Raphael’s “St. Cecilia”. An Iconographical Study

From the time when in 1550 Giorgio Vasari praised in his Lives of the Artists the St. Cecilia by Raphael (Pl. 1) the famous work has been many times the subject of interest not only of critics and historians of art but also of musicians and musicologists and even philosophers, whose attention was most often drawn by its many sided subject matter, puzzling, and still not explained. The authors of particular works have reached various conclusions, sometimes contradicting each other, one of the reasons for this being the fact that their investigations were as a rule based on source material to a small degree only. Reexamination of the sources, at the same time taking into consideration to a greater extent those intellectual and religious trends under whose influence were the persons connected with the creation of the work, might lead to a better knowledge and more correct interpretation of the theme of the picture.

This picture by Raphael, which has been in the Pinacoteca in Bologna since 1815, was ordered by a patrician of Bologna known for her piety and later beatified, Elena Duglioli dall'Olio, through the agency of Antonio Pucci, her friend, a Florentine canon and later Bishop of Pistoia, and his uncle Lorenzo Pucci, cardinal and at the same time papal datario, to the chapel of St. Cecilia erected by Elena in her natal town adjoining the church of San Giovanni in Monte. The picture was ordered, according to Vasari, after Lorenzo had received the office of cardinal, i. e. after 29 September 1513; the fact is convincing as only a high and influential dignitary could at that time force through the painting of a picture by Raphael who, overwhelmed by numerous papal orders did not fulfil his obligations even for sovereign princes.

The oldest sources also mention the year 1513 when speaking about the contacts of Elena Duglioli with the cardinal's nephew, Antonio Pucci. We do not know whether direct talks took place between Elena, Pucci, and Raphael. But it is not impossible that they could have occurred at the end of 1515 during the stay in Bologna of Pope Leo X who arrived there at the beginning of December to meet François I, the King of France. The Pope was accompanied by Cardinal Pucci, who played an important role in the negotiations with the French, and perhaps by Raphael, who was known to be at that time in Florence with the Pope taking part in the conference on the building of the façade of the Medici church of S. Lorenzo. The probability of the picture's being ordered at that time is the greater because of the fact that the building of the St. Cecilia chapel came to an end in the years 1515—1516 and its finishing and furnishing were important. When Raphael actually carried out the order is a matter of conjecture only. The style of work, with distinct manneristic elements, is an argument, as John Shearman has recently stressed, for dating it late, but it is difficult to place it beyond the end of 1516 if Vasari's statement that the finished picture sent to Bologna was admired by the painter Francesco Francia, who died, as we know, on 5 January 1517 and was employed at its installation at the altar, is true.

A knowledge of the circumstances of the inception of the picture and the personality of Elena Duglioli and the two Pucci permits an approximate reconstruction of the wishes of the founder and her advisers, upon which the artist must have depended. The ordering of a picture representing the traditional type in Italy of that time, called Sacra Conversazione, cannot be considered as anything extraordinary. The choice of saints, i. e. of Cecilia surrounded by John...
the Evangelist, Augustine, Paul, and Mary Magdalene, however, requires explanation, as well as the question to what extent it was the desire of the lady commissioning the painting and why.

The least trouble in interpretation would seem to be caused by St. Cecilia, the main figure of the picture and the patron of the newly erected chapel where the work was to be placed, and whose relics Elena Duglioli possessed and worshiped. The saint was well-known in Bologna if only for the fact that at the end of the fifteenth century the Bentivoglio family founded an oratorium dedicated to St. Cecilia at the church of S. Giacomo Maggiore and in the next century decorated it with a series of frescoes depicting her life.

The choice of St. John the Evangelist and of St. Augustine also seems justified as the chapel founded by Elena adjoins the church of S. Giovanni belonging to the Canons Regular of the Rule of St. Augustine. As we know from the sources, the founder of the picture had particular reverence for these two saints as well as for St. Paul.

The cult of St. Cecilia, the endeavour to obtain her relics, and the erection of the chapel dedicated to her had a profound importance in Elena's life. Similarly to that Roman patrician, on the day of her marriage she took, with her husband's agreement, the vow of chastity and kept it, according to source information, throughout the many years of her married life. This virtue of Cecilia's was stressed in the picture where her rich clothes are tied with a simple belt, the traditional symbol of chastity. This was also the origin of Elena's cult for St. John and St. Paul, of whom the former had long been worshiped as the patron of virginity and the latter, a celibate, praised this state in his first letter to the Corinthians.

The oldest sources concerned with the life of Elena and coming from people who knew her personally give numerous items of information about her frequent visionary and ecstatic states; for example, Father Pietro Recta, enumerating the admirable virtues of his penitent of many years stressed above all "la contemplazione et il vedere cosi chiaramente le cose dell'altra vita, come il Cielo, e quelle Animi e Spiriti Beati". He further wrote that Elena, at that time about forty years old, seemed like a young girl, her face undergoing visible change and becoming rounded and rosy.

Antonio Pucci, a friend of Elena, knew about these visions, and through him probably also Raphael, this being not without influence on the way of presenting St. Cecilia in the picture. She is dressed in golden yellow garments symbolising desire of God, and lifts her face upwards to where the dark, cloud-ridden sky opens above her showing a brightly lit glory of angels. "La faccia rivolta in alto", says the textbook by Cesare Ripa based on the iconographical tradition of high Renaissance, "mostra che come sono gli occhi nostri col Cielo, con la luce, e col Sole, così è il nostro inteletto con le cose celesti, e con Dio". The round, rosy face of St. Cecilia shows, as Vasari remarked, "quella astrazione che si vede nel viso di coloro che sono in estasi".

The saints surrounding St. Cecilia do not take part directly in her ecstasy; nevertheless the element of spiritual visions occurring in the life of each of them could also be one of the factors which decided their choice. St. John's visions on the isle of Patmos gave rise to his Book of Revelations. This is probably the great book lying at the feet of the Evangelist on which an eagle is sitting, his attribute and at the same time the symbol of perspicacity reaching the highest regions. St. Paul converted as a result of a vision on his way to Damascus, was, as he wrote in his second letter to the Corinthians (XII, 2—4) transported to heaven where he heard things which might not be repeated. The painter placed two letters, perhaps those to the
Corinthians 28, in the apostle’s hand. St. Paul’s visions were in turn the subject of scholarly considerations of St. Augustine, whose conversion in Milan had also a supernatural character. St. Mary Magdalene, according to a Provençal legend made widely popular by The Golden Legend by Jacopo de Voragine, was during her penance lifted by the angels to heaven several times a day in mystic ecstasy.

In the visions of Elena Duglioli, reported by contemporary biographers who based their information on her stories, the element of music played an important part. "Questa Vergine", wrote the Anonymous author known to us, “esser elevata alli celestiali concerti che possiamo dire quasi di continuo di quelli esser stata partecepe, o fusse per reale esteriore suono, o par per solo imaginario miraculosamente dal Signore, o angeli beati da lei fatto assaggiare non sappiamo. Ma particolarmente piú volte narrasi haver alcune fiate sentito tali celesti concerti realmente", and Pietro Recta added, “ha parlato sensibilmente con li Angeli e con quelli cantato”.

These stories of Elena, known to a wide group of people close to her, had some influence on the way of presenting the vision of St. Cecilia in Raphael’s picture, where a choir of singing angels appear to the saint lost in ecstasy.

