Filippo Benizi à Montesenario, ma non hanno altare. In testa da' piè di detta Cappella sopra la Porta di essa vi è un San Francesco col Monte della Vernia, e di qua e di là di detta Porta vi son dipinti in fresco un San Zanobi, e un Santo Antonino. Il resto poi delle mura è tutto dipinto in fresco d'Angeli, Arcangeli, Cherubini, e Serafini, e grottesche.'

¹²⁶ For Vasari's comments and the Spini chapel in Santa Trinità, see Kevin Murphy, ' "Lilium inter spinas": Bianca Spini and the Decoration of the Spini Chapel in Santa Trinita,' *Italian History and Culture (Journal of Georgetown University at Villa le Balze* 8 (2002): 51-66.

chapel situated within the agricultural compound of the villa, made reference to the production and fertility of the earth.¹²⁷ The priest Razzi declaimed that there was everything necessary for the celebration of mass and that it was both 'rich and noble'. Razzi went on to write that the chapel was kept double-locked and opened only when the patrons or their guests came, or when the patrons had asked it to be opened 'to show it to who should want to visit it and see it'.¹²⁸

That oratories might inspire a circuit of interested spectatorship might seem bizarre given their almost monolithically simplistic and repetitive external form that has undoubtedly contributed to the subsequent lack of interest in them expressed by scholars. By usually conforming to a specific formal typology, detached oratories, as evident from surviving examples, tend to offer little architectural interest or spatial variation. Despite the rare and usually late seventeenth-century exceptions to this, such as the Bernini-esque oratory at villa Lamporecchio built by Giulio Rospigliosi upon election to the papal throne as Clement IX (1600-1669) (fig.5.64) or the cyclopean reference in the chapel at Villa Bellavista in Buggiano designed by Giuseppe Piamontini and Giovanni Battista Foggini (fig.5.65), the majority of detached oratories were architecturally banal, in short, a type of ecclesiastical garden shed. Located on roadsides and often junctions or cross roads, they were predominantly single rectangular or square rooms with an *occhio* above and two small windows either side of the centrally placed door figs (see for example figs.5.3-5.8, 5.24, and 5.27). Even the elaborate late seventeenth-century re-facing of the Oratory of the Immaculate Conception in Casabiondo, Pian di Scò (see fig.5.66) fails to hide this basic skeletal structure. Like the Casabiondo example and as previous illustrations have shown, a great majority of oratories appear to conform uncannily to the ideal form offered in Borromeo's *Instructionum Fabricae et Supplectilis Ecclesiasticae*.¹²⁹ The *Instructionum* was an exhaustive reformatory manual of church architecture and decoration whose obsessively detailed codification of *all* aspects of churches and their furnishings aimed to regularize and regiment the ideal ecclesiastical space and liturgical practice. Borromeo's text posited two key types of ecclesiastical building: the church and the oratory. These were further divided into hierarchical categories to establish a sequence that runs (in order) from cathedral to collegial to parish church to finally 'chiese minori'; and then from public oratory to semi-private oratory to oratories (in fact either wayside shrines, *maeste* or tabernacles) where mass is not to be celebrated. Borromeo's description of the 'oratory where mass is sometimes celebrated', stipulated that they should be at least twelve *cubiti* square, have a single nave and a raised altar at the back. Directly in front of the altar was to be an entrance door that had

¹²⁷ Mannini, 'Il patrimonio sconosciuto', 275.

¹²⁸ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 16 August 1615: 'L'entrata di detta Cappella è per una Porta di buon legname con serrame doppio, che per l'ordinario sta chiusa, e solo s'apre quando i Padroni vi vengono, o vi villeggiano, o si porge occasione d'apirla per mostrarla a chi havessi voglia di visitarla e vederla.'

¹²⁹ Borromeo, *Instructionum Fabricae*. On this work see Cecilia E. Voelker, 'Borromeo's Influence on Sacred Art and Architecture,' in *San Carlo Borromeo*, eds. Headley and Tomaro, 172-87, and Scotti, 'Architettura e riforma'.

two windows either side and above 'a round window, or really an *occhio* of the prescribed structure'.¹³⁰ These windows should be placed high enough so that the interior should not be visible from the outside.

The similarities between practice and Borromeo's guidelines are self-evident. However, it is inaccurate to say that oratories were necessarily built with Borromeo's text in mind, as these forms pre-date his text, as, for example, in the case of the fourteenth-century Strozzi oratory of Santuccio, Michelozzo's chapel at the Medici villa of Trebbio, the Alberti family's Oratory of St. Catherine of Alexandria built c.1354 (see fig.5.67), or the Bardi Oratory of the Annunciation attributed to Michelozzo c.1440s (fig.5.68).¹³¹ Rather, it would appear that Borromeo turned best practice into prescription. In doing so he codified an evolving architectural form that in the trecento had begun to suggest an ecclesiastical form, and which by the end of the cinquecento came to signify an expressly religious function.

Very few detached oratories diverge in form from the above descriptions. There are however a few exceptions which are worth noting. Caterina Vinta Cellesi's villa oratory at San Piero Varlungo was described as of 'the most beautiful architectural construction', Ottaviano Acciaiuoli commissioned the architect Gherardo Silvani to rebuild his chapel at San Lorenzo a Montegufoni and the Cavalier GiovanBattista Rondinelli's was 'furnished with a most beautiful cupola.'¹³² GiovanBattista Michelozzi's oratory seems to have been conceived deliberately as an architectural embellishment to his 'most beautiful and magnificent palace' six miles away from Florence at Sant'Andrea (presumably Sant'Andrea a Quinto). Recalling Buontalenti's chapel at Pratolino, Michelozzi's was detached from the villa by twenty *braccia*, the oratory was ten *braccia* square and was made with 'the most beautiful cupola whose height is in proportion and it is most richly dressed inside and throughout with all the trimmings.'¹³³ Cosimo Pasquali's detached *cappella* was similarly described as made of 'beautiful architecture' with a semi-circular form and, again, a cupola, and adorned with richly carved *pietra serena* throughout.¹³⁴

Interior domestic chapels included within the floorplans of Serlio's Sixth and Seventh Books are invariably signalled by a distinguished and distinguishing architectural form, usually an octagonal or round shape drawn from temple layouts that comes to signify a specific domestic

¹³⁰ Borromeo, *Instructionum fabricae*, 149.

¹³¹ On the Bardi's oratory, see Acidini-Luchinat, ed., *I dintorni di Firenze*, 159. The oratory's altarpiece of the Annunciation by Filippo Lippi (picturing the donors Andrea de' Bardi and Lorenzo di Illarione de' Bardi) is now at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica at Palazzo Barberini, Rome (see fig. 1.23).

¹³² AAF, *Oratori* 4, 23 July 1631, oratory at San Piero a Varlungo, visitation by Gabriello Zanchini: 'di bellissima Architettura fabricata'; AAF, *Oratori* 4, 9 July 1629, visitation by Donato Benini; AAF, *Oratori* 2, 5 August 1595, San Bartolomeo a Sovigliana, visitation by Sebastiano Tano.

¹³³ Michelozzi 'ha fabricata [l'oratorio] per ornamento del suo bellissimo et magnificentissimo palazzo [...e con] bellissima cupola alta a proportione richissima di concii di dentro et dinanzi con tutti gli ornamenti [...]', AAF, *Oratori* 2, nd.

¹³⁴ AAF, *Oratori* 4, 3 October 1634, oratory at San Martino alla Palma, visitation by Fra Giovanni Vincenzo Dossi.

religious function.¹³⁵ Similar to the way that Serlio, Capponi and Pasquali used architectural form to connote function are the quattrocento precedents of Francesco Sassetti's small private oratory at La Pietra and Bartolomeo Scala's chapel in his Florentine palace both constructed *ex novo*.¹³⁶ Sassetti's interior chapel took the form of a domed Greek cross and Scala's recalled a miniature version of Brunelleschi's Pazzi chapel at Santa Croce. Both then used shapes that architecturally signalled the room's sacred function and differentiated it from surrounding secular areas. A cupola had the same effect. Its inclusion was to have deliberate architectural recourse to an established ecclesiastical signifier that moreover had strong civic overtones and a defining, peculiarly Florentine identity that contemporary viewers of Michelozzi's and Pasquali's oratories, ever in the shade of Brunelleschi's dome, could not have missed.

For Conte Ruberto Capponi's oratory of San Michele Archangel at Petrognano (see fig.5.69-5.72), this recourse to Santa Maria del Fiore was entirely deliberate and entirely fitting given that the chapel had been commissioned by GiovanBatista di Gino di Nero Capponi (1506-1594), a former canon of the Florentine cathedral.¹³⁷ Designed by Santi di Tito and built between 1594-1597, Santi di Tito and his student Gregorio Pagani's architectural plans of the oratory (figs.5.73-5.76) show how it was intended to reproduce Brunelleschi's dome in scale on a ratio of 1:8.¹³⁸ With its Tuscan orders and capitals, and the replication in miniature of Florence's famous dome, the oratory shows the way in which elements of Tuscan quattrocento architecture were deliberately historicised to create a memory of place. In fact, a strong memory of place was already there as the chapel's site was where the town of Semifonte had once stood. A fortified medieval city, Semifonte's antagonistic and competitive nature to Florence had led to its complete destruction by Florentine troops in 1202 and a subsequent prohibition to build on this site.¹³⁹ Indeed, Capponi had to write to Grand Duke Ferdinand in order to gain permission to build there. The third and final inscription that Capponi proposed to place within the chapel's interior makes clear both the history of the site and Capponi's motivations to build:

¹³⁵ See for example the floorplans in plates XI (project N 13A), XII (project O 14), XVII (project Q 16), XXIV (V 20) reproduced in Serlio, *On Domestic Architecture*. See also the surviving circular chapel with cupola at the seventeenth-century Villa Calamia, via di Figline, Tuscany.

¹³⁶ On Scala see Brown, *Bartolomeo Scala*, 232-3, and Pellechia, 'The Patron's Role'. On Sassetti, see Lillie, 'The Patronage of villa chapels', 29-33.

¹³⁷ AAF, *Oratori* 4, 12 September 1636. The oratory was one of four that Capponi had in his compound of Petrognano.

¹³⁸ On the chapel see Isidoro Del Lungo, 'Semifonte,' *Miscellanea Storica della Valdelsa* I (1910), 25-30, and by the same author, *Semifonte: con un'appendice di documenti e sei illustrazioni* (Castelfiorentino, Società storica della Valdelsa, 1910). See also Gianluca Belli and Edoardo Melchiorri, 'La Cappella di S. Michele Arcangelo e Santi di Tito,' *Miscellanea storica della Valdelsa* XCII (1986), 163-173. According to Belli and Melchiorri the actual ratio is 1:5, *op cit.*, 174.

¹³⁹ Most recently on Semifonte's history see Paolo Pirillo, ed., *Semifonte in Val d'Elsa e i centri di nuova fondazione dell'Italia medievale* (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 2004).

The Senate and People of Florence in the year of our Lord 1202 after a long siege captured Semifonte with treachery and took possession of it. That town, situated on this mountain, had been fortified more by nature than craft, and was wealthy in arms and men. After razing it to the ground they [the Senate] ordained by law that no one should build there again. But now by grace of Ferdinand, Grand Duke of Etruria, GiovanBattista Capponi, the son of Gino and the grandson of Nereus, restored again this temple, a witness [*testudineum*] to St. Michael Archangel. 1594. In his eighty-eighth year.¹⁴⁰

The choice of architecture for the site and the intended inscriptions make clear that this chapel functioned not only as a personal memorial or ‘witness’ for the patron, the saint and the lost town, but also as a symbol of Florence’s political domination of the Tuscan countryside and the Capponi family’s civic and religious allegiances. The ancestry of place is linked to Capponi’s own personal ancestry as well as the ancestry of Medicean Tuscany or, as Capponi wrote, Etruria. Moreover, the closest architectural precedent for the oratory was the Temple of Victory at Foiano della Chiana designed by Ammanati, which, built on the site of the battle in which Florence defeated Siena, similarly marked the site of Florence’s subjugation of the countryside and the power of the grand-ducal regime through recourse to a *cupola* and an octagonal model recalling Florence’s Baptistery.¹⁴¹

Ottavio Galilei’s chapel of the Annunciation in his Florentine home competitively allied its owner to the Medicean regime. Galilei’s oratory was especially marked out by the visiting priest, Simone Fortune, as being ‘more beautiful and marvellous than any other that I have visited in Florence, giving it a reputation [fitting enough] they say to the person of the most Serene Grand Duke himself.’¹⁴² Like the above examples belonging to Michelozzi, Capponi and Pasquali, Galilei’s also had a *cupola*. However, its internal and urban position aligns it more closely with the example of Scala and suggests how this was a purpose-built chapel rather than a simple room conversion. Its location indicates this as well, as chosen ‘with much judgement’, the chapel was situated at the top of a ‘bel’ corridor of *pietra*, recalling several of Serlio’s plans which positioned a

¹⁴⁰ ‘S.P.Q. FLO. ANNO D. 1202 POST LONGAM OBSIDIONEM SEMIFONTE CAPTO CUM PRODITIONE TANDEM POTITUS EST. ID OPPIDUM, HOC IN MONTE SITUM, NATURA MAGIS QUAM OPERE MUNITUM ERAT, ARMIS VIRISQUE OPULENTUM; EOQUE RADICITUS PRORUTO LEGE SANXIT NE QUIS IBI DENUO MOLIRETUR. NUNC VERO, FERDINANDI MAGNI ETHRURIAE MAGNI DUCI GRATIA, TEMPLUM HOC TESTUDINEUM DIVO MICHAELI ARCANGELO RESTITUIT ITERUM D. IO BAPT. CAPONIUS GINI FIL. NEREI NEP. 1594. AESTATIS SVAE AN. 88 (VEL ANNUM AGENS OCTUAGESIMUM OCTAVUM).’ The three increasingly elaborate inscriptions written by GiovanBattista are reproduced in full in Del Lungo, ‘Semifonte’, 26-27. I would like to thank Mark Davies for his help in translating.