Unlike the classical approach, the Christian idea of celestial music as musica angelica, that is, "illa quae ab angelis ante conspectum Dei semper administratur", whose aim is constant praise of God, was developed on the basis of Isaiah’s vision from the Old Testament (VI, 1—4), and the gospel of St. Luke (II, 13—14) and St. John’s Book of Revelations (e. g. V, 11) from the New Testament, besides the writings of Dionysius Pseudo-Areopagita (Celestial Hierarchy, 273 B) and of numerous Fathers of the Church. Besides fulfilling an important function in the celestial liturgy, the music was to express the happiness of the redeemed souls directly watching the glory of God. Celestial music, as it would appear from the mention in the Book of Revelations (I, 9—to) and, among others, from the writings of St. Augustine, may be accessible on earth only to people in a state of ecstasy, as can be seen in Raphael’s picture.

It may be supposed that the song of the angels choir appearing in heaven finds an answer in the mystically ecstatic soul of St. Cecilia, who in this way fulfills the recommendation of St. Paul (Ep. ad Ephes. V, 19), commented on many times by St. Augustine “cantate et psallete in cordibus vestris Domino”, and at the same time forms an illustration of the legend connected with her life. In the oldest description of the saint’s life from the fifth or sixth century, Passio S. Caeciliae, there is the following sentence in the description of the wedding of the young Roman girl with Valerianus “Venit dies in quo thalamus collocatus est, et, cantantibus organis, illa in corde suo soli Domino decantabat dicens: Fiat cor meum et corpus meum immaculatum ut non confundar”. Cecilia’s vow of chastity, connected in the text of the legend with the music in the depth of her heart, is also connected with the singing of the angels who, according to St. John (Revelations XIV, 3—4) may be only those qui virgines sunt. This is the reason why the angels appearing to Cecilia are shown as very young people since according to the principle taken from ancient times and transformed by Christianity of linking music with youth, most suitable for the praise of God’s glory is the song of innocent children. Nor is it accidental that the singing angels use no musical instruments because the human voice, being a direct expression of the soul and at the same time closely connected with words, which in religious songs are often divine words, has, according to St. Augustine and other Fathers of the Church, the character which is most suitable for the most important, that is the religious function of music. The tendency to give priority to the human voice over the sound of
instruments, contrary to another tendency derived from the tradition coming from Boethius’s treatise of connecting vocal with instrumental music within the frames of the category common to both of them *musica instrumentalis* or *organica* 43, developed especially in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries 44.

Lost in the sound coming from the heavens and responding with music from her heart St. Cecilia is holding in her hand a small portative organ (in Italian *organetto* or *organino*) 45.

The way of showing St. Cecilia with a musical instrument in her hands and of attributing to her the patronage of religious music appeared in connection with the false interpretation of the fragment of the quoted *Passio S. Caeciliae* i.e. “cantantibus organis, illa in corde suo soli Domino decantabat”. The fragment is commonly known as it was included in the prayers of the breviary in the early years of the Middle Ages 46 and quoted in the *Golden Legend* 47 expressing the contrast between the spiritual song of the saint directed to God and the actual music of wedding instruments; “organa”, St. Augustine said, “dicuntur omnia instrumenta musicorum, non solum illud ... quod grande est et inflatur follibus” 48, which in the late Middle Ages began to be interpreted inconsistently with its real meaning showing St. Cecilia playing the organ 49. It was not accidental that this occurred in the fifteenth century 50 when this instrument began to play a more and more important role in church music 51 and the portative organ, *organetto*, was at the peak of its popularity and development 52. In such a way, probably on the basis of the idea taken from ancient times of connecting music with prayer 53, the representation of St. Cecilia was included in the circle of images of music praising the glory of God and at the same time expressing the happiness of the souls participating in the glory 54. This way of presenting St. Cecilia, found very often north of the Alps 55 during the whole of the fifteenth century, occurs extremely rare in Italian Art 56 before the picture by Raphael.

The instrument in the hands of St. Cecilia in the picture in Bologna plays a slightly different role than that in representations of similar type till that time. Music may be the means leading to ecstasy, according to the ancient notions taken over by Christianity 57. “Musica extasim causat”, was the laconic formulation of Joannes Tinctoris, a theoretician of music active in Italy in the second half of the fifteenth century 58, and this was probably the reason for the Raphael St. Cecilia’s using the organ 59. After attaining the state of ecstasy, enabling her to hear the angels singing, she lowered the now unnecessary *organetto* from which some pipes started to fall out 60.

The *organetto* is not the only musical instrument shown in the picture. At the feet of the saint can be seen a *viola da gamba* three fipple flutes, a tambourine, and an instrument similar to it in the form of a wooden hoop with small circular metal plates inserted in its side (German: *Schellenreif*), two kettledrums with sticks, a triangle and a pair of cymbals 61. According to Vasari’s information they were painted, as well as St. Cecilia’s *organino*, at Raphael’s order by his pupil Giovanni da Udine who “fece il suo dipinto così simile a quello di Raffaello, che pare d’una medesima mano” 62. Scattered in disorder and partly damaged (the viola has broken strings and a cracked body and one kettledrum has a torn head) they probably symbolise the secular music of the wedding ceremony, rejected by St. Cecilia, this being mentioned in the text of the legend 63. Purely instrumental music, unconnected with words, was already in ancient times considered as something low — Plato called it the “mountebank or the boor” 64 — and the tambourine, kettledrums, flutes and other percussion instruments symbolised even lascivious love *vita voluptaria* in the Christian Middle Ages when dance music was connected
with Satan. These ideas were common also in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and were the reason that during the famous bruciamenti delle vanità carried out in Florence under the influence of Savonarola among other vanitates musical instruments were also added to the holocaust. St. Cecilia standing over them and at the same time dominating the music which they symbolise, lifted into ecstasy by the organ playing and listening to the angels singing, clad in a quasi ecclesiastical garment approaching a dalmatic becomes in this context a personification of religious music.

The old tradition from St. Augustine closely connects religious music with love understood as the main theological virtue Caritas “Cantare autem et psallere” wrote this Father of the Church “negotium esse solet amantium”, “cantare amantis est; Vox huius cantoris, fervor est sancti amoris”.

Music and love were connected with each other also in the angelic visions of Elena Duglioli, according to her stories passed on by the Anonymous author mentioned before “per vehementia di divin amore, et della celestial patria (Elena) comincio ad intonare una bella laude . . . et ecco una compagnia de beati Spiriti Celesti se accompagnaron vocalmente à cantar seco, et tutta la laude suavissimamente seco cantaron” and further “per ardente desiderio di quel sommo amore intonando qualche laude, disubito accordavansi seco a cantare li Angeli.”

Love beside music plays an important part also in the picture by Raphael. It stimulates the choir of angels to sing and it also encouraged St. Cecilia to praise God by playing the organ, who now “in corde suo soli Domino cantat”. Love, inseparable from ecstasy, is symbolised probably by the pearls adorning the robe of the saint, the beauty of which is compared by Ripa to grace “che rapisce gli animi all’ amore”.

Finally, love is probably one of the factors connecting all the figures in the picture.

John, the beloved disciple of Christ, putting his hand on his breast with a characteristic gesture, is looking at St. Augustine who is turned towards him, and the dialogue of their looks seems to be concerned with the love for Him whom the learned Father of the Church had addressed in his Confessions saying “sagittaveras tu cor nostrum charitate tua”.

St. Paul in turn, wrapped in a red toga, whose colour symbolises amore e carità is holding two letters in his hand, probably those to the Corinthians, the first of which is devoted to the most important theological virtue. The hand holding the letters is resting on a sword, the saint’s attribute at the same time symbolising words. The point of the sword is resting, surely not accidentally, on the triangle at that time and up till the end of the sixteenth century called cymbalum together with another percussion instrument; the eyes of the apostle, deeply in thought, gaze on it; he seems to ponder over the words from the first letter to the Corinthians (XIII, 1) “Si linguis hominum loquar et angelorum, caritatem autem non habeam, factus sum velut aes sonans aut cymbalum tinniens”.

Finally St. Mary Magdalene, about whom Christ said, “Remittuntur ei peccata multa, quoniam dilexit multum” (Luke VII, 47) holding in her hand a jar with the precious ointment with which she anointed Jesus’s feet for love of Him, is looking from the picture towards the viewer as if inviting him to take part in the mystery of love presented there.

Raphael’s picture, painted according to the wishes of the founder and her advisers represents simultaneously a number of philosophic and religious ideas which imbued the world of fancy of educated Italian society at that time. It was the epoch in which new philosophic theories were better understood by educated laymen than by professional university scholars, the epoch in which according to the words of one of its experts, “practising artists tried to assimi-
late the entire scientific culture of their epoch while, conversely, scholars and men of letters sought to understand the work of art as a manifestation of the highest and most universal laws.\textsuperscript{81}

One of the most popular ideas in that epoch was the Pythagorean belief, supported by the authority of Plato's \textit{Timaeus}, that the structure of the universe has a mathematic character and was built on the basis of simple ratios of small integer numbers. This theory, not unfamiliar to the Christian Middle Ages, the more so that it was believed to be confirmed by the biblical Wisdom of Solomon (XI, 21, "omnia in mensura, et numero et pondere disposuisti"), was developed in the epoch of the Renaissance, when it played an important part in philosophic ideas and became the basis not only of the theory of music, which in the Middle Ages belongs to the liberal arts as closely connected with mathematics, but also of the theories of architecture, painting, and sculpture.

In connection with the spread of mathematic speculations, the fact of putting six angels in Raphael's picture is worth considering.\textsuperscript{82} The number six was considered as the first perfect number (\textit{primus numerus perfectus, numerus perfectissimus}) as the first in a set of rare numbers, whose integer divisors give as the sum their value. According to the opinion of Philon of Alexandria and St. Augustine, often quoted by the humanists, it was for this reason that the number six was privileged by God, who created the world in six days and on the sixth day crowned his work by creating the most perfect earthly being — man.\textsuperscript{3}

The symbolic meaning connected with the number six cannot fully explain the problem of the group of angels if only for the reason that Pythagorean-Platonic mathematic speculation concerned not the symbolism of particular numbers but above all the ratios between them. For it was the theory of proportion. Thus the fuller explanation of the meaning of the group of angels in Raphael's picture should be sought also in their composition.

In the centre of the group are placed three angels singing from a common choir-book. At the side they are joined by a fourth angel, represented heraldically on the right, who sings from a separate sheet of music, holding it in his left hand while with his right he supports the choir-book of his companions as if he wanted to stress that he is not independent but also belongs to their group. The six person group of the choir is completed by two angels singing from a separate book placed heraldically on the left.

This thoughtful and even refined composition cannot be considered as accidental, especially as the sequence of numbers 2, 3, and 4, and 3, 4, and 6 had a quite defined and commonly known sense in the Pythagorean theory. In the first sequence the extreme terms 2 and 4, which are in the ratio of 1:2, i. e. they express the mathematical proportion of the most perfect music consonance, the octave, are divided by the number 3, which is their arithmetic mean, so that the ratio of the first to the second (2:3) and the second to the third (3:4) expresses the ratio of the two remaining basic music consonances, i. e. fifth and fourth. In the second sequence the octave (3:6 i. e. 1:2) is divided by the mean 4 into a fourth (3:4) and a fifth (4:6 i. e. 2:3). In other words, both sequences of numbers occurring in the composition of the group of angels express mathematic ratios of the octave divided into a fifth and fourth or into a fourth and a fifth.\textsuperscript{84} The accordance of two different proportions, called \textit{proportionalitas}, in such a way that they would form a proportion of higher order is called harmony.\textsuperscript{85} "Harmonia est discordia concors" a famous Renaissance theoretician of music, Franchino Gafurio, taught his listeners on a woodcut in his work \textit{De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum} (Pl. 2), and in order to illustrate these words on both sides of his chair there are shown three organ pipes.
marked 3, 4, 6 illustrating the ratios of the octave divided into a fourth and a fifth, and on the opposite side there are three lines marked by the same numbers and a pair of dividers in order to explain that harmony is only geometry translated into sound. From the contents of the woodcut it follows indirectly, as indicated by Rudolf Wittkower, that Gafurio accepted the Pythagorean-Platonic belief that the principle of harmony is the basis of macrocosm and microcosm, universe and man, soul and body, medicine, and architecture, painting, and sculpture as well.

It is supposed that this mathematic principle of harmony was expressed in the composition of the group of angels in the picture from Bologna and it is probably not without cause that Vasari, in describing the ecstasy of St. Cecilia said, “Santa Cecilia che da un coro in cielo d’Angeli abbagliata, sta a udire il suono, tutta data in preda all’armonia.”

Which role does the representation of the principle of harmony play and what is its connection with the main themes of the picture, i.e. music and love, only the Neoplatonic theories concerning music and love offered by the chief representative of this philosophical trend in the epoch of the Renaissance, Marsilio Ficino, permit us to understand.

Ficino divides music generally into divine music and its imitation human music. Divine music is of two kinds, corresponding to the Neoplatonic differentiation between the Cosmic Mind — the realm of pure Intelligences (angels) and Ideas — and Cosmic Soul — the nine celestial spheres. In the Angelic Mind it exists as a mathematic Idea which is a model for the celestial spheres moving harmonically. The human Mind — the highest faculty of the human soul, thanks to its divine origine, has a recollection of this music and on this basis it is blessed with an inborn and immanent feeling of harmony. In turn, harmony of the moving celestial spheres, realizing the Idea existing in the Angelic Mind, is a model for all kinds of harmonies in sublunary world which it influences. One of them is the interior harmony of the human soul. The soul and body of man are within the influence of the planets owing to links connecting the Human Spirit — the medium element linking the human soul with the body — and the Cosmic Spirit — the medium element between the heaven and the sublunary world. The Human Spirit is especially sensitive to music based on the proportion principles which through it harmonizes soul and body. Suitable music of voices or instruments subdues the Human Spirit under the influence of harmony of the spheres. At the same time it enables the soul to elevate itself into the realm of celestial harmony and is one of the means leading the Mind to God.

In the Neoplatonic system of Ficino music is connected also with love. He defined love as the desire for beauty and beauty is the splendour of divine goodness whose brilliance shines through everything which exists. God as a pure and simple being surpasses everything else so in the multiple world the divine beauty manifests itself in the accordance of the elements, that is in harmony which may appear in souls, bodies, and sounds, recognized correspondingly through thinking, seeing, and hearing.