¹⁴¹ The resemblance is also noted by Belli and Melchiorri, ‘La Cappella di S. Michele Arcangelo’, 169. For an exhaustive list of all possible sources and architectural references, see *op cit.*, 167-175. Another surviving octagonal chapel is located on the via di San Carlo, see Giulio Lensi Orlandi, *Le ville di là d’Arno* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1978), fig. 223.

¹⁴² AAF, *Oratori* 2, 10 April 1596: ‘bella e miraviglia quanta altra ch io si habbia visitata in Firenze, dano ripurtela dischono per la persone istessa del Serenissimo Gran Duca.’

chapel at the end of a long gallery or loggia (see figs.5.77 and 5.78).¹⁴³ Through its placement at the end of the corridor, Galilei's chapel was given a position of visual prominence towards which the visitor was propelled. Entering from a portico whose door had an elaborate and gilded grating that allowed those outside aural access to the proceedings inside, the chapel's interior was embellished with arches of *pietra conci*. Around three sides were wooden benches for seating, whose measurements (each were five and a half *braccia* long) combined with the height of the cupola at ten and a half *braccia* suggest symmetry of classicizing proportions.

However the reason that Galilei's chapel was perceived as so marvellous, just as Geri Spini's oratory provoked a kind of social spectatorship, was primarily to do with its decoration and furnishing: its visual value. It is through their furnishing and decoration that private oratories and chapels are particularly significant and important, revealing the ways in which differing identities and religious loyalties were visually cast. The *Oratori* files are littered with comments similar to the priest's regarding the Barons Pandolfo and Bindaccio Ricasoli's chapel in Florence, which proclaimed that 'it can be put amongst the most beautiful private chapels or oratories that there are in houses of this city'.¹⁴⁴ Comments such as this, or that of Simone Fortune regarding Galilei's chapel, highlight the competitive circuit of status that domestic oratories constructed.

As the constant references to Santi di Tito have already suggested, it was a circuit whose fabric had often been constructed by the same circle of architects and artists. In addition to the oratories at Petrognano, Peretola, and le Corti which can be attributed to him, Santi di Tito was also responsible for, among others, the chapel architecture or paintings at Villa Collazzi-Bombicci, Arcangeiolo Montegonzi's oratory of the Nativity at San Giovanni a Senni, GiovanBattista di Jacopo Quaratesi's oratory at San Martino a Rovezzano, and Orazio Lanfranchi Rossi's oratory of St. Francis at Crespina.¹⁴⁵ A large number of these chapels were frescoed or provided with altarpieces by Bernardino Poccetti detto Barbatelli (1548-1612) and his workshop. Among the domestic chapels recorded in the files that Poccetti worked on were Spini's three oratories; the Strozzi's villa il Boschetto; Giovanni Sommai's at Sant'Ilario a Colombaia; Antonio Salviati's palace chapel in Florence; Francesco Rinuccini's in Santo Spirito; the Pesciolini's in Val d'Elsa; the Pucci Florentine chapel, and the Corsini villa le Corti. Poccetti also was recorded as decorating

¹⁴³ 'Il sitto dello quello è stato eretto con molto giudi percioche è in capo un bel corridoio di pietra, et è spiccato da tre bande et dall'altra non si dorme,' *ibid*.

¹⁴⁴ 'si può mettere in fra li più si belli oratori o cappelle private che sono per le case in questa Città' in AAF, *Oratori* 3, 15 August 1615. Cf. also the description of Vincentio Bardi's ('è delle belle Cappelle che sia a qui habbia visitate in questa Città') and Counts Ugo and Ippolito Gherardesca's Florentine chapels ('ornato di 3 tavole antiche e di tale bellezza che credo che altro simile non se ne trovi nella Diocesi) in the same volume, or the description of Capitano Vincenzo Landi's chapel at San Cristofano a Casoli as 'delle più belle Cappelle che sieno in questo parti convicine' in AAF *Oratori* 4.

¹⁴⁵ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 16 August 1610 Montegonzi's oratory; *Oratori* 3, 22 October 1625 oratory of GiovanBattista di Jacopo Quaratesi. For the altarpiece by Santi di Tito at Villa Lanfranchi, see Giusti, *Le ville del Valdarno*, 47.

villa alla Torre (villa Franceschi), villa Casale and villa dello Strozzino and as having painted the altarpiece depicting 'St. Michael Archangel, St. Nicholas and Other Saints' in Capponi's oratory of St. Michael Archangel. Other late-sixteenth or seventeenth century artists who were recorded in the visitation files as having worked on domestic chapels included Jacopo Ligozzi (1547-1627), Fabrizio Boschi (1572-1642), Ludovico Cardi *detto* il Cigoli (1559-1613), and Giovanni Mannozi *detto* Giovanni da San Giovanni (1592-1636), although several more obscure names like Niccolò Uccelli and Giulio Berti were also noted in the visitation files.¹⁴⁶ The repetition of names like Santi di Tito or Poccetti and their followers, in relation to the competitive status of domestic chapels recorded in the visitation records, demonstrates not only how domestic oratories created an important art and/or religious market at the turn of the seventeenth century, but that more work needs to be done in exploring how these places formed a network amongst themselves, establishing a collective, and a visually and conceptually referential identity.

In contrast to the practice of employing 'current' artists to design or decorate these spaces, many new chapels used altarpieces that were described favourably as 'antica': so many in fact that it seems it was a conscious strategy to imbue a long-established aura and a sense of memory and belonging to places recently constructed. Either way, the intermingling of the modern and the old in combination with the often vast listing of sumptuous materials and adornments in domestic chapels revealed, to the woe of priests like Pippi and Giuliano, how much they outstripped the often impoverished 'very uncomfortable' and 'very crude and *repentia*' parish church.¹⁴⁷ The stress on the 'nobility' and richness of the material goods contained within the oratories show how commonplace had become the views expressed by Abbot Suger and St. Thomas of Aquinas whereby physical magnificence was infused with theological content. The fast-booming Tuscan chapel industry indeed seems to have given rise to a concurrent increasing expenditure in the objects necessary for the celebration of mass, and in fact, by the mid-seventeenth century, chapels could contain a vast quantity of liturgical material culture. This ecclesiological accumulation stands in sharp contrast to the often meagre contents noted in early-sixteenth-century chapels.¹⁴⁸ The 1650

¹⁴⁶ For Boschi see AAF, *Oratori* 4, 3 October 1634, Cosimo Pasquali's oratory of SS. Cosimo and Damiano; for Cigoli see *Oratori* 2, 21 July 1610, Francesco and Cosimo Medici's oratory of the Conception at San Piero a Sieve and *Oratori* 3, 4 August 1615, Ilario Martelli's Florentine chapel. For Uccelli and Berti see *Oratori* 3, 12 August 1615, oratory of GiovanMaria Carcidoni at Sant'Andrea a Mosciano, and *Oratori* 4, 17 December 1629, GiovanBattista and Piero Bini's oratory of San Giovanni in San Giovanni in Sugana respectively. On Giovanni da San Giovanni, see the descriptions of Villa Il Pozzino (renovated 1594) and Villa Il Casale in Giusti, *Le ville del Valdarno*, 197-199, & 208-211. Few artists of the quattrocento or early-cinquecento were recognised by priests, although Andrea del Sarto was noted as having painted Raffaello Spetiali's oratory of the Nativity at San Giovanni a Senni (see *Oratori* 3, 20 July 1615), and an altarpiece by Ghirlandaio was recorded in the oratory of Carlo Tucci at San Cristofano a Viciano (*Oratori* 4, 27 January 1632).

¹⁴⁷ Taken from the description of San Piero Pimaggiore in contrast to Raffaello Arnaldi's Marian oratory located in the garden of his villa, AAF, *Oratori* 2, 7 July 1610.

¹⁴⁸ For example in 1524 Francesco di Carlo Pitti's villa chapel in Antella contained only: '1 tavola col cornicioni dorati dipintovi XP co piu santi; 1 cortina di levante azura; 1 campanezzo; 1 predella col 1 filo di

inventory of Cavalier Vincenzo di Giovanni Bardi's urban palace records a chapel outfitted with a staggering array of objects, which it is worth listing briefly to understand how elaborately decorated these spaces could be.

Decorating the chapel were yellow and red taffeta wall hangings; a wooden altar covered in red taffeta with *bullette* of brass and silver ribbons bearing a crib (*cappanuccia*) containing 'rifatte' statuettes, including a figure of the Virgin dressed with an undergarment of white fabric covered with a dress made from turquoise cloth with 'beautiful' gold velvet trim and sporting a crown of false pearls, as well as those of St. Joseph, several angels, Jesus in a basket, two small figures of Jesus in jasper, gesso statues of an ox, a mule, and another six figures; more angels of papier-mâché and card; two fabric runners of red taffeta to cover the crib; a frame of gilded walnut to go around the altar; a walnut *gradino* and two other *gradi* to place on top of the altar; a wooden cross with base that had the figure of Christ crucified in bronze as well as two vases attached; another similar crucifix; a *pero* without base; six candelabras of bronze to place above the altar (four with *baccioli* (snuffers) and two with small brass oil lamps); four wooden candelabras gilded with silver with covers of red cloth; two reliquaries of ebony each one *braccia* long with the images of Jesus and the Madonna in the middle and covers of yellow taffeta; two alabaster statues; a baby Jesus doll [*geiusino*] in gesso dressed in a red garment with gold edgings; two vases of glass with paper flowers; a locked sacred stone in a walnut frame that was placed within the altar; a fine piece of cloth with a lace border on the altar; a square piece of cloth measuring around four *braccia* on the altar; a canvas altarpiece depicting Christ and measuring four *braccia* high by two and a half wide with two statues placed either side; two small wooden cupboards placed either side of the altar with small inlaid benches of walnut and a red damask covering lined with linen that had gold tassels and net-work; two carved wooden busts adorned with silver that contained relics in their chests; four small vases of wood with tinsel [*orpello*] flowers; a small copper vase for holding holy water; a bronze lamp and similar basin with a *palla* of wood attached to the ceiling; a small missal in red leather bindings with a silk book mark; a papal brief in *carta pecora* bestowing permission to celebrate mass in the chapel; four spiritual books in *ottavo*; a small image of the Madonna adorned in silver; a box to hold the host; a small bowl of metal; five small images of various saints of little value; twelve small glass vases to hold flowers; three flasks of water to drink; a *leoncino* (what Florio confusingly translates as 'a lyon's whelp') of silk; an agnus dei of ash without ornament; one small asperge; a painted *inginocchiatoio* of walnut; two seats and a wooden bench.¹⁴⁹ Nor should this list be seen as definitive, as within the *biancherie* of the palace were placed the 'robe

tarsia.' See ASF, MAP 189, f.409r. Cf. with the contents of AntonMaria Pitti's chapel in his Villa di Ribbia in 1653: ASF, MPP 2661, f.917v.