In connection with the distinction between divine beauty and that which is the reflection of God in the empirical world, Ficino differentiated two basic kinds of love, i.e. celestial love (amor coelestis) and human love (amor humanus) which should not be confused with bestial love (amor ferinus). Celestial love, identified with Christian caritas, is the desire for the beauty of God Himself. Its abode is the Angelic Cosmic Mind, continually contemplating the divine beauty, though in man, it rests in the highest faculty of his soul, the Mind. The Idea of divine beauty on the basis of which a man discovers beauty in the world surrounding him, is
impressed in his Mind and this is why the only way to a knowledge of divine beauty is concentration and internal experience. According to Ficino, there are seven types of *vacatio* which facilitate and favour internal concentration and contemplation, among which are melancholy, solitude, and chastity. Full enchantment with divine beauty is very seldom accessible to man during his short earthly life and only for a short moment when the internal contemplation rises to ecstasy. The soul turning inwards gradually separates itself from the body and turns to God and torn from the body, sees God directly and cognizes Him, this being the highest goal of man. Ficino called the rising of soul to God “divine madness” (*furor divinus*) and differentiated four degrees leading to ecstasy. The first is “the divine madness of the poet” (*furor poeticus*) which is the harmonizing of the soul by means of music, and the last and highest “the divine madness of the lover” (*furor amatorius*) when the harmonized and united soul enraptured by divine love, reaches God. Each kind of “divine madness” has its opposite, the opposite of the first being the effect cased by common music charming only the ear and of the last physical lust.

The contents of the picture of Raphael become understood fuller in the light of the Neoplatonic philosophy of Ficino. The mathematic principle of harmony expressed in the composition of the angels choir is probably the Idea of harmony and at the same time the reflection of divine beauty in the Angelic Cosmic Mind. Between it and Nature mediate the saints stand-

2. Gafurio's lecture. From F. Gafurio, *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum*, 1518
ing beneath on earth, among whom are those who are especially close to Renaissance Platonists i.e. John, Paul, Augustine, and Magdalene. Beyond their large figures appears the world of Nature in the form of abundant plants and a hilly landscape with a group of buildings around a central temple. The main figure of the picture St. Cecilia, who like John and melancholic thoughtful Paul, cultivated the virtue of chastity which helped internal contemplation, is shown probably at the moment of passing to the highest degree of “divine madness”. After harmonizing her soul by organ playing, which at that time had for more than a century its own tablature and could therefore independently realize the postulates of harmony, she is just in the state of ecstasy; her Mind takes part, together with the angels of the divine Cosmic Mind, in the direct sight and cognition of God Himself. Scattered at her feet, the partly damaged wedding instruments, among which predominate the bacchic percussion instruments, are only a symbol of vulgar music, deceiving the ears and at the same time a symbol of physical love alone. Beneath, a shapeless stone or lump of earth and a dark hole in the corner symbolize the lowest Neoplatonic hierarchy of being, the shapeless Realm of Matter. The graded composition of the picture has its reflection in the coloristic composition of the work which in its general outline is in agreement with the hierarchy of colours of Ficino, leading from the blackness of Matter, through the brown of earth and blue of air to the shining clearness of God.

The multilayer programme, full of erudition, closely connected with the philosophic ideas of the epoch, arose as the result of cooperation not only of the founder and her counsellors but also of the artist himself. Those ordering the picture played not a small part in the formation of its programme, especially since the counsellors of Elena Duglioli were Lorenzo and Antonio Pucci, members of a Florentine family connected with the Medici, with broad contacts and humanistic tradition. Both of them, excellently educated, were at the papal court of Julius II and Leo X, in the centre of the intellectual life of Italy where Lorenzo even held a high position. Antonio Pucci, orator, writer, and Latin poet in close friendship with Elena, must have been especially active in establishing the inventio of the picture.

Nevertheless the part played by the artist himself must also have been very important, this being indicated by the close connection of the contents of ideas with the forms expressing them, giving the impression that the person forming the programme thought as a painter. It calls to mind the true observation of Lodovico Dolce, a sixteenth century theoretician of painting, “Raffaello imitò talmente gli Scrittori, che spesso il giudizio de gl’intendenti si muove a credere, che questo Pittore habbia le cose meglio dipinte, che essi discritte”. Raphael, living from his early youth among humanists in Urbino, Florence, and Rome and in daily contact with them, had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with numerous branches of knowledge, especially as it was his pleasure to “doceri ac docere” as Celio Calcagnini put it.

The artist’s humanistic knowledge is visible also in the picture from Bologna. The very clothes of St. Cecilia, not seen before in the modern iconography, were composed on the basis of the oldest known life of the saint “Caecilia vero subtus carnem cilicio erat induta, desuper auratis vestibus tegebatur”. Under the golden dalmatic, through the transparent tunic, there is visible a dark cilice the hem of which appears out of the right sleeve. In order to illustrate the text most faithfully, Raphael used also the oldest accessible iconographic materials concerning St. Cecilia provided by frescoes and mosaics from Roman basilicas. The similarity of the golden dalmatic with the characteristic finish of the cut of the neckline to the clothes of the saint in the frescoes from the end of the eleventh century showing the scenes of her legend
3. St. Cecilia with Valerian, copy of the 11th century fresco in the vestibule of basilica S. Cecilia in Trastevere in Rome (Vatican Library, Cod. Barb. lat. 4402, one of fols. 20 ff)

4. Virgin Mary, the 5th century mosaic in the rood-arch of basilica S. Maria Maggiore in Rome. Detail from the scene of the acknowledgement of Jesus to be Son of God by Aphrodiosius

in the vestibule of the basilica of St. Cecilia in Trastevere and the fashion, unknown to the Renaissance, of arranging the hair with a small bun over the forehead, a close analogy to the arrangement of the hair of Maria in the fifth century rood-arch mosaic in the basilica of S. Maria Maggiore are surely not accidental (Pl. 3—4). In the light of the artist's interests in ancient art, holding as he did the position of conservator of antiques of the Eternal City and of his transformation in his works of forms taken from the ancient pagan and Christian world, these references to the early mediaeval iconography are quite understandable.

Raphael also knew the Pythagorean-Platonic theory of proportion and the mathematic principle of harmony. As an architect he had to master the theory of proportion and the proof that he applied it successfully in practice is the important remark which Sebastiano Serlio added to Raphael's design for the project of the basilica of St. Peter in the Vatican, "ne vi porrò tutte le misure di esso tempio, perciòcè essendo ben proportionato, da una parte delle misure si potrà trarre il tutto". He must also have known the principle of harmony for he put it on the tablet placed opposite the figure, probably of Pythagoras, in the famous School of Athens (Pl. 5). Here can be seen a diagrammatic design of the four strings of the ancient
lyre connected properly and numbered 6, 8, 9, and 12, expressing the proportion of the octave (6 : 12 i.e. 1 : 2) generated by using the harmonic and arithmetic means 8 and 9 into two fifths (6 : 9 and 8 : 12 i.e. 2 : 3) and two fourths (6 : 8 and 9 : 12 i.e. 3 : 4) and the tone (8 : 9). The octave, the fifth, the fourth, and the tone are designated by their Greek names i.e. diapason, diapente, diatessaron, and epogloon. At the bottom is the perfect Pythagorean number 10 as the sum of the first four numbers which have the ratios of all basic musical consonances, i.e. the octave, the fifth, and the fourth (1 : 2 : 3 : 4). The problems of music and its theory were not strange to Raphael, not only because the education of an artist at that time required a knowledge of it, but also because while staying at the court of Pope Leo X he had quite often to be in touch with music and its practice and theory. Leo X was a devoted music lover, he kept a large choir and numerous musicians, knew very well the theory of music, and liked to discuss with experts "tonis et chordis totaque numerorum proportione". Moreover, he had a good voice, sang, and played an instrument, probably the portative organ, which stood in his room. He specially liked religious music.
which affected him strongly. In the atmosphere of the papal court it was not difficult to acquire a general knowledge of music.

In trying to show the contrast between the two kinds of music, divine and vulgar, Raphael returned to a subject he knew well. A similar theme is contained in one of the frescoes on the ceiling of the *Stanza della Segnatura*, executed from his own design, and showing the end of the musical contest of Apollo and Marsyas, the victory of the divine music of Apollo’s lyre, based on mathematic principles, over the uncontrollable sounds of Marsyas’s flute.

Also Raphael’s knowledge of the problems of Neoplatonic philosophy is unquestioned in the light of studies of the ideological contents of the decorations of the *Stanza della Segnatura*, the *Stanza d’Eliodoro* or the Chigi chapel in the Church of S. Maria del Popolo. The Neoplatonic theory of love also provides the clue to a fuller understanding of the content of the series of frescoes showing the love story of Amor and Psyche in the Villa Farnesina.

The participation of the artist in the determination of the ideological conception of the picture is most distinctive in the elaboration of the figure of Mary Magdalene whom it is
impossible to connect positively with the presumed wishes of the founders on the basis of the known sources. Considered sometimes as one of the most beautiful female figures painted by Raphael, stylistically the nearest to mannerism and so perhaps painted the latest, Magdalene is of the characteristic type of beauty occurring in a number of Raphael's works, and which seems to be the result of idealising the features of the girl from his well-known portrait in the Barberini Gallery (Pl. 6). This semi-nude young girl, wearing on her left arm a bracelet with the inscription RAPHAEL URBINAS which was probably something more than a signature, has traditionally been identified with Margherita, daughter of the baker Francesco Luti, called La Fornarina from her father's profession, with whom Raphael was associated till the last days of his life; she was probably the cause of his putting off his wedding with the cousin of the Cardinal Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena which never took place. Proof of this great, as may be supposed, love are not only La Fornarina's features, more or less idealized, repeated in Raphael's many works, but also his love sonnets, probably dedicated to her, preserved in several variants on the margins and at the back of the artist's sketches for the frescoes for the Stanza della Segnatura.

"Como non podde dir d'arcana dei Paul, como discesso fu dal celo
così el mio cor d'uno amoroso velo
a ricoperto tuti i pensser mei"

begins one of them, with this characteristic comparison of the exaltation of love to St. Paul's ecstasy so often quoted and commented on by the Neoplatonists of the Renaissance. The fact of giving St. Mary Magdalene the features of the artist's beloved becomes fully understandable only in the light of the Neoplatonic idea that human love, as the desire of visual beauty which is the reflex of divine beauty, forms the first stage leading to the love of God. This view, widespread at that time, in accordance with the old tradition of the Italian dolce stil nuovo, confirmed by the authority of the works of Dante and Petrarch, is commonly found in the writings of the philosophers and writers of these times, and among many others it is found in Il Cortigiano by Baldassarre Castiglione, a friend of Raphael.

It is not by accident that the sublimated features of the beloved were given to Mary Magdalene in the picture from Bologna. Her legendary conversion was at that time interpreted as a transition from amor profano to amor divino. For this reason she is shown at the moment of joining the group of other saints, and at the same time she is looking towards the spectator serving as intermediary between him and the mystery of divine love unfolding in the picture.

The combination in Raphael's picture of various elements, religious, secular, Christian and Neoplatonic is typical for the epoch. It is known that the Neoplatonists of the Renaissance believed deeply that Christianity, the only true religion, was in accordance with Platonism, the only true philosophy. Some of them, e.g. Pico della Mirandola, called princeps concordiae, even went so far as to collect doctrines taken from Egyptian, Greek, Jewish, and Christian sources into some kind of universal syncretism. During the theological conflicts preceding the Reformation it was Neoplatonism that represented the attitude of tolerance and harmony.

In this light it becomes clear why the content programme of Raphael's picture was based on the evangelical and patristic sources and also on Christian and Pythagorean-Neoplatonic ones, which overlap, permeate, and combine into one whole in this work.

Typical also for the epoch in which the picture was painted is its involved character, consciously postulated by the Renaissance humanists cultivating esoteric knowledge and loving
hidden arguments and enigmatic statements, thanks to which they were to acquire greater earnestness and authority, according to these scholars' belief.\(^{139}\)

Renaissance Neoplatonism had also a strikingly theological character. Attacking the scholastic theology, its representatives turned to the biblical and patristic sources of Christianity, which they wished to supplement only with the realm of classical thought. It permits the comprehension of why such a number of piagnoni, the supporters of Savonarola, were from the circles of the Florentine Platonic Academy, and why from the sources of Neoplatonic docta pietas came the first attempts of Christian renovatio preceding the Reformation.\(^{140}\)

The elements of Neoplatonic philosophy, and especially of the theory of love, cannot then be surprising coming from the lips of the saintly Elena Duglioli, whose visions "per vehementia di divin amore" have a Neoplatonic character. In the work elaborated by her Brieve e signoril modo del spiritual vivere the service of God is defined, not without the influence of Ficino, as "un industrioso modo, et un arte di amare, nel quale cercar debbe l'innamorata anima con ogni studio, e forza copularsi al suo diletto". It further commends constant prayer "finche l'anima si reunisca con perfetta copula al suo superno sposo" and frequent taking of Holy Communion "la qual comunione non e altro che un intima unione et copula, che fa il celestial Sposo con l'innamorata anima".\(^{141}\)

A friend and confidant of Elena, the Bishop of Pistoia, Antonio Pucci, was closely connected at that time with the first attempts at the reform of Catholicism prepared among others by Neoplatonic ideas. He was in close contact with the disciple of Ficino and adherent of Savonarola, Paulo Orlandini, and with the humanist, the Venetian diplomat and later Camaldolite, Vincenzo Querini, who in 1513 together with Tommaso Giustinianì, presented a programme of radical reform of the Church to Leo X and was himself the author of such religious works as, for example, commentaries to the Bible and the treatise De corporis et sanguinis Jesu Christi. As chierico di camera of Leo X, Pucci at the inauguration of the ninth session of the fifth Lateran General Council in May 1514 delivered a sermon, in the presence of the Pope, calling for a reform of the Church.\(^{142}\) He was also a member of a secred society of clergy and seculars Oratorio del Divin Amore, whose aim was to deepen religious life, to take the Sacraments frequently, and cultivate the virtue of charity. This small society, counting only a few scores of members, led by Gaetano da Thiene, later canonized as S. Gaetano, was approved by Leo X in 1516, and therefore existed and was active still earlier.\(^{143}\)

Raphael, who had been a member of the confraternity Corporis Christi in Urbino since 1514, had contacts with the supposed members of this society, which fact as well as the influence of the ideology of Oratorio on the last phase of the artist's creative work, were often and for a long time stressed, though there were no factual data.\(^{144}\) Only as the result of finding the list of members of the Oratorio from 1524, arranged in the order of enrollment, where as the third is "R. D. Antonius Puccius episcopus Pistoriensis, Romae" can it be said with certainty that at least the Bologna St. Cecilia was created in connection with the ideology of Oratorio del Divin Amore and its content programme was crystallized in the circle of the influence of Christian Neoplatonism, which played an important part in the birth of the first pre-reformational Catholic renovatio.
The present article could be written thanks to the scholarship granted to me by the University of Bologna in the year 1965/66. I wish to express here my sincere gratitude to the Rector of Bologna University Professor Felice Battaglia as well as to the Italian librarians and archivists who supplied me with advice and help. I am also indebted to Miss Mary Filippi, Mrs. Strelley Waligórska and Miss Paulina Ratkowska for the English translation.