¹⁴⁹ ASF, MPP 2661, 14 October 1650, ff.338r-399r & 408v.

della cappella' which included silk embroidered altar frontals, the priest's vestments and other cloth items.¹⁵⁰

The decoration of Vincenzo Bardi's domestic chapel during the mid-seventeenth century demonstrates both the increasing number of items that household chapels came to hold, as well as the numerous decorative strategies employed, such as the use of fabrics and lighting to add to the material opulence of the possessions. Just as these textiles enveloped the other walls of the house, rich brocades and silks veiled altarpieces and pictures, and were used alongside gilt leather *paramenti* as a wall decoration to cover the unfrescoed parts of chapels and oratories. This mode of decorating can be seen in a photograph of the Corsini chapel of le Corti (fig.5.51). The use of drapery in fact merely extended the 'cloth of honour,' so commonly depicted in altarpieces, into the earthly realm outside. The *baldacchino* became increasingly used as a type of 'altarpiece treatment,' creating a focal point within a structured hierarchy of viewing, whose theatrical framing and visual association with both the credenza and thrones of state allowed the ever-present conflation of material and spiritual wealth, as well as that of religion, state and home. There is a scopic and synesthetic lushness and tactile nature to the materials often used in decorating domestic oratories, and inventories like Bardi's show how they were well equipped to supply the full spectacle of religious experience. As has been examined in Chapter Two of this thesis and as the Bardi inventory also shows, specific images or sculptures were often elaborately framed or veiled, highlighted and lit with candles and lamps. Such tropes created a particularly privileged intimacy of the sign, investing it with a value of exclusivity and uniqueness that symbolically and viscerally increased a sense of the divine and therefore devotion. The visitation report of Francesco Tani's chapel at Santa Maria alla Romola by the priest Piero Tucci shows that the very materials used in veiling or covering were of the utmost importance in order to create the correct effect or bestow the right degree of honour. Tucci was adamant that the frescoed altarpiece of the Madonna and St. Dominic and St. Francis specifically needed a transparent veil and shroud like the one that adorned the Madonna del Soccorso at Florence's church of the Santissima Annunziata. Tucci's reasoning was that Marian images dispensed continuous *gratie* and miracles and therefore needed the appropriate adornments.¹⁵¹ The transparency of the Madonna's veil also alerts us to the fact that domestic oratories played with the entire panoply of sensory experience and not just sight or touch. Incense burners were commonly noted in the contents of domestic oratories, as were vases for

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., f.420r.

¹⁵¹ AAF, *Oratori* 5, 7 March 1647: 'la tavola dell'Altare e di pittura a fresco cioe la Madonna et San Madonna e San Francesco: la Madonna sta nel mezzo con la manetellina a me perrebbe stessi coperta con un velo trasparente come sta la Madonna dlia Cappella del Soccorso nella Nuntiata di firenze che le mantelline se voltini il foglio a me pare si convenghino all'Immagine della Madonna dove si riceve et si vede contenove gratia e Miracoli questi imagine e come la detta Madonna del Soccorso nella Nuntiata a me parebbe si dovessi ornare con un bel velo trasperento et con Mantellina tutto sia con approvazione et con senso di Monsignor Illustrissimo Arcivescovo.'

flowers. As has been noted in regard to the Pucci Oliveto villa and church regulations, bell towers were common additions to oratories. However, music clearly played a large part in other domestic chapels: Vincentio Manieri's attached villa oratory contained walled organs (themselves a relative rarity in rural churches), while books for singing vespers were housed at Neri Capponi's oratory of the SS. Annunziata.¹⁵² Chapter One has shown how the *inginocchiatoio* became closely linked to the rise of domestic chapels and the increasing importance of seating in churches more generally. It also noted how these prie-dieux, like other forms of seating such as the 'three low benches for the women' in Tommaso de' Medici's oratory, created a different physical relationship to space for their users.¹⁵³

Moreover, spaces could be decorated from outside, using the natural landscape to frame them and engender meaning. GiovanBattista di Jacopo Quaratesi's oratory shows the direct correlation between the interior and external spaces, as well as the spiritual and temporal spheres that the decoration of these places could navigate. Quaratesi's altarpiece was 'Christ's Sermon in the Garden', while the oratory was placed in the 'orto come più li piace'.¹⁵⁴ Like Neri Scarlatti's oratory in the middle of a grove of cypresses and oaks, Lorenzo del Turcho's villa oratory was placed 'in the site of a theatre of cypresses which bestow [a sense of] both ornament and devotion'.¹⁵⁵ This description illustrates quite succinctly the relationship between devotion, nature and theatricality, something to which domestic chapels deliberately made reference. Indeed, the landscaping of many surviving Tuscan oratories show them still to be encircled by a 'theatre' of cypresses (see fig.5.79; see also fig.5.71).

DEDICATIONS AND INTERCESSORS

A key issue is not just how domestic oratories were decorated, but with what subject matter. Who was the most popular dedicatory and who was the favourite in the altarpiece stakes?

Although the dedication of oratories and the subject of their altarpieces were haphazardly given, by adding together the data from *Oratori* files two, three and four, the dedications for approximately a third of oratories (32%), and altarpiece subjects for around one half of them (47%) can be collated. Very few chapels were dedicated to Christ, and the data shows that domestic oratory dedications were a competition between Mary and other Saints. Collectively, saints accounted for more than half of all dedications (see Appendix E, Table 5.1, 5.2), and around one

¹⁵² 'ci sono ancora li organi murati' from AAF, *Oratori* 3, 30 July 1615; while for the 'libri da cantare vespri et messe' see *Oratori* 2, 9 September 1610.

¹⁵³ See Chapter One, section on 'inginocchiatoi'; for the 'tre panchette basse per le donne' see the visitation of Medici's oratory of St. Anthony, AAF, *Oratori* 2, 11 September 1610.

¹⁵⁴ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 22 October 1625.

¹⁵⁵ 'in sito a un teatro di cipressi che danno ornamento e insieme devotione,' AAF, *Oratori* 4, 16 November 1635, at Ripoli. On the apostolic priest of Sant'Andrea a Empoli, Neri Scarlatti's oratory of the Assumption see, *Oratori* 4, 29 April 1638.

fifth of all altarpieces listed (see Table 5.3). Recalling his popularity as a subject for domestic images in the seventeenth century as discussed in Chapter Two, St. Francis was the most widely invoked saint for chapel altarpieces or dedications and he was also the most likely to be listed alongside pictures of the Madonna or Christ. However, in contrast to the figures for Chapter Two, oratory saints show a strong residual concern with family identity and regional loyalty. As previously noted, a large number were simply named after their founder, one of their relatives, or their patron saint, such as Alberto Bardi de Conti di Becino's small chapel in his house at Florence dedicated to his namesake St. Albert.¹⁵⁶ Nonetheless, a significant number of specifically Tuscan and Medicean saints, as well as saints with strong ties to the countryside where oratories that were built were recorded, such as SS. Cosmas and Damian, St. Blaise, St. Romolo, St. Zenobius, St. Giovanni Gualberto, and the Beata Giovanna da Signa. For example, the Franceschi's oratory of St. Donnino at their villa in the parish of Sant'Alessandro a Vitigliano (in the Valle di Sieve, Mugello) tapped into the widespread devotion that the populace held towards that saint, and whose relics were kept at the parish church and believed to offer a cure for rabies.¹⁵⁷ Rural oratories' titular saints and altarpieces often reveal a quiet conservatism in their builders, and the need to incorporate pre-existing beliefs and devotions. For example, two countryside oratories dedicated to St. Roch and one to SS. Roch and Sebastian were built after the disastrous plague of 1630, showing the continued role these saints enjoyed in rural locations as the patron saints of pestilence.¹⁵⁸ Marchese Ruberto Capponi specifically erected a chapel in honour of St. Catherine of Siena during the 1630 plague at Petrognano. Recalling Francesco di Giorgio's fifteenth-century church of Santa Maria del Calcinaio which was built beside a stream that dispensed *grazie*, Capponi's oratory of St. Catherine similarly aimed to harness the miraculous powers of one of the beloved springs that circled the area around Semifonte. A *maestà* situated on the main road of the villa complex marked the path that descended through the woods to the oratory (fig.5.82), a simple two-level structure built directly on top of the *fonte di Santa Caterina* (figs.5.83 & 5.84). According to the visitation report, and as attested to by the remaining inscription (fig. 5.85), it was through the sacred waters flowing there that St. Catherine interceded to help the large number of people (and particularly the feverish) who ran there.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 23 May 1614.

¹⁵⁷ Santoni, *Notizie*, 179-180; Repetti, vol. 5, 793.

¹⁵⁸ AAF, *Oratori* 4, oratories of Caterina Malaspini, San Martino a Quona, 23 October 1637; Lorenzo da Isole Meccaci, San Piero a Olena, 22 July 1634; Huomini della Villa del Porto a Signa, San Martino a Gangalandi, 16 August 1639.

¹⁵⁹ 'Cappella di S. Caterina da Siena eretta in honor della Santa nella passata calamità della pesti dall Ill. Sig. Machese Capponi risiede sopra una fonte miracolosisima e di grandissima devozione, ove concorre gran popolo a prender dell'acque po che quelle mediasti per intercessione della Santa, concede Iddio NS infiniti grazie e in particolare a febricitanti', AAF, *Oratori* 4, 6 September 1636, visitation by Giulio Rossi. According to contemporary belief, the spring remains renowned for helping nursing mothers.

As the above examples demonstrate, the invocations of oratories can reveal wider social events or currents. They demonstrate a Tridentine influence with so-called 'Counter-Reformation' saints and themes (such as the Conversion of St. Paul), or relatively recently canonized saints (such as St. Hyacinth) beginning to be included in their dedications or decorations.¹⁶⁰ Carlo Borromeo, for example, became the titular saint of Roberto Pucci's Florentine domestic chapel the same year he was canonized, and St. Joseph was prominently included alongside the Madonna and St. John the Baptist in his chapel at villa Bellosguardo (Malmantile).¹⁶¹ The *Oratori* files, in addition with the findings for Chapter Two, show how Pucci's inclusion of St. Joseph was part of a wider trend to embrace this saint and more particularly the theme of the Holy Family. The head of the Grand Duke Ferdinando II's stables built an oratory dedicated to the Holy Family and was granted a plenary indulgence of seven years for celebrating the feast day of St. Joseph.¹⁶² Those within the religious orders showed clearly shifting Catholic ideals and led by example: the Archdeacon of Florence, Alessandro Venturi, commissioned St. Filippo Neri to be placed alongside SS. Zenobius, Cosmas and Damian in his chapel, while the priest and prior of Santo Stefano di Linare, Giovanni Lioncini, built an oratory in honour of St. Joseph just 200 *passi* from his parish church.¹⁶³

However, similar to the results for images discussed in Chapter Two and the more widespread public devotion she enjoyed, it was Mary who was the most popular individual dedicatee for the entire timeframe surveyed (see Appendix E, Tables 5.1, 5.2).¹⁶⁴ She was also by far the most commonly listed subject for altarpieces, although other saints were often included with illustrations of the Virgin Mary (see Appendix E, Table 5.3, 5.4). By the 1650s, it appears that the majority of domestic chapels being built *ex-novo* were Marian, which suggests that owners were giving up family or local saints (and a more obvious causal link between identity and dedication) in favour of a devotion to the Virgin. Such a hypothesis seems to correspond to an increase in Marian devotion that became strikingly visible in the quattrocento, and the subsequent stress laid on her during the sixteenth century as a figurehead of orthodox Catholicism.¹⁶⁵ What can be stated firmly

¹⁶⁰ See for example, AAF, *Oratori* 3, Pagolo Pagoli's oratory at Santo Stefano a Campoli, n.d., and Paolo Rovai's oratory at San Niccolò a Cipollatico, n.d. respectively.

¹⁶¹ AAF, *Oratori* 3, 2 October 1610, parish of San Michele Visdomini; 15 October 1610, San Piero in Selva respectively.

¹⁶² 'Cappella otteune per 7 anni Indulgenzia a Plenars per il giorno d S.Giuseppe da Sua Santita'. Oratory of the *dispensiere delle biade* Domenico di Matteo Poli, AAF, *Oratori* 4, 26 March 1642, Santo Stefano a Pane.

¹⁶³ AAF, *Oratori* 4, 15 October 1643, Sant'Andrea a Mosciano, and entry on the 4 February 1635 respectively.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. the list of images' subjects in Tuscan churches which show in 1589 the Madonna to be the most popular subject followed by (in order), Crucifixes or Crucifixion scenes, the Annunciation, St. Anthony, the Madonna and Saints, St. Catherine, St. Michael, St. Laurence, the Nativity, St. Jerome, and St. Giacomo. Data from Tarchi, 'Per un'indicazione computerizzata', 94.

¹⁶⁵ On the dramatic increase in Marian shrines in fifteenth-century Italy see Davies, 'Studies in the Quattrocento Centrally Planned Church', esp. pp. 35-37. Davies's thesis, as he himself remarks, corresponds to tendencies in Spain and Germany as noted in William A. J. Christian, *Local Religion in Sixteenth Century*

is that both the particular and the universal aspects of Mary's authority and cult were promoted and consolidated by private Tuscan oratories and chapels. Corresponding to the findings regarding domestic images in Chapter Two, specific 'Marys' or Marian images (such as the Madonna di Loreto and the Madonna della Neve) appeared in domestic oratories alongside a more general devotion to the Madonna, and a strong belief in the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption emerges.