The role of the Pucci in the commission of the picture should not be limited to their mediation with the artist. It seems quite probable they bore to some extent the expenses of the commission, which would become in part their gift to the holy woman. Perhaps, such is the reason for Vasari's mention about the commission of the work by Cardinal Pucci personally (G. Vasari, Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architetti, ed. G. Milanesi, 1906, IV, p. 349, and III, p. 545). In a similar way an anonymous author, active in the 1st half of the XVIIth century, a personal acquaintance of Elena, wrote in her biography (cap. 21) “Messer Antonio Pucci . . . fece ancor a Roma depinger la ancona da Rafael da Urbino” (quoted after G. P. Melloni, Atti o memorie degli uomini illustri in sanità, nati o morti in Bologna, III, Bologna, 1780, pp. 332—33, note 15. The original copy of this biography available to me, preserved in the Biblioteca Comunale di Archiginnasio at Bologna, is unfortunately incomplete, its chapter 21 is lacking [Gozz. 292, fol. 19—57]. This biography is regarded as one of the oldest written sources, connected with Elena, cf. Acta Sanctorum, VI, 23 Sept., Antwerp, 1757, pp. 653 ff., as well as Super confirmatione cultus . . . beatae Helenae ab Oleo, Bologna, 1827, p. 9).

The commission of the picture was ascribed to Antonio Pucci also by later documents from Archivio Pucci in Florence (F. 7, N. 29) published by O. Pucci, “La Santa Cecilia di Raffaello d’Urbino”, Rivista Fiorentina, I, June 1908, pp. 6 f.


4 The biography of Elena, referred to above, relates of personal contacts between Canon Pucci (a Bishop since 1518) and Elena Duglioli, who e. g. in the year 1513 extended hospitality to the Canon during his stay at Bologna (fol. 32 v).

5 For the Pope's visit in Florence and Bologna see: L. Pastor, Storia dei Papi dalla fine del Medio Evo, IV/I, Rome, 1908, pp. 84—90, for that of Raphael: V. Golzio, Raffaello nei documenti, nelle testimonianze dei contemporanei e nella letteratura del suo secolo, 1936, p. 36 and pp. 40 f.

6 The history of the construction of the chapel should be discussed here more circumstantially since, even if indirectly, it may throw some new light on the date of our picture. The idea of erecting the chapel was born in Elena's mind most probably only after receiving the relics of St. Cecilia, offered her by Bishop Francesco Alidosi, who since 1506 was Cardinal of St. Cecilia and since 1508 the Pope's legate at Bologna. This gift was a particle of the relics of this Saint, sent by Julius II to Henry VIII of England (cf. G. P. Melloni, Atti o memorie, III, p. 346). This event might take place in 1510, when the Golden Rose was sent to the King (cf. L. Pastor, op. cit., III, 1912, p. 620). On the other hand, it is known that in the early 1510 Cardinal Alidosi frequented the house of Elena, where he consecrated masses, and that several times he offered her remarkable sums for devotional purpose (G. Bolognini, Diario delle cose di Bologna . . . dal 1494 fino al 1513, Bibl. di Archiginnasio, Ms. B. 1108, pp. 202—203). A precise data of the beginning of architectural works at the chapel is unknown. It is for the year 1510 that a notice from Archivio Pucci speaks (O. Pucci, op. cit., p. 7), as well as the inscription on a commemorative plaque put into the interior wall of the Chapel in 1695 (its text quoted by M. Gualandi, Memorie risguardanti le belle arti, I, Bologna, 1843, p. 51). However, the anonymous biographer of Elena stated that she was inspired to build the chapel in October 1513 (cf. G. P. Melloni, op. cit., pp. 332—33) and the well-known notice of another anonymous author, published by Malaguzzi-Valeri, runs as follows: “L’anno 1514 la Beata Elena . . . fece edificare la Capella di S. Cecilia et fece fare da Raffaello d’Urbino il quadro di S. Cecilia” (F. Malaguzzi-Valeri, “Nuovi documenti. La Santa Cecilia di Raffaello”, Archivio storico dell’arte, VII, 1894, p. 367. The notice is said to be preserved in Archivio di Stato di Bologna, Demaniale Lateranensi di San Giovanni in Monte, 145/1480, but I could not find it there). The first mention about the building already finished may be found only as late as 1516 in a diploma of 9 September, certifying the vesting with a locality Varignana of the chapel “quam prefacta Domina Elena iam est annus fundavit et de novo erexit ac fundari, erigi et
construi fecit” (Archivio di Stato di Bologna, Lateranensi di San Giovanni in Monte, Instrumenti, 33/1373, no. 12, fol. 2v, published erroneously by G. P. Melloni, op. cit., pp. 338–39 and correctly by F. Malaguzzi-Valeri, op. cit., p. 368). This information is attested also by the anonymous biographer of Elena: “Nel mese d’Agosto del 1515 finita già la bella Cecilia... la magnanima Vergine... aveva comprato molte... cose... per far paramenti ed altri ornati ecclesiastici” (G. P. Melloni, op. cit., p. 339). The work at the chapel seems to last for several months since in Elena’s testament, written on 15 April 1517 we are told: “prefacta testatrix... unam capellam in ecclesia sancti Joannis in Monte... iam est annus ellapsus a fundamentis erexit et errigi, construi et fabricari fecit” (Bibl. di Archiginnasio, Ms. B. 374, fol. 1). The consecration of the chapel and its altar took place only 24 August 1520 (G. P. Melloni, op. cit., p. 346).

7 J. Shearman, “Maniera as an Aesthetic Ideal”, Studies in Western Art, II, 1963, p. 214. The dating of the picture to the years 1513—14 accepted by several scholars is based first of all on Vasari’s mention referring to the nomination of Cardinal Pucci and on archival sources (not wholly credible) cited above, concerning the erection of the chapel, particularly on that, published by Malaguzzi-Valeri.

8 G. Vasari, ed. cit., III, pp. 545 f.

9 For Elena’s particular devotion to St. Cecilia see e. g.: P. Recta, Narrativa della vita e morte della beata Elena Duglioli dall’Oglio... scritta dal suo confessore, Bibl. di Archiginnasio, Ms. Gozz. 292, fols. 3r, 4v, and G. P. Melloni, Atti o memoriae, III, p. 318.


11 The connection of the representation of St. John the Evangelist with the vocation of the church was pointed out by C. Justi, op. cit., cols. 135 f., and O. Fischel, Raphael, Berlin, 1962, p. 183.


14 Renaissance texts concerning this symbolism are quoted by E. Wind, Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance, 1958, p. 123, note 3.

15 P. Recta, op. cit., fols. 4v, 12r. Some authors regarded also St. Mary Magdalene on our picture as a symbol of chastity restored through the penitence (F. A. Gruyer, Les Vierges de Raphaël et l'iconographie de la Vierge, III, 1869, pp. 587 f., and O. Fischel, op. cit., p. 185), or they even extended this interpretation to St. Augustine to recognize the triumph of chastity and virginity as the main subject of the picture (P. A. de Santi, “Santa Cecilia e la musica”, Civiltà Cattolica, LXXII, 1921, p. 328, and L. Réau, Iconographie de l’art chrétien, III/1, 1958, p. 282).

16 P. Recta, op. cit., fol. 6r (see also fols. 3r, 4r and anonymous biography of Elena, op. cit., fols. 22r, 26r, 56v).

17 P. Recta, op. cit., fol. 5r and anonymous biography of Elena, op. cit., fols. 54v, 55r.

18 To a similar conclusion came L. Müllner, “Raffaels ‘Heilige Cäcilia’”, Literatur- und Kunstkritische Studien, Vienna, 1895, pp. 185 f., basing himself on the informations concerning the supernatural origin of the inspiration, received by Elena, which caused the building of the chapel.


22 G. Vasari, ed. cit., IV, p. 349.

23 At a similar conclusion arrived L. Müllner, op. cit., p. 187, as well as O. Fischel, Raphael, 1962, p. 182.


25 “Sanctus Joannes apostolus, non immerto secundum intelligentiam spiritualium aquilae comparatus” (Augustinus, In Joannis Evangelium, XXXVI, 8, ed. Migne, P. L., XXXV, col. 1662, 1686) and “acutissimi visus Aquila est Joannes, qui osculi acie in altissimae divinitatis recessum directa, prae omnibus maxime superioris naturae secreta revelavit” (P. Valeriano, Hieroglyphica, ed. Lugduni, 1595, pp. 181 f.).

27. G. B. Cavalcaselle, J. A. Crowe, Raffaello, la sua vita e le sue opere, III, Florence, 1891, p. 77. On the other hand, Fischel, op. cit., 1962, pp. 183 f., wrongly read on the strip of paper visible from the book between St. Paul and St. John the words CORIN which he tried to connect with the Epistles to the Corinthians. This inscription or rather the hardly discernible lines marking the text are wholly unreadable and the book, on which an eagle — the symbol of St. John the Evangelist — is sitting is to be related rather with the writings of the latter.

28. The attitude of St. Paul lost in meditation, resting his head on his hand, with the eagle on his left may be interpreted as a symbol of “elevatione della mente, nata per la quiete del corpo” (C. Ripa, Iconologia, s. v. “Pensiero”, Padua, 1630, p. 562).


31. Anonymous biography of Elena, op. cit., fol. 51r (cf. also fol. 51v—56v).

32. P. Recta, op. cit., fol. 51r (cf. also fol. 5v).


37. It seems quite probable that here, as Fischel (Raphael, 1962, p. 181) believes, we are faced with the so-called visio (auditio) spiritualis. Cf. also R. Hammerstein, op. cit., p. 54, and texts influenced by the writings of St. Augustine, P. L., XL, cols. 751, 796, 997, 1028.


40. Ancient and Mediaeval trends towards the connecting of Music with Youth are discussed by G. Bandmann, Melancholie und Musik, pp. 130 f., who listed the bibliography of the problem.

41. Musical instruments, held by angels are shown, however, on the engraving by Marc-Antonio Raimondi (Bartsch 116) representing, as Vasari attested (ed. cit., V, p. 413), the picture by Raphael. Nevertheless, this engraving differs from the Raphael's work in so many important details that it was often regarded as reproducing primary designs of the painter (cf. e. g. J. Shearman, Maniera, p. 214). In the light of our knowledge of Raimondi's method of working (cf. P. Kristeller, “Mare-Antonios Beziehungen zu Raffael”, Jahrbuch der Preußischen Kunstsammlungen, XXVIII, 1907, pp. 219 f., 228, and M. Pittaluga, L'incisione italiana nel Cinquecento, 1928, pp. 144, 197) it seems quite reasonable to assume that it might be executed even after the completion of the picture by Raphael as its liberal paraphrase (cf. W. E. Suida, Raphael, 1948, p. 26, and A. Petrucci, Panorama della incisione italiana, 1964, pp. 22 f.).


Instrument is here represented as if reflected in the mirror, according to exigences of the composition (W. Gurlitt, op. cit., p. 87).

Breviarium Romanum, 22 November. See also H. Quentin, Cécile, cols. 2721 f.; P. A. de Santi, Santa Cecilia, p. 327, and H. Aurenhammer, Lexikon, p. 427.


Augustinus, Enarratio in Psalmum 56, P. L., XXXVI, col. 671; see also P. A. de Santi, op. cit., p. 320.


See H. Hickmann, in Die Musik in Geschichte, X, cols. 263 ff.

See Philo, De somniis, I, 35—37. Cf. also Z. Ameisenowa, “Some neglected representations of the Harmony of the Universe”, Essays in honor of Hans Tietze, 1958, pp. 350 f., 353 f., 357 f. Christian opinions on this subject are discussed by Spitzer, Classical and Christian Ideas, pp. 427, 442 and 456. This author regards the painting of Raphael as a reflex of the ideas concerning the identity of the music with the Divine Grace (pp. 451 f.).


The oldest representations of this type (to begin with an anonymous Netherlandish drawing of ca 1400) were published by A. P. de Mirimonde, “La musique dans les œuvres de l’École des anciens Pays-Bas au Louvre”, La Revue du Louvre, XIII, 1963, pp. 20 f. and figs. 1—3. See also P. A. de Santi, Santa Cecilia, p. 326; R. Hammerstein, op. cit., p. 279, and H. Aurenhammer, Lexikon, pp. 429 f.

Musicians playing at the wedding of St. Cecilia according to the text of the legend held real musical instruments on the frescoes of the beginning of the XVth century in the sacristy of Sta Maria del Carmine in Florence (cf. G. Kaftal, Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting, cols. 249 ff., fig. 285). Instead, on the painting by Riccardo Quartararo of ca 1500 in the Palermo Cathedral an angel playing the lute at the Saint’s feet symbolizes the celestial music (cf. G. Kaftal, Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting, 1965, cols. 275 ff., fig. 301). Perhaps, the only Italian representation of St. Cecilia with a musical instrument antecedent to Raphael’s picture is the painting of Signorelli’s School executed at the beginning of the 16th century, now in the Pinacotheca at Città di Castello. Here Christ crowns St. Cecilia who is holding the organ (see H. Aurenhammer, op. cit., p. 430).

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See Cicero, De republica, VI, 18, and Boethius, De musica, I, 1; Augustinus, Epistola 166, 13, and Epistola 55, 33 (P. L., LXIII, coll. 1168; XXXIII, coll. 726, and coll. 221).

the instrumental terrestrial one is represented and that between these two kinds of music no connection exists except for the glance of the Saint, directed upward: "Die Musik der Menschen hat keinen Teil an der der Engel". Cf. also W. Gurlitt, Die Musik in Raffaels Caecilia, p. 97, and L. Réau, Iconographie, III/I, p. 282.