In addition, and also corresponding to the tendencies noted in Chapter Two, the figures show that a strikingly large number of domestic chapels were dedicated to the Annunciation and/or adorned with altarpieces of the Annunciation (Appendix E, Tables 5.2, 5.4). Like the images kept at home, these oratories were quite concretely related to the Servite church of Santissima Annunziata in Florence and its miraculous painting of 'Our Lady of the Annunciation' (see fig.2.37).¹⁶⁶ In fact, there was a widespread devotion to the Annunciation extending ever outwards from Florence to encompass its whole diocese. Messer Giulio Opichi built a chapel for his dying wife dedicated to the Annunciation in his house on the via de' Annunziata, choosing this invocation because of their joint devotion to their neighbourhood church.¹⁶⁷ The detached oratory made by Andrea Lezzani in his villa at Impruneta had above the altar 'an Annunciation with angel in similitude of the Annunciation of Florence'.¹⁶⁸ Similarly Neri Capponi's rural chapel of the Annunciation had on the ceiling 'a painting of the Annunciation they say is a similitude [*essere asimilitudino*] of the Annunciation of Florence'.¹⁶⁹ The close relationship between political and religious loyalties that the image of the Annunciation at SS. Annunziata embodied has already been explored in Chapter Two, but suffice to say that the bonds between heavenly and earthly courts can be seen to have been given physical form by the number of domestic chapels owned by courtiers that referenced this most Medicean of miraculous images.¹⁷⁰

Beloved Marian images or sites could be more complex than the copying of a single image. Several Tuscan villas replicated the physical setting of pilgrimage sites. For example, one of the three chapels that Lorenzo Franceschi (1561-1642) founded in 1613 recreated the very site of the

Spain (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989) and Rothkrug, *Religious Practices and Collective Perceptions*.

¹⁶⁶ See Chapter Two, Religious Art at Home, section on 'The Madonna della Neve, the Madonna di Loreto, and the Annunciate Madonna'.

¹⁶⁷ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 31 July 1610, visitation by Raffaello Zocchi.

¹⁶⁸ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 10 July 1601: 'una nuntiata col l'agnolo a similitudino della nuntiata di Firenze.'

¹⁶⁹ AAF, *Oratori* 2, 9 September 1610: 'una tavola della nuntiata quale dicono essere asimilitudino della nuntiata di firenze.'

¹⁷⁰ See also AAF, *Oratori* 3, 9 September 1615, and ASF, *Archivio Ramirez*, filza 1, inserto 1, which details how the Montalvo chapel in the palazzo Ramierz-Montalvo (borgo degli Albizzi), designed by Ammannati, was dedicated to the Annunciation. Cosimo I paid for the reconstruction of his *maggiordomo*'s house. I thank both Niccolò Capponi and Adriano Barontini for the information regarding Cosimo I's payment for the palace.

Annunciation in his villa at Sant'Andrea a Rovezzano, near Florence (figs.5.80 & 81).¹⁷¹ Inscribed above the door placed on the public road ('via di mezzo') was the dedication to 'Sancta Marie Lauretane' that provided the starting point for a seemingly circuitous route through the villa complex to the chapel. Franceschi's oratory was nothing less than a complete - albeit slightly inside-out - simulacrum of the *Santa Casa* from the sanctuary of Loreto, decorated with the 'same stories from the outside that are done [there] in marble are here done in fresco and with the same architecture [so] that [it] looks like gilded marble with good effect.'¹⁷² The chapel recreated the exact dimensions of Mary's original modest little house in order to pay tribute to this important pilgrimage site.¹⁷³ Above the *committio* Franceschi had the 'image of the three Kings adoring the Christ child copied from the exit of that *Santa Casa*.' The Magi's crowns were gilded and studded with real gems, lit by ornate and costly lamps and candlesticks. There was a copy of the sculptured image of the Madonna of Loreto veiled in 'the richest gold brocade and red velvet, and above it are two columns conforming to those of the Holy House with gold torches and gems attached, and at the columns of its niche are two angels holding glass candlesticks and candles that illuminate this image [creating] a beautiful sight, and there are also two lamps that make the image resplendent.'¹⁷⁴ This elaborately framed image was part and parcel of the complete recreation of the shrine of Loreto that Franceschi built at his oratory, but the material richness of the image's niche also highlighted the move of the cult's miraculous powers and its devotional belief: this Madonna of Loreto was the one 'that listens' ('ch ascolta').¹⁷⁵ The ceiling was done *a padiglione* in a 'beautiful style' [*bella foggia*]; the floor, like the basilica of Santa Maria di Loreto, paved in black and white marble in the 'form of a chessboard.' All this, noted the awestruck visiting priest Gabrielle Landini, had already cost Franceschi a sum in excess of four thousand *scudi*, adding that

¹⁷¹ Notice of Franceschi's villa can be found in *Repetti*, s.v. 'Loretino', v.2, 812 & 'Rovezzano', v.4, 832-838; Santoni, *Notizie*, 357, and Giulio Lensi Orlandi, *Le Ville di Firenze di qua d'Arno* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1978), 124. Other Tuscan villas whose oratories replicated the Holy House of Loreto include Villa Borromeo, Villa dei Cedri, and the Villa il Loretino in Carmignano. Originally owned by the Mazzinghi, the oratory of this villa Loretino was built by the owner Pomi in 1702 to the exact measurements of the *Santa Casa*. A member of the *Accademia della Crusca* and a Senator in 1641, Franceschi was buried in San Michele agli Antinori and published various commentaries (see bibliography). For information on Franceschi and other senators, see Domenico Maria Manni, *Il Senato fiorentino, ossia notizie dei senatori fiorentini* (Florence: lo Stecchi & il Pagani, 1771).

¹⁷² '[...] di fuori [...] ed circondata dalla storie estate di marmo ci sono le medesime storie fatte a fresco con la medesima Architettura ch paiano di marmi dorato con ben fette.' AAF, *Oratori* 4, 16 March 1641. On the Madonna di Loreto see note 166 above.

¹⁷³ The dimensions given for Franceschi's oratory are 16 *braccia* long by 11 wide and 7 high, the altar measured at 4 x 1.3 *braccia*. On the importance of measurements to replicate a sacred relic and their prophylactic function, see Barbier de Montault, 'Les mesures, poids, fac-simile et empreintes de dévotion', and Chapter Three, Relics.

¹⁷⁴ AAF, *Oratori* 4, 16 March 1641, visitation by Gabriele Landini: 'Il Mantellino della Madonna è richissimo di Broccato d'ore e di velluto rosso ha sopra esso 2 collone conferme a quelle della Santa Casa con torchie d'oro e gemme in esse son attaccati alle colonne della nichia due angiole dovesti con candellieri in vetronato e candeled ch fanno lume a detta imagine con bella vista e ci sono ancora 2 lampade che fanno risplendere detta imagine.'

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Franceschi had furthermore made his meadow a public right of way to facilitate access. The staggering sum that Landini claims Franceschi spent, indicates not only the actual expenditure but also implies the valuable commerce of the Madonna's miracles.

By using pre-established Marian cults such as those of the Santissima Annunziata and the Madonna of Loreto, oratory owners created an authentic religious presence and myth of the Origin quickly and efficiently, if not, in the case of Franceschi, cheaply.¹⁷⁶ The visual and physical recreation of specific sites and images allowed the absorption of the real and the originary into themselves, whilst offering a dialectical exchange between source and the simulated. A specific cult elsewhere could be promoted at the same time that its miraculous powers and devotion were transferred to a new geographical and temporal sphere. In this sense the cults were both re/decentred and the devotion re-established to migrate to a rural and domestic source by the patrician builders of these spaces. Franceschi's oratory installed quite literally a holy house within a house, and by doing so conflated their differences in domesticity.

BUILDING AND STAFFING ORATORIES

The question of who officiated at spaces such as Franceschi's remains. A large number of the priests visiting on behalf of the Archbishop's office also identified themselves as celebrants of the oratories, and sometimes felt the need to reassure the office of their continued loyalty to their parish church.¹⁷⁷ However, the remunerative support and charity of the private families in no small way aided a rural priest's often difficult and impoverished existence.¹⁷⁸ Private oratories, like other benefices, could provide employment and a regular stipend for less fortunate kin, and establish a more permanent representative on rural estates. Certain households were noted as having a 'live-in' priest, while others used nearby clergy (who were often relatives) from religious orders to which their households had ties.¹⁷⁹ Antonio di Tommaso Bracci had three priests who officiated at his

¹⁷⁶ See Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* (first published 1968), trans. James Benedict (London & NY: Verso, 1996), 74. However, given that Baudrillard's analysis of simulations and simulacra, reliant as it is on discourse of modernity and a Marxist critique, formulates a hyperreality where meaning is both epiphenomenal and endlessly deferred (and essentially uncommodified), his thesis would be anachronistic to apply to this period where meaning and material were understood to be inseparably fused and fixed even if ceaselessly replicable.

¹⁷⁷ E.g. the comments of Giovanni Capponi, who also officiated at Niccolò Guicciardini's oratory of San Niccolò, '[...] ma la messe conventiale che tocca a me curato l'ho detta sempre nella chiesa parrocchiale,' AAF, *Oratori* 3, 1 September 1615.

¹⁷⁸ '[...] ma è di grand'util poichè con la carita che danno detti gentiluomini io posso tener il cappellano che senza questo non poter,' unknown priest speaking of Giovanni and Francesco Cerretani, AAF, *Oratori* 2, 8 August 1610. See also *Oratori* 3, 20 July 1615, priest Matteo Mannucci talking about payment from Carlo Landi: '[...] io gli ho vi detto di moltanni messa una volta la settimana e ho ricevuto di molti scudi e altre savorelleze.'

¹⁷⁹ For example, it was noted that for Counts Ugo and Ippolito Gheradeschi 'il prete l'havanno sempre in casa,' AAF, *Oratori* 2, Santa Maria dell'Antella, 20 September 1610; Antonio Ninei had rooms for a Capuchin monk within his house, *Oratori* 3, San Casciano in Castello, 22 August 1615; and Caterina Peschi at her villa in San Martino a Gangalandi was noted as often having Capuchin or Zoccolanti monks residing in

oratory in San Romolo a Colonnata; the testament of Niccolò Capponi's father required him to use four priests for the four feast-days his oratory celebrated yearly, while the priest Giuliano Bianchi noted that for the Frilli Croci oratory at Santa Maria alla Querciola there was an abundance of surplus *sacerdoti* in the neighbourhood whom the family used regularly to officiate.¹⁸⁰ There is a large variation in the amounts paid to those who officiated, ranging from two loaves of bread to a substantial annuity of thirty *scudi*. In fact, owners of several domestic oratories privileged certain ones, both in terms of the money expended in their decoration and the reimbursement they offered for officiators. In a rare example of self-assertion, Bartolomeo Guidoni felt that the *limosina* that his predecessors had traditionally received from the Rossetti family for saying mass (four *staia* of grain yearly), was no longer enough, and Guidoni withheld his services until the amount paid to him had increased to six *staia*.¹⁸¹

While fewer examples of building costs were given, those that were emphasize that spiritual wealth was not cheap. By the time the priests came to check, Antonio Puccini had already spent one hundred and fifty *scudi* on his oratory at San Clemente a Signano, as had Antonio di Nello Nelli on his at Santa Reparata a Pimonti.¹⁸² For his oratory under the invocation of the Madonna and his name-saint, GiovanBattista Rondinelli had spent, according to the priest, the incredibly large sum of around one thousand ducats.¹⁸³ Poli, the aforementioned head of the grand-ducal stables left a legacy of four hundred *scudi* in the *Monte del Sale* for the building and posthumous provision of his chapel. Somewhat embittered, the priest Cesare Raspanti noted how Francesco di Bastiano Mascherini had made a church or chapel on his property as 'he is rich with a fleece of around a thousand *scudi* so that he's able to have offices and mass said how he wants.'¹⁸⁴ Like Poli, Mascherini's construction was explicitly linked to memorialisation, with the priest noting that there

her house, *Oratori* 2, 21 October 1610. Corsino Corsini left funds for the construction of a domestic oratory and obliged that Friars from the Zoccoli order should officiate, AAF, *Oratori* 3, 20 November 1610.

Regarding relatives officiating, Baccio Gianelli, for example, provided the services at Francesco d'Ulisse Gianelli's oratory at San Lorenzo a Villore, see *Oratori* 2, 29 September 1615.

¹⁸⁰ On the Bracci see AAF, *Oratori* 3, 3 August 1621, while for the Frilli Croci see the comment that '[...] havendo anco abbondanza di Sacerdoti de Paesi cirumvicini et consciuti cosi se coloi come Regolari,' in *Oratori* 3, 23 October 1616.

¹⁸¹ '[...] per limosina i padroni della casa hanno dato i miei antecessori 4 staia di grano l'anno. Ma parendo poi a me detta limosina molto piccola e debole non mi sino curata di piglione detta ofiziata e cosi a mio tempo non ci si e detto mai la messa [...]', AAF, *Oratori* 3, 29 May 1617, San Michele a Lumena.

¹⁸² AAF, *Oratori* 3, 1 April 1620 and *Oratori* 4, 23 May 1642 respectively.

¹⁸³ '[...] ho giudito che infino à oggi ci habbia speso un miglialo di ducati piacesse a Dio ch si trovasse quattro chiese percento fra le Chiese di questo arcivescovado che fussino cosi magnificamente e murate e guarnita veramente opera da Signore Ill.e e Cattolico come questo Cavaliere,' AAF, *Oratori* 2, 5 August 1595.

¹⁸⁴ '[...] ha fatto una Chiesa o Cappella, pianta luoco detto a Viola. Lui è solo con esso la sua moglie e non figli alcuno et è ricco chi il suo velle della Migliaglia di scudi quanto poi a farla officiare e farci dire messe', the quote continues 'si li può dare licentia che la sua famiglia e dua altre Case che sono costi vicino e salfacino al precetto il giorno di festa e non alto dell mio popolo che di questo contento [...] quanto al giorno feriale ha possa fare dire Messa quanto volte gli piace e a chi mi piace ancora a me perché non mi pare divere si metta la falce in su la ricolta ch altre finalmente il detto feriale vi Voglio dire messa io e non voglio ch'un altro patone entri infra la mia pecorelle e questo affine per non havere disgusto con esso un'altro Prete,' AAF, *Oratori* 4, 5 December 1635, San Michele a Casanuova.

was only Mascherini and his wife remaining in the world. In this way, spending on domestic chapels and oratories must be linked with more general provisions and strategies for the afterlife and understood as an important part of a family's spiritual assets.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated how domestic oratories performed a wide range of valuable functions for both patrons and users alike. They created a space in which religion was incorporated into the very fabric of the domestic sphere, and in doing so extended that sphere further outwards: entwining more closely not only the Tuscan landscape and its inhabitants into its folds but also, vitally, providing a physical place in which the domestic and the spiritual spheres were inseparably fused, albeit decorously distanced. As the evidence has shown, domestic oratories had become clearly desirable, if not *de rigueur*, spaces for the Tuscan elite by the beginning of the seventeenth century, forming an important artistic market and a competitive symbol of spiritual and temporal status that enshrined together memories of both self and site. Yet their growing popularity during the Counter-Reformation period and the consolidation of the Medici Grand Duchy ensured that domestic oratories were also a space contested by the Church and its individual members. Comments by priests like Antonio Pippi and Marcantonio Giuliano and the Florentine synodal decrees recognised how domestic chapels could bestow upon the wealthy families who owned them a problematic degree of authorised religious autonomy and thereby usurp the parish structure. The resulting ban on domestic chapels and its circumvention, point towards the pivotal role of the domestic within religion, as well as the important role that these usually unassuming and unexplained structures held. As the first four chapters have shown regarding domestic devotional objects, the home through its belongings and spaces provided a critical locus for imagining familial and individual identity through religion and, conversely, a means of understanding religion through a secular (and material) identity.

Conclusion

This thesis has argued for the importance that religion had in constituting and defining a sense of home and identity for its inhabitants and guests. More specifically, it has argued for the importance that devotional household space and objects had for Catholics in defining domesticity as well as providing mechanisms to access a system of the divine already deeply embedded within a complex web of social and temporal relationships. For most Catholics, faith was mediated and understood through a range of everyday belongings and experiences located at home. These belongings, and the spaces they formed or were located in, offered their owners not just access to the spiritual, but also a significant measure of protection, solace, and status. This thesis has sought to describe more precisely the nature of these spaces and objects, and chart more accurately their possession in lay houses during the early modern period in Florence. Importantly, it has related domestic practices and ownership back to wider religious and social trends, and the current historiography of this period. In doing so, it has uncovered an expanding market for religious commodities, and as the case for holy water containers and *altarini* shows, one that was not entirely limited to the elite.

According to the data gleaned from the *Pupilli* inventories, the presence of almost all objects in Florentine homes rose exponentially post-Trent. Among other items listed in inventories, chairs, cutlery, more elaborate tableware (and tableware made of ceramics), and musical instruments were increasingly noted from the mid-fifteen hundreds onwards and often in surprising quantities. The influx of these types of objects, which speak so strongly of a shifting emphasis on the home as a centre of sociability, was paralleled by a rising number of religious items that in turn suggest the home as a centre of religion. More specifically, this increased consumption of devotional aids can be located quite accurately between the last decades of the sixteenth century to the first quarter of the seventeenth, or in the case of relics, during the mid-Seicento. It has been well established that the secular 'world of goods' was not simply a passive product of changing cultural and social mores or new production techniques, but also helped produce new expectations and understandings by actively engendering certain behavioural patterns.¹ This thesis has attempted to demonstrate that the same was true regarding the religious world of goods.

¹ See, for example, Brewer & Porter eds., *Consumption and the World of Goods*; Bermingham & Brewer eds., *The Consumption of Culture*; Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass, *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Maxine Berg & Helen Clifford eds., *Consumers and Luxury: Consumer Culture in Europe 1650 – 1850* (Manchester: Manchester

Some objects, such as the domestic *inginocchiatoio* or *altarino*, were themselves products of the increased status given to personal religion. By creating a discrete space ostensibly reserved for private prayer, and one that moreover required a particular posture, this furniture additionally produced a quite specific experiential understanding of religion. The growing consumption of other object types, such as the *aquasantiera*, appears to have been intertwined with a growing desire for a more formalized religious ritual at home and one that drew on and modified existing liturgical practices. As chapter two has shown, images continued to provide the focal point for such para-liturgical rituals and were often placed at the forefront of a system of objects that could include an *aquasantiera* and *inginocchiatoio*, as well as blessed candles, relics, bells, and devotional texts. These constitutive elements for domestic religion could both physically and metaphorically mark out household space as sacred space. The relatively widespread presence of such objects within Florentine households shows that a devotional practice at home was both commonplace and an important function of the household. Domestic oratories provided a space for the elite in which domestic and ‘proper’ liturgy merged completely and the household practice of religion was, in theory, given a defined architectural boundary. Similar to the increase in *aquasantiere* or *altarini*, these spaces also became more common at the end of the sixteenth century and were themselves to become increasingly inundated with more and more complex contents.

The accretion of devotional objects and the development of a more formalised devotional space relates to cultural aspirations and assumptions as much as spiritual ones. The boom in domestic oratories as well as the shifting popularity in the subject matter of images shows the ways in which devotional practices were the result of both internal and external forces. As Philip Benedict has shown for Metz, the choice of subject matter for household images strongly displayed confessional beliefs.² For Florentines, the assertion of Tridentine or orthodox Catholic values can be read through the prominence that Mary and the Saints had at home, and more specifically, the growing popularity of particular Marian cults (like the Madonna di Loreto or the Madonna della Neve) and saints like S. Joseph. The rise in images of angels and images of, or oratories dedicated to, the Annunciation can be understood as demonstrating the success of the Jesuits’ promotion and the Medici’s exploitation of these respective cults. Indeed, the prolific number of Medici portraits found in homes is indicative of the influence the ruling family had over domestic spheres and religion more generally. The requirement of a domestic chapel or oratory for the Florentine elite by the sixteenth century shows the ways in which room types were socially determined: the alignment of the grand ducal court with religion appears to have developed into a rather competitive requirement for its courtiers. Domestic oratories allowed personal piety to be declared publicly to any guest

University Press, 1999); Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass. *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

² Benedict, ‘Towards the Comparative Study of the Popular Market for Art’, esp. pp.109-110.

admitted to the household, just as images of the Grand Duke declared personal loyalty to the public figure.

The example of domestic oratories serves to highlight the way in which faith and status were intricately fused together. An elevated status was required in order to have a domestic chapel, while a domestic chapel would in turn guarantee its owner an elevated status. This status came not simply from the ability to have afforded such a space in the first place, but also from the fact that such a space brought about a close and authorised access to the divine and a closer ownership of the divine. Similarly, the status of newly canonized Florentine saints at home was contingent not only on their previous secular status, but also on the status of the household where their images were found. Noble families appear to have been more ready to embrace new saints, especially when they came from noble backgrounds.

In addition, the case of domestic oratories draws attention to the conflicts that existed between a relatively autonomous domestic devotional practice and the Church's directives. As this thesis has argued, the Catholic church post-Trent became increasingly concerned with distinguishing between the sacred and the profane, orthodox and heretical behaviours, and religious and superstitious practices. In terms of the domestic sphere, these concerns were enacted through a series of initiatives. The ostensible Tridentine ban on domestic chapels could, for example, be overcome by adherence to a set of rigid formal requirements. The Roman Inquisition attempted to instil a correct religious use of sacramentals in lieu of an incorrect and superstitious use. The censorship of devotional texts aimed to ensure that access to heretical literature was minimal if not impossible and that textual interpretation was strictly orthodox. The ownership and use of religious spaces and goods shows that distinctions were never clear-cut and could in fact be easily overcome. Banned books continued to be read, and ostensibly banned vernacular devotional texts were in fact published with the Church's own authority. Domestic chapels were installed adjacent to bedchambers, and appear in the rural context to have quite often usurped the authority of nearby parish churches. An orthodox use of sacramentals at home doubtlessly involved 'superstitious' beliefs. The simple possession of religious goods or spaces at home allowed the possibility that faith could be personally determined and privately accessed.

Perhaps the key question that emerges from the increase of devotional material culture at home is whether the household became sanctified (or, alternatively, a paradigmatic model of Christian sanctity), or whether religion became secularised by private demands. The answer is that these are not mutually exclusive concepts. The ownership of religion helped ensure that wider social and cultural demands were met, while the incorporation of devotion into the fabric of the home guaranteed that religion underpinned quotidian life. As a part of everyday existence religion was itself susceptible to fashion and changing sensibilities. A study even larger than this one in both scope and time could help further reveal the nature of how religious sensibilities shifted. However,

what this dissertation has made clear is that in early modern Florence religion was itself a fashionable commodity. It was also a commodity that this thesis has shown must be taken into greater consideration when evaluating both the concept of the home and the convictions of its inhabitants.

Appendix A

ANNA MARIA VITALI'S DENOUNCEMENT

Copy of Anna Maria Vitali's denouncement to the Court of the Inquisition in Florence, 23 April 1650, detailing the use of holy water to help heal her house.

AAF, TIN 40.17, ff.106r-107v:

Padre Inquisitore sono venuta da VPI.^{ma} per legravare la mia coscienza perché saranno da otto o novi mesi incirca che io per mia disavventura rompesi il Collo et acquisitai subito dei buoni Amici quali mi comministravano tutte le mie necessità. Laonde essendo invidiata da una certa donna chiamata Caterina per soprano me la Bacaia che habita su la Cantonata di Via dell'Olivo per venne un giorno in Casa mia, e m'esoritava à introdurre in Casa un certo Gio: Narcherilli che mi diceva esser persona molto commoda, e dicendo io a voler fare torto alli miei amici ella mi aggiunte che havrei fatto male i per fatti miei amici s'allontanorno della Casa mia, e non vi capitavano più doppo alcuni giorni capitò in Casa mia una donna chiamata Catrina per soprano me la Soldatina ch'hora è morta e mi dissi ch' la mia Casa era guasta, e [106v] domandassi io in che maniera ella mi rispose che ci era stata fatto una malia ma che pigliassi l'Aqua Santa la gettava p la Casa e su l'uscio, e non dicendomi altro si n'andò. Doppo un hora venne a Casa la sudetta Caterina Bacaia e videndo l'anima mia tutta turbata domandò quelch'l'haveva e lei gli rpose che in Casa mia v'era stata la Caterina Soldatina e gli'haveva detto che la mia Casa era stata guasta la detta Bacaia giunsi a mia cure che n dubitasse perché lei haveva per le mani un Giovanni chiamato Michele Nati che habbita in Camaldosi a lato all'hosteria che capeva assittare e guastare le malie e cosl io pregai la detta Bacaia che mi volesse condurra in Casa il d° Michele, si come fece la sera, arrivato in Casa il d Michele ci cavò di manica alcuni foglio dietro di quali vi era Inccaso abuta Sole e Horace e Mirra quali robbe gettò il detto Michele su fuoco dicendo alcuni parole ch io non intesi e mi dece stare in ginocchioni un quarto d'hora con una mano in terra e di poi andò all'usico e pigliando del--christe factua le croci dicendo molte parole ch'io no intradevo, e da una Croce all'altra stava ciraca [sic] un Ave Maria sempre dicendo parole e gettando Aqua Benedetta poi poglio il Caldarino dove haveva messo l'incenso e le le' robbe sudette et andava incensando la casa pure dicendo parole da mi non intesse la qualcosa l'ha fatto piu di 100 volte alla fine senza di mia madre e mia tendo sempre una Candela benedetta accesa in mano. Doppo alcuni giorni [107r] mia Madre s'ammalò e mandò a chiamare una Certa Donna chiamato Bartolomea ch'habbita vincina di Santa Maria acciò gl'andasse afare un pegno la qual donna arrivata in Casa dissi a me et a mia madre che v'erano di Rumori quali erano che cinq psona facevano una Malia a un tal donna chiamata Lena che habbita in la Costa a Giorgio [...] Il che preseintito del Prete Albertano Carmilitano andò a trovare il detto Michle Nati e gli disse che non faccessi queste porecherie perché gli sarebbe successo male se poi sia successo cos'alcuna io non lo so. Perciò ben dire ch il detto Michele Nati fece di molti Croci per la mia Casa e mi benedi con farmi leggere d'evangilo di S.

Gio dicendo anche lui delle parole ch'io non intendevo sempre alla corenza di mia madre. Di più devo dire ch'il detto Michele Nati mi la dato ad intendere che nel mio uscio di Casa vi era un Spirito chiamato Suprilla che lui con li suoi segreti l'haveva scacciato e doppo havrei cavati di mano di molti denari ha detto che la Casa n'è più guasta ma che sarebbe bene che ce'n'uscissimo. Questo è quanto devo dire per sgravio [107v] di mia Coscienza.

METHODS AND TABLES FOR CHAPTER TWO: RELIGIOUS ART
AT HOME

It is necessary to point out how the evidence from the inventories that form the basis for this thesis has been used for Chapter Two regarding religious art at home.

I use the terms artwork or image to include paintings, prints, sketches and sculptures, conforming in this way to Gabriele Paleotti's definition of images as 'every material figure produced by art'.¹ I have similarly, if not steadfastly, stood by his conviction that all art is divisible into two categories: the sacred and the profane.² However, the Cardinal and Archbishop Paleotti was not anticipating the habit of inventories to supply a large (and impassable) category of the unknown. Anywhere from 16% to 40% of works from c.1460 to 1650 were without a subject, only listed unhelpfully as 'an image', 'a portrait', 'various figures', or simply 'of the smallest possible worth' (*di pochissimo valore*). This abundance of unknown artworks makes a completely accurate statistical analysis impossible, but with an overall number in excess of 4,000 identifiable images from the *Pupilli* inventories alone, a respectable quantitative study of the distribution of themes and subjects can be made.

The reasons for the *Pupilli* officials' lack of concern in specifying the subject of artworks is not always clear. In some cases pieces, particularly groups of prints, were simply of too 'little value' to bother describing in detail. Instead, the frames and supports were meticulously explained as they often had a financial value equal to or superseding the work itself. For example, only the subject of Lelio d'Alessandro Quaratesi's small picture of the Assumption of the Virgin was revealed, even though the frame was described as of ebony adorned with silver, gold and [semi-precious] stones.³ In other cases, the officials and presumably the member of the household who accompanied them were confounded in identifying the subject. The subject of the painting found in Gherarozzo Bartoli's estate in 1652 was left blank, noted down simply as 'un quadro dipintovi ... a p[ro]p[ri]o di Lorenzo Lippi Pittore per raccondario', while in the della Stufa palace an extremely long horizontally formatted painting was noted as having a gilded frame and an image 'said to be by the hand Giorgione Lombardo', although what it represented remained undisclosed.⁴

¹ Paelotti, *Discorso*, 9.

² *Ibid.*, 36-8: 'Che tutte le Imagini si riducono a due capi principali che sono ò sacre, ò profane.'

³ ASF, MPP 2661, f.288v: '1 quadretto di mezzo braccio col ornamento d'ebano e tutto tpezzato d'argento et oro e pietre dipintovi l'Assunta d Maria Vergine'.

⁴ For Lorenzo Lippi (1606-1664), see ASF, MPP 2661, f.788r, & ASF, GCS 941, Inventory of della Stufa palace in 1640, unpaginated.

Images whose subjects were unspecified are included in the overall figures for artworks, and have been retained in calculations comparing the number of religious and secular artworks. The categories for religious and secular artworks have been formulated by taking the inventories' notations at face value. A 'female nude' has been assigned to the secular camp, even though it is possible that it represented a more lascivious rendition of a saint. However, with portraits described simply as 'male' or 'female', and figurative paintings whose subject is unlisted, I have erred on the side of caution, and classified them as unspecified. In all probability, however, the majority of these can be assumed to have been secular works, rather than disguised and obscure saints or biblical narratives, as religious works tend to have been readily identifiable as such.

If the identity of subjects is sometimes ambiguous, the terminology used to describe the goods in the inventories is more so. Coupled to this is the fact that while the notaries were lackadaisical about recording subjects, the medium on the whole mattered even less except if it displayed intrinsic monetary worth. The word *colmo*, which essentially denotes a rectangular image with a curved or pointed top that could be sculpted or painted, seems to have disappeared from common usage by the fifteen hundreds, as does the term 'icon' (*ancona* and its variants).⁵ Similarly, the word *tavola* and the endless variations on it which were used to describe works that were two-dimensional and usually, though not always, wooden (a fact unsurprising given that 'tavola' literally means 'table'), appears to have been more common in early inventories. Other self-evident words employed to describe artworks included *pittura* and *immagine* (although the latter term seems to have been used more often when describing an impressed or engraved image, such as the 'small gold agnus dei with an image [*col immagine*] of the Annunciation and a Pietà' belonging to Lorenzo Nati's wife in 1619).⁶ Unless clearly pieces of jewellery, crucifixes have been included as artworks, but as the word 'crocifisso' could be used to describe a Crucifixion scene, the reader is advised not to take the figures of Crucifixion scenes and crucifixes as independent and distinct statistics but as interchangeable categories. In the same way, a 'mappamondo' could refer both to two-dimensional wall maps like the one hanging on Lionardo di Simone Niccolini's terrace, or to globes, such as the 'two small *mappamondi* of wood with their feet' which the medical doctor Antonio di Messer Rinaldi Baldesi kept alongside his four astrolabes, a telescope ('occhiale di Galileo') and a 'brass *fustro* for measuring the celestial spheres'.⁷ However, by far the most common term employed to describe images throughout the timeframe was 'quadro' and its

⁵On the word 'colmo' and its use see Gino Corti, 'Sul commercio dei quadri a Firenze verso la fine del secolo XIV.' *Commentari* 22 (1971):84-91; Martin Wackernagel, *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist. Projects and Patrons, Workshops and Art Market*, trans. Alison Luchs (first pub. 1938, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 168.

⁶ASF, MPP 2660, f.373r.

⁷ASF, MPP 2660, f.102r & 589v. For a detailed description on the presence of maps in households see David Woodward, *The Panizzi Lectures: Maps as Prints in the Italian Renaissance. Makers, Distributors, & Consumers* (London: The British Library, 1996), 75-102.

diminutives 'quadretto' or 'quadrettino', or the pejorative 'quadraccio'. 'Quadro', glossed by Florio as 'any four square thing', is not media specific, and only sometimes is a 'quadro della Madonna' specified as either a painting, print, or a gesso or terra-cotta bas-relief, or more rarely what must have been a sculpture in the round presented in a frame.⁸ A 'quadro di legno' could refer to either a carved picture, or a painted one on a wooden support. Neither is the word for a bust ('testa' or 'effigia') necessarily strictly sculptural, as they could be used to refer more generally to the format of a portrait.

Probably the second most common notation invoked for images was 'ritratto', which can be defined succinctly as a portrait, or more specifically as 'a figure drawn from nature' according to both the dictionary of the Accademia della Crusca and Baldinucci's *Vocabulario Toscano dell'arte del disegno*.⁹ It is this last sense that explains why this term was used predominantly for secular images, rather than portraits of saints. On the few occasions when it is used for religious figures, it is employed in a way that makes clear a relationship of verisimilitude, or a rendering or impression taken from nature, such as the 'ritratto al naturale' of a Jesus on paper in Salvatore di Francesco Renzi's house in 1584, or the 'small picture with carved frame inside which is the *ritratto* of the most Holy Shroud on taffeta on board'.¹⁰ While the term *ritratto* was never commonly employed to describe religious pictures, it nonetheless appears to have been used with greater frequency in descriptions of devotional works in seventeenth-century inventories, perhaps charting a perceived stylistic change of greater naturalism in the way holy men and women were depicted. Similar to the term *quadro*, *ritratto* can be used for both two and three-dimensional images like Bastiano dello Scarpella's 'gesso bust in relief with the portrait of the chest and head [*lo busto*] of our uncle Zanobi'.¹¹

Because of the ambiguity of the terms, I have not attempted to divide artworks into sculptural objects or painted two-dimensional pictures, and indeed, such a division would be anachronistic for the period. In fact the workshop accounts of 'dipintori' such as Neri di Bicci and Neroccio dei Landi demonstrate the fluidity if not interchangeability existent between painted and sculptural media, and the way in which the latter formed an integral part of their studio output alongside painterly practices.¹² However, when inventories clearly specify sculpture in the round, such as 'figura', 'statua', and exceptionally 'scultura', I have endeavoured to maintain the distinctions.

⁸ Florio, s.v. 'quadro'. The entry for 'quadro' in *VAC* notes a size limitation: 'Quadro diciamo a pittura, che sia in legname, o in tela, accomodata in telaio, che non ecceda una certa altezza'.

⁹ *VAC* and *VTAD*, s.v. 'ritratto': 'figura cavata dal naturale'

¹⁰ ASF, MPP 2655, 23 November 1584, f.433v, and MPP 2660, Inventory of Filippo di Dionigi Carducci, 16 October 1621, f.622r: 'quadretto col cornice brevite entrovei il ritratto di Santissimo sudario di Nostro Signore nel taffetta in tavola'.

¹¹ ASF, MPP 2655, 5 July 1584, f.139v.

¹² Thomas, *The Painter's Practice*, 59-60.

Certain general observations can be made about media and format. First is the rising range of materials that officials of the *Magistrato* recorded as being used to create pictures. Amongst others, the media of canvas, paper mâché, wood, wax, gesso, terracotta, brass, copper, paper, mirror, marble, bronze, oil paint, gouache, ink, charcoal, fresco, embroidery, print, glass, fabric, intarsia, gold, silver, stones, semi-precious jewellery and crystal were noted. Canvas and linen supports (*di tela, di telatura, di telaio*) were mentioned with growing frequency from the late sixteenth century onwards, whereas prior to this it appears more common for paintings to have had wooden supports. The size of religious paintings increased over the timeframe so that by the mid-seventeenth century, pictures measuring up to four *braccia* are mentioned in wealthier estates. The increase in image's size was paralleled by an increase in the size of mirrors, as, for example, the 1659 Taddei estate contained 'one big ornamented large mirror two and a half *braccia* high by two *braccia* wide' alongside a painting of the Virgin, Christ Child and S. John the Baptist measuring two by three *braccia*.¹³ As Roberta M. Olson has already explained in detail, the *tondo* format was noted more often during the sixteenth century than during the succeeding one, and was usually reserved for images of the Madonna and child, *deschi di parti* and coats of arms.¹⁴ The relatively frequent notation of 'all'antica', rather than denoting the style of the work seems instead to refer to a type of frame constructed by pilasters upholding an entablature and pediment. In contrast, the adjective 'vecchio' was able to imply both a work stylistically older and the image's age, as it could be used in conjunction with 'bello' or 'bene' (implying out of date but good), as well as 'usato', 'cattivo', and 'rotto'. Other adjectival phrases such as 'alla veneziano' or 'alla fiamminga' clearly suggested the stylistic provenance of an image, although the description of Sandro di Lorenzo Rucellai's tondo of the Madonna *alla grecha* most probably connotes what we would term a Byzantine icon.¹⁵

The medium of items was often recorded when, in the case of gold or silver, it had an obvious intrinsic material value. However, artistic value was sometimes alluded to by the qualifying assertions that the picture is 'bello' or 'by a very good artist' (*di buonissima mano*). It was very rare for a work to be ascribed to a specific artist, and when this does happen it suggests an elevated artistic and therefore financial value of the work. The only artists individually mentioned in the inventories were Ludovico Cigoli, Santi di Tito, Jacopo da Empoli, Giorgione, Raphael, Donatello,

¹³ ASF, LCF 4839, f.101v.

¹⁴ Olson, *The Florentine Tondo*; Roberta J. M. Olson, 'Lost and Partially Found: The Tondo, a Significant Florentine Art Form, in Documents of the Renaissance.' *Artibus et historiae* XIV, no. 27 (1993): 31-65. Cf. Moritz Hauptmann, *Der Tondo: Ursprung, Bedeutung und Geschichte des italienischen Rundbildes in Relief und Malerei* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1936).

¹⁵ ASF, MPP 2645, f.132r: '1a tondo messo doro dipintovi i Madonna alla grecha'. Interestingly, few works were noted *alla greco* in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century *Pupilli* inventories and the word 'icon' and its variants (e.g. *ancona*) were very rarely used. Cf. Maria Constantoudaki-Kitromilides 'Taste and the Market in Cretan Icons in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries' in *From Byzantium to El Greco: Greek Frescoes and Icons* ed. Myrtili Acheimastou-Potamianou and Vyzantino Mousseio (Athens: Greek Ministry of Culture, Byzantine Museum of Athens, 1987): 51-53.

Lorenzo Lippi, della Robbia, and da Maiano; while in Agostino di Piero del Nero's house a work was attributed to Giotto.¹⁶ The lack of concern with authorship in the *Pupilli* inventories was matched in the household inventories of other cities, with, for example, attributions in French inventories only occurring with any regularity after the 1750s.¹⁷

Tapestries have not been included in this examination despite their privileged position within households and the hierarchy of artworks, as their subject matter is rarely recorded: the detailed description of 'a beautiful cloth of tapestry of four *braccia* with the history of Giuseppe' in Carlo di Oddo Ghaetani's estate is a rare exception.¹⁸ Moreover, as tapestries were often noted as being stored away, it is probable that they were hung only seasonally or reserved for significant social functions within the few wealthy households who possessed them.¹⁹ Painted *spalliere* have similarly not been included in this survey as their subjects were also seldom listed, and for the same reason nor have the images on *cassoni* been discussed.²⁰ Essentially 'fixed' or built-in artworks, carved inscriptions on doorways or other architectonic surfaces, and wall or ceiling paintings are not examined, as, again, these are not described in inventories. Even if studies of domestic frescoes have tended to concentrate on classicizing mythologies, pastorals and allegories, clearly religious themes for this type of decoration did exist and require a study that would exceed the limitations of this one.²¹

The figures for saints are taken from individual artworks of the saints, rather than their presence within paintings of the Madonna or Christ, which have been classified as Marian or Christ-themed works respectively. Undoubtedly, these figures somewhat erase the importance that certain saints had for individual households, although some depictions of saints highlight the personal value these intercessors held.²² Certain subjects such as the Pietà, the Adoration of the Magi, and the Nativity, while technically Christological, were nonetheless treated as Marian in the notarial descriptions and

¹⁶ For del Nero see ASF, MPP 2664, f.368r: 'Uno quadro in seta dentrovi tre figure dissono di mano di Giotto'. For Cigoli see MPP 2661, f.7v; for Giorgione and Santi di Tito see GCS, *Libri di Amministrazione* 991, f.2v (1650 inventory of della Stufa palace, also reproduced in MPP 2661); for Filippo Lapini see MPP 2657, f.433r; for Della Robbia see MPP 2660, f.674r & f.689v, and Empoli, f.353v.

¹⁷ Benedict, 'Towards the Comparative Study of the Popular Market for Art', 107.

¹⁸ MPP, 2709, f.40v: 'Uno bello panno d'Arazzo di braccia Quattro con la storia di Giuseppe'.

¹⁹ On tapestries, see Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior*, 44-51.

²⁰ On *spalliere* see Anne B. Barriault, *Spalliera Paintings of Renaissance Tuscany, Fables of Poets for Patrician Homes* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 1994); Ellen Callman, *Beyond Nobility: Art for the Private Citizen in the Early Renaissance* (Allentown, P.A.: Allentown University Press, 1980).

²¹ However, as Lydecker and Peter Thornton have already noted, the mid to late-sixteenth century fashion for gilded leather or fabric wall-hangings (*paramenti*) suggest that frescoed domestic decoration would have been limited even within elite estates. See Lydecker, 'The Domestic Setting', 42; Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior*, 85 & 89.

²² For example, ASF, MPAP 189, Inventory of Basitano di Francesco Marsanti, f.74v: 'Uno tabernacholo dipinto con una santa chaterina chon uno chorucina d'ottone con prete 2 perlle et chon uno veso di perlla et roba di velluto paghonaso e 11 bottoncini di perlle 2 ad chollo 2 da mano fornito di perlle'; and the 'cover of heavy cloth' (*coperta di tela grossa*) that hid Francesco d'Andrea Castelli's picture of St. Sebastian 'di buon mano' in MPP 2661, f.215r.

presumably perceived as Marian in the public imagination. For example, a painting of the Adoration of the Magi in Pagolo di Filippo Chatastini's estate in 1557 was described as 'una nostra donna dipinta col tre magi in telaio di albero dipinto in nero', while a Nativity in the same *Pupilli* file is explained as 'un quadro di Nostra Donna di Nativita col fornimento dorato' and a Pietà as 'una madonna cioè pieta'.²³ Because of this, even though I have classified these subjects as pertaining to Christ, the reader should be aware that they were not necessarily perceived so at the time, and indeed, as will be explored later on, such descriptions merely witness the significance that Mary held for the household and her canonical role in shaping it.

With works that were described as Flemish ('fiandreschi', 'fiamminghi', 'alla fiamingha' or 'da fiandra') but lack any clearly ascribed subject matter, I have classified them as unknown, although the large majority of these were in all likelihood landscapes or genre scenes such as hunting images or still lifes.

No qualitative distinction has been made between artworks: an old, *brutta* or *cattiva* Virgin Mary, no matter how unbecoming to her role, has been given the same statistical value as one attributed to Raphael. As such the terms 'artwork' and 'image' have been used for their flexibility in allowing the inclusion of different media rather than denoting a qualitative judgement.

²³ ASF, MPP 2651, f.71v, and ff.182r & 407r for the inventories of Francesco di Gianozo di Francesco Magniale and Bastiano di Goro da Pistoia respectively.

Appendix B

TABLES FOR CHAPTER TWO: RELIGIOUS ART AT HOME

TABLE 2.1 OWNERSHIP PATTERNS FOR ESTATES OWNING ARTWORKS IN THE PUPILLI INVENTORIES

Pupilli No.	Date range	<i>No. of artworks owned</i>																
		None	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-60	61-80	81-100	101-150	150+	
186	1460-1510	32.8	55.7	8.2	1.6	0	1.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
189	1508-32	21	49.4	14.8	7.4	3.7	3.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2648	1538-45	41	36.7	12	7.7	1.7	0	0.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2651	1556-62	26	42	10.1	7.2	2.9	4.3	1.4	2.9	1.4	0	0	1.4	0	0	0	0	0
2655	1581-88	28	37.3	10.6	2.7	2.7	5.3	4	2.7	0	2.7	0	0	2.7	0	1.3	0	0
2657	1598-1601	22.4	39.5	14.5	6.6	3.9	2.6	0	2.6	0	1.3	1.3	1.3	2.6	0	1.3	0	0
2660	1617-22	22.2	22.2	7.4	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	3.7	5.6	3.7	3.7	3.7
2661	1644-53	15.9	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	3.3	13.6	6.8	4.5	2.3	4.5	4.5	6.8	6.8	6.8	9
<i>Total no. of estates</i>																		544

NOTE: Estates are given in percentages. Separate inventories for the same estate have been amalgamated for all data.

TABLE 2.2 PERCENTAGES OF RELIGIOUS, SECULAR AND UNKNOWN ART IN THE PUPILLI INVENTORIES

<i>Pupilli no.</i>	<i>Date range</i>	<i>Religious</i>	<i>Secular</i>	<i>Unknown</i>
186	1460-1510	76.9	6.5	16.6
189	1508-32	70.2	10.2	19.6
2648	1538-45	73.2	13	13.8
2651	1556-62	47.5	19.9	32.6
2655	1581-88	36.4	33.1	30.5
2657	1598-1601	35.7	23.5	40.8
2660	1617-22	43.5	26.4	30.1
2661	1644-53	33.6	40.2	26.2
<i>Total no. of artworks</i>			6063	

TABLE 2.3 IMAGES WITH RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS IN THE PUPILLI INVENTORIES

<i>Pupilli no.</i>	<i>Date range</i>	<i>No. of artworks</i>	<i>Marian</i>	<i>XPO</i>	<i>Saints</i>	<i>Angels & cherubs</i>	<i>Narrative†</i>	<i>Other</i>
186	1460-1510	130	57.4	17.8	4.7	0	0	0
189	1508-32	275	39.3	17.1	10.7	0.2	0.8	2
2648	1538-45	292	39.8	19.8	11.5	0.3	0.5	1.2
2651	1556-62	246	24.5	13.7	7.9	0.4	0.6	0.4
2655	1581-88	271	17.3	11	4.3	1.1	0.5	2.2
2657	1598-1601	285	15.7	10.4	6.9	0.5	1.6	0.6
2660	1617-22	641	15.4	13.6	8.2	4.5	0.4	1.5
2661	1644-53	534	7.9	6.9	14.3	1.1	2.1	1.2
		<i>Total no. of artworks</i>		2674				

* NOTE: Figures are given as the overall percentage of all artworks sampled.

† Includes both Old and New Testament subjects

TABLE 2.4 IMAGES WITH SECULAR SUBJECTS IN THE PUPILLI INVENTORIES

<i>Pupilli no.</i>	<i>Date range</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Portraits (total)</i>	<i>Portraits (family)</i>	<i>Portraits (rulers)</i>	<i>Portraits (other)</i>	<i>Coats of arms & family trees</i>	<i>Still lifes</i>	<i>Genre†</i>	<i>Classical, historical, & allegorical</i>	<i>Animal</i>	<i>Landscape/ Topographical</i>	<i>Other‡</i>
186	1460-1510	11	3.6	1.2	0	2.4	2.4	0	0	0	0	0.6	0
189	1508-32	40	1	0.5	0.3	0	7.4	0	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	0.5
2648	1538-45	34	1.3	1	0	0.3	4.3	0	0.3	2	0	0.3	0.5
2651	1556-62	103	6.4	3.1	1.5	1.9	9.1	0	0.2	1.7	0.2	2.1	0
2655	1581-88	246	12.4	5.8	4.7	1.9	5.6	0.3	0.4	1.6	0.4	11.7	0.7
2657	1598-1601	187	13.8	4.5	6.1	3.1	3.4	0	0.4	1.5	0.3	3.6	0.5
2660	1617-22	388	8.4	4.9	3.2	0.3	6.3	0.5	0.8	3	0.5	5.7	0.6
2661	1644-53	639	13.1	3.1	7.2	2.8	4.3	1.9	4.8	4.8	0.3	10.2	0.9
<i>Total no. of artworks</i>												<i>1648</i>	

* NOTE: Figures are given as the overall percentage of all artworks sampled.

† Includes hunting, battle, tavern, music and maritime scenes; figures dressed in regional or national costumes.

‡ Includes nudes, proverbs or mottoes; depictions of building, fairs, festivals or other contemporary events.

TABLE 2.5 UNKNOWN ARTWORKS IN THE PUPILLI INVENTORIES

<i>Pupilli no.</i>	<i>Date range</i>	<i>No. of artworks</i>	<i>Portraits (unknown)†</i>	<i>Statues & figurines</i>	<i>Busts</i>	<i>Other</i>
186	1460-1510	28	7.7	0	7.1	9.5
189	1508-32	77	7.7	0	7.1	11.9
2648	1538-45	55	6.8	0.8	6	6.3
2651	1556-62	169	3.7	3	1.7	25.9
2655	1581-88	227	5.6	1.5	3.2	23.4
2657	1598-1601	325	2.9	1.1	2.9	36.8
2660	1617-22	443	4	1.3	1.4	19.4
2661	1644-53	417	4.5	2.6	0.8	19.1
<i>Total no. of artworks</i>						1741

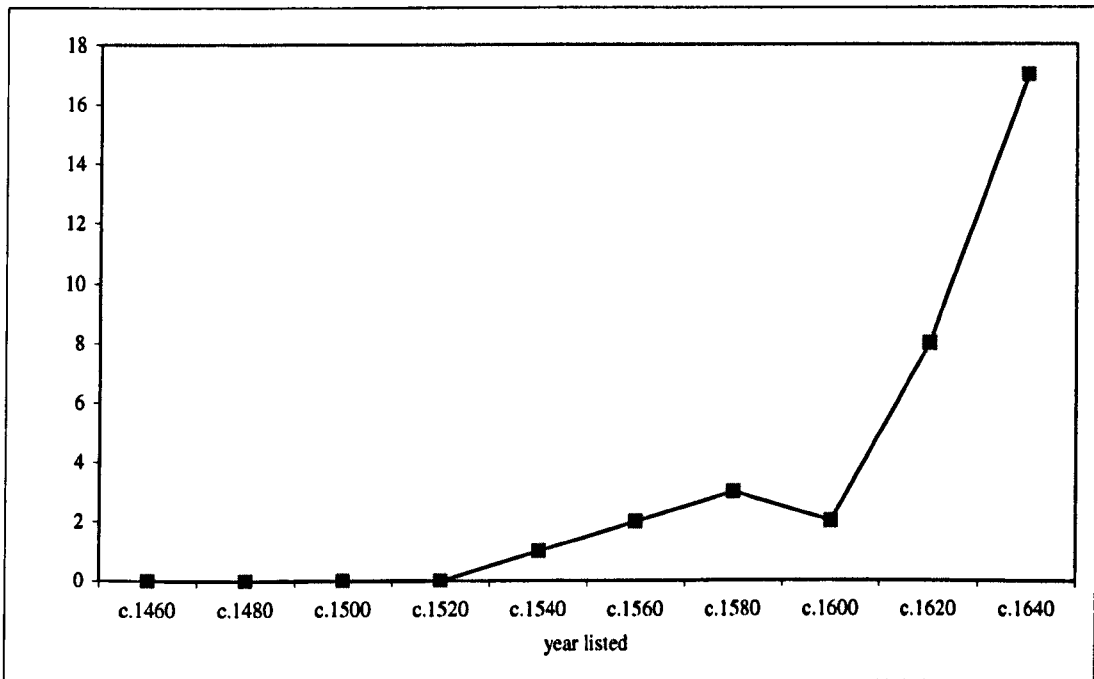
* NOTE: Figures are given as the overall percentage of all artworks sampled.

† Overall figure including busts.

Appendix C

GRAPH FOR CHAPTER THREE: RELICS

GRAPH 3.1 OWNERSHIP OF RELICS IN THE *PUPILLI* INVENTORIES, c.1460 – c.1650[†]



[†] *Pupilli* files MAP 186; 189, MPP 2648, 2651, 2655, 2657, 2660, 2661.

Appendix D

TABLE FOR CHAPTER FOUR: BOOKS

TABLE 4.1 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS CONTAINING PRINTED, MANUSCRIPT, OR PERSONAL BOOKS IN THE *PUPILLI* FILES

<i>Pupilli Nos.</i>	<i>Date range</i>	<i>No. of estates sampled</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
189	1519 – 25	51	31%
2648	1538 – 45	119	33.6%
2651	1556 – 62	91	42.7%
2655	1581 – 88	79	48%
2657	1598 – 1601	82	46.3%
2660	1617 – 22	71	56%
2661	1644 – 53	58	54%
<i>Total number of estates</i>		642	

Tables for Chapter Five: Domestic Oratories and Chapels

TABLE 5.1 ORATORY DEDICATIONS FROM *ORATORI* FILES 2 – 4 (C.1591-C.1643)[†]

<i>Marian</i>	<i>Christological</i>	<i>Saints</i>	<i>Other</i>
34.5%	5.2%	56.7%	3.7%
<i>Total no. of oratories with dedications listed</i>			<i>134</i>

TABLE 5.2 DETAILS OF ORATORY DEDICATIONS FROM THE *ORATORI* FILES 2 – 4 (C.1591-C.1643)[†]

<i>Marian</i>	34.3%	
	Mary & Saints	1.5%
	Annunciation	9%
	Assumption	4.4%
	Birth	4.4%
	Coronation	0.7%
	Immaculate Conception	3.7%
	Rosary	0.7%
	Specific Marys (including del Loreto, de' Rezzi, del Giesù)	2.2%
	Visitation	1.5%
<i>Christological</i>	5.2%	
	Adoration of the Magi	0.7%
	Crucifixion	0.7%
	Nativity	0.7%
	Passion	0.7%
	Salvator Mundi	1.5%
<i>Saints</i>	56.7%	
	S. Francis	6.7%
	S. Jerome	5.2%
	S. Nicholas	3%
	S. Michael	3%
	S. Cosmas & Damian	3%
	S. Antony	3%
	S. Zenobius	1.5%
	S. Romolo	1.5%

S. Mary Magdalene	1.5%
S. Lawrence	1.5%
S. John the Baptist	1.5%
S. Jacob	1.5%
S. Catherine of Siena	1.5%
S. Catherine of Alexandria	1.5%
S. Catherine (unspecified)	1.5%
S. Carlo Borromeo	1.5%
S. Bartholomew	1.5%
S. Simon	0.7%
S. Roch & S. Martin	0.7%
S. Roch	0.7%
S. Peter	0.7%
S. Matthew	0.7%
S. Mark	0.7%
S. Lucy	0.7%
S. Lorenzino	0.7%
S. Julian	0.7%
S. Jacob & S. Blaise	0.7%
S. Giovanni Gualberto	0.7%
S. Giovanni di Loreto	0.7%
B. Giovanna di Signa	0.7%
S. Friano	0.7%
S. Francis & S. Zenobius	0.7%
S. Francis & S. Michael	0.7%
S. Donnino	0.7%
S. Donato	0.7%
S. Blaise	0.7%
S. Augustine	0.7%
S. Anna	0.7%
S. Andrew	0.7%
S. Albert	0.7%
<hr/>	
<i>Other</i>	3.7%
<hr/>	
Holy Cross	1.5%
Holy Family	1.5%
Trinity	0.7%

TABLE 5.3 ALTARPIECE SUBJECTS FROM *ORATORI* FILES 2 – 4 (C.1591-C.1643)[†]

<i>Marian</i>	<i>Christological</i>	<i>Saints</i>	<i>Other</i>
55.8%	20.3%	21.3%	2.5%
<i>Total no. of oratories with altarpiece subject given</i>			197

TABLE 5.4 DETAILS OF ALTARPIECE SUBJECTS FROM *ORATORI* FILES 2–4 (C.1591–C.1643)[†]

<i>Marian (total)</i>		55.8%		
Of which:	Mary (unspecified)	23.9%		
	Mary & XPO	0.5%		
	Mary & XPO & Saints	1%		
	Mary & Saints (total)	10.1%		
			Mary & Saints (unspecified)	2.5%
			Mary & Saints (Antonio & Giuliano)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Bartholomew & S. Andrea Corsini)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Bartholomew & S. Luke)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Cosmos & S. Damian)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Cosmos, S. Damian, S. Zenobius, S. Filippo Neri)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Francis & S. Damian)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. John the Evangelist)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Joseph, S. Carlo Borromeo, S. John the Evangelist, S. Catherine of Siena, S. Stephen, S. Bartholomew)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Nicholas)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Roch & S. Sebastian)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints & Angels	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Joseph, S. Carlo Borromeo, S. John the Evangelist, S. Catherine of Siena, S. Stephen, S. Bartholomew)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Nicholas)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints (S. Roch & S. Sebastian)	0.5%
			Mary & Saints & Angels	0.5%
	Annunciation	12.2%		
	Assumption	2%		
	Birth of the Virgin	2%		
	Coronation of the Virgin	0.5%		
	Immaculate Conception	1.5%		
	Rosary	0.5%		
	Specific Marys	1%		
	Visitation	0.5%		
<i>Christological</i>		20.3%		
Of which:	Christ (unspecified)	2%		
	Christ & Saints	3%		
			Christ & Saints (S. Francis, S. Jerome & others)	0.5%
			Christ & Saints (S. John the Baptist, S. Francis)	0.5%
			Christ & Saints (S. John the Baptist, S. Mary Magdalene)	0.5%
			Christ & Saints (S. Mary Magdalene)	0.5%
			Christ & Saints (S. Mathew)	0.5%
			Christ & Saints (S. Roch & others)	0.5%
	Adoration of the Magi	0.5%		
	Ascension	1%		
	Baptism	0.5%		

Circumcision	0.5%
Coronation	1%
Crucifixion	1%
Deposition	0.5%
Feeding of the five thousand	0.5%
Misery in the Garden	0.5%
Mysteries	1%
Nativity	3.6%
Oration in the Garden	1%
Passion	1%
Pietà	2%
Resurrection	0.5%
<hr/>	
<i>Saints</i>	21.3%
<hr/>	
S. Francis	3.6%
S. John the Baptist	2.5%
S. Cosmas & S. Damian	1.5%
S. Mary Magdalene	1.5%
S. Carlo Borromeo)	1%
S. Catherine (unspecified)	1%
S. Catherine of Alexandria	1%
S. Hyacinth (Jacinto)	1%
S. Jerome	1%
S. Anthony	0.5%
S. Catherine of Siena	0.5%
S. Francis & S. Catherine of Siena	0.5%
S. Giovanni Gualberto	0.5%
S. Horatio	0.5%
S. Laurence	0.5%
S. Matthew	0.5%
S. Micheal	0.5%
S. Nicholas	0.5%
S. Nicholas & S. Barbara	0.5%
S. Paul (Conversion of)	0.5%
S. Roch	0.5%
S. Roch & Martin	0.5%
S. Sebastian	0.5%
<hr/>	
Other	2.5%
<hr/>	
Of which:	
Holy Family	2%
Trinity	0.5%
<hr/>	

† AAF, *Oratori* filze 2 (1591-1613), 3 (1614-1627), 4 (1628-1643)

Appendix F

De Celebratione Missarum

Copy and translation of the decree from the 1610 Florentine Synod called by Archbishop

Alessandro Marzimedici prohibiting Mass at all domestic chapels and oratories in the diocese.[†]

Decreta Synodi Diocesanae Florentinae. Habitae in Metropolitana Ecclesia VI. Kal Iunii. MDCX
(Florence, Michaelmangelum Sermartellium, 1610), 5-6

De Celebratione Missarum: Cum experientia cognitum fit fi passim licentiae celebrandi Missas in Oratoriis privatis concedantur, non augeri devotionem, fed potius euenir, vt incurratur in contemptù, & irreuerentiam, multa; fubinde exoriri salubri parochialium conditioni, & saluti animarù adversantia, cù Ecclesiae Parochiales ex hoc deferantur, nec oues à proprio pastore Salubribus moitis instrui possint, atq; è conuerso durum admodum, nec pietati Christiane consentaneùfit, omnibus huiusmodi facultaté denegare, vt in posterum aliquis delectus haberi possit, revocamus, & irritamus omnes, & qualcumq; licentias hactenus ab Ordinario concessas celebrandi Missas in huiusmodi privatis Oratoriss, statuimusq; ne in posteru concedantur, nisi de mandato Ordinarii Oratoriu inspiciatur, an fit decenter instructum, & ornatum, an congruo loco exaedificatum, nec nisi causa cognita, & propter evidentem necessitatem, & ea tantum durante, causaq; in concessione exprimatur.

Decernimus etiam celebrantes tam praedictis privatis Oratoriis, quam in publicis infra limites alicuius Parochiae existentibus abstinendum esse ab omnibus, quae aliquo modo directè, vel indirectè vertant in parochie praedictae, vt alias à provinciali Concilio constitutum fuit, caveantq; in primis, ne in illis confessiones audiant, ne vè corpus Domini nostri IESU CHRISTI distribuunt, nisi loci dominicis, & eius familiae tantummodo, campanulas ad convocandum populum ne pulsant, festiuitates, & ieiunia non annuncient, confessionem que a Parochis ante offeritorium recitari folte, ne recitent, matrimonia, ordinationes, & quaecunq; aliæ denuncient, mulieres post partum, puerosq; ne benedicant, cinerum, palmarum, candelarumque benedictionem ne faciant, nullae collectae saint solennitates, festiuitatesq; etiam sancti illius ad cuius honorem erectum est Oratorium, non celebrentur, nisi de expresso consensus, & licentia Parochi, quae omnia ceteraq; iurisdictionem importantia habeantur pro interdictis omnibus intra limites alienae Parochiae celebrantibus.

On the celebration of Mass: Through experience it may be recognised that if licences for the celebration of Mass in private oratories are widely conceded, devotion is not increased but rather [devotion] to a great extent rushes into contempt and irreverence. Therefore, because they oppose the salvation of souls and the sound condition of the parishioners drawing them away from the Parish church so that the sheep cannot be guarded by their proper shepherd in appropriate surroundings, while on the other hand, it is absolutely harsh and not in agreement with Christian piety to deny everywhere a faculty of this sort so that in the future some discretion may be had, we revoke and invalidate all and whatsoever licences so far conceded by the Ordinary for

celebrating mass in private oratories of this kind and we establish that they may not be conceded in the future unless by mandate of the Ordinary. The oratory is to be inspected as to whether it is appropriately designed and decorated and whether it is built in a befitting place. [It is] not [to be] recognised without reason and on account of evident and ongoing need and the reason is to be expressed in the concession.

†I would like to acknowledge Mr Robin Peach for his kindness in helping with the translation.