61 W. Gurlitt, op. cit., p. 87.
63 Cf. similar opinion by R. Hammerstein, Die Musik der Engel, pp. 256 ff.
64 Plato, Leges, 669 D—E. See also G. Bandmann, op. cit., p. 128.
65 R. Hammerstein, op. cit., who quoted opinions of particular Fathers.
67 See also C. Justi, Raphaels heilige Cacilia, col. 139; A. Chastel, Art et Humanisme à Florence, p. 492; R. Hammerstein, op. cit., p. 257.
69 Anonymous biography of Elena, op. cit., fol. 52v.
73 Cf. C. Ripa, s. v. "Fede cattolica", ed. cit., pp. 242 ff., "La mano che tiene sopra il petto, mostra, che dentro nel cuore si riposa la vera et viva fede".
78 This passage of the Epistle to the Corinthians as related with St. Paul on the Raphael's picture was quoted by C. Justi, Raphaels heilige Cacilia, col. 138; P. A. de Santi, op. cit., p. 332; L. Spitzer, Classical and Christian Ideas, p. 452, and O. Fischel, op. cit., p. 183.
79 The mediation of St. Mary Magdalene between the beholder and the scene shown in the picture was mentioned by G. Franciosi, Cecilia Raffalessca, p. 41; E. Müntz, Raphaël, 1886, p. 558; C. Justi, op. cit., col. 137; W. Gurlitt, Die Musik in Raffaels Caecilia, p. 87; S. J. Freedberg, Painting of the High Renaissance in Rome and Florence, I, 1961, p. 175.
82 Only if there were seven angels it might be possible as F. X. Kraus and J. Sauer suggested (Geschichte der christlichen Kunst, II, 2, 1908, pp. 512 f.; cf. also G. Bandmann, Melandholie und Musik, pp. 131 f.), to connect them with the representations of the harmony of the spheres, i. e. harmonic music emitted by the spheres of the seven planets. According to classical version of the myth these planets were moved by singing Sirenes or Muses while according to that of mediaeval Christianity by singing angels (cf. e. g. Dante, Purgatorio, XXX, 92—93). For the angels and the harmony of spheres see L. Spitzer, op. cit., p. 423; Ch. de Tolnay, "The Music of the Universe", Journal of the Walters Art Gallery, VI, 1943, pp. 90 ff.; R. Hammerstein, Die Musik der Engel, pp. 118 f., 134 f. and 175 f.
The symbolism of the number 6 was discussed by Philo, De opificio mundi, 13—14, De specialibus legibus, II, 38, Legum allegoriae, I, 2—3; Augustinus, De genesi ad litteram, IV, 2, De civitate Dei, XI, 30 (P. L., XXXIV, cols. 296—99, XLI, cols. 343 f.); Boethius, De Arithmetica, I, 19—20 (P. L., LXIII, cols. 1597—99), and L. Pacioli, Summa de arithmetica, geometria, proportioni e proportionalità, Venice, 1494, fols. 2v and 3rv. The latter ranks it together with the number 5 to the particular cathegory of numeri circulari i.e. the numbers of which all might end with the number of base (6² = 36, 6³ = 216, 6⁴ = 1296) “numero circulare semper in lui ritorna, et semper idem ipse est, et nunquam deficit ad instar ipsius Dei” (fols. 3rv). Considerations on the symbolism of this very number swell to an ample discourse in the erudite work of F. Giorgi, De harmonia mundi totius cantica tria, Venice, 1525, fols. 35rv and 172vf.

The Pythagorean theory of proportions, expressing the basical music consonances (the octave, the fifth and the fourth) as well as the theory of the three types of proportion the arithmetic (b—a = c—b, i. e. b = \(\frac{a+c}{2}\)), the geometric (a : b = b : c, i. e. b = \(\sqrt{ac}\)) and the “harmonic” one (b—a = \(\frac{2ac}{a+c}\), included in Plato’s Timaios and discussed by Philo, Boethius, Alberti, Pacioli, Ficino, Gafurio, Barbaro, F. Giorgi and many others were explained by R. Wittkower, Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism, 1952, pp. 89—135.

The principle of harmony played a particular role in Italian music of the period under discussion as a result of the development of a new simultaneous conception of music, so-called harmonic simultaneity (see E. E. Lowinsky, Music in the Culture of the Renaissance, pp. 529—35 and 531). In representing the choir of angels singing simultaneously from three sheets of music (which themself might symbolize music harmony cf. C. Ripa, s. v. “Musica”, ed. cit., p. 502: “Il libro di musica mostra la regola vera da far participar altrui l’armonie in quel modo che si puo per mezo de gl’occhi”) Raphael might mean the same simultaneous trivocal harmonic chant as defined by Gafurio “tres soni, harmonica mediate dispositi et simul sonantes, dulcissimum concen tum atque ipsam armoniam efficient” (De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum, Milan, 1518, see R. Wittkower, op. cit., pp. 108 f.

Vasari, ed. cit., IV, p. 349. That Vasari knew the principle of music harmony his definition of another harmony furnished evidence, namely, the coloristic one. Basing himself evidently on formulations elaborated by the theory of Music he referred to this harmony ("unione dei colori") as to "una discordanza di colori diversi accordati insieme" and "una discordanza accordatissima" (see J. Shearman, Maniera, p. 203).


"Est autem apud Platonicos interpretes divina musica duplex, alteram profecto in aeterna Dei mente consistere arbitrantur, alteram vero in coelorum ordine, ac motibus, qua mirabilem quendam coelestes globi orbesque concertum efficient et on the mathematic essence of the Idea of Music "Figurae autem numerique partium naturalium ... cum idaeis maximam habent in mente mundi regina connexionem" (M. Ficino, ed. cit., pp. 614 and 555).


Cf. "Quoniam vero coelum est harmonica ratione compositum, moveturque harmonice, et harmonics motibus atque sonis efficit omnia, merito per harmoniam solam non solum homines, sed inferiora haec omnia pro viribus ad capienda coelestia praeparantur" (M. Ficino, Opera, p. 564).

"Veram Plato musicam nihil esse aliud quam animi consonantiam arbitratur" (Supplementum Ficinianum ed. P. O. Kristeller, 1937, I, p. 51). For the mathematical basis of the harmony of sound in
Ficino’s thought see A. Chastel, Marsile Ficin, pp. 100 and 105, and P. O. Kristeller, Studies in Renaissance Thought, p. 466.
95 “Non ignoras concentus per numeros proportionesque suas, vim habere mirabilem ad spiritum et animum et corpus sistendum, movendum et afficiendum” (M. Ficino, Opera, p. 555; cf. also p. 614). See also P. O. Kristeller, Il pensiero di Ficino, p. 332, and the same Studies in Renaissance Thought, p. 464. Making the influence of the planets upon the man easier Music plays an important role in Ficino’s system of natural magic. In the sevengrade hierarchy of the things, distinguished by him, of which harmonies are said to win the influence of a particular planets, Music holds the central position being the counterpart of the Sun-Apollo (see M. Ficino, Opera, pp. 562, 564, and L. Thordike, A History of Magic and Experimental Science, IV, 1934, p. 565; A. Chastel, Marsile Ficin, pp. 71—79; D. P. Walker, “Orpheus the Theologian and Renaissance Platonists”, Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, XVI, 1953, pp. 100—102, and first of all The same, Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella, 1958, pp. 3—24).
96 M. Ficino, Opera, e. g., p. 631. See also E. Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, 1939, pp. 141 f.
98 “Pulchritudo corporis non in umbra materiae, sed in luce et gratia formae, non in tenebrosa mole, sed in lucida quadam proportione, non in pigro ineptaque ponderie, sed in convenienti numero et mensura, consistit. Lucem vero, ipsam gratiam, proportionem, numerum, et mensuram, cogitatiionem, aspectu, auditu, duntaxat attingimus, Hucusque igitur se extendit verus veri amantis affectus” and “Pulchritudo vero gratia quaedam est quae ut plurimum in concinnitate plurium maxime nascitur” (M. Ficino, Opera, pp. 631 f. and 1322; cf. also P. O. Kristeller, Il pensiero di Ficino, pp. 285, 329 [Engl. ed., pp. 265, 305], and A. Chastel, Marsile Ficin, p. 87). The beauty of proportions and of harmony in the world accessible to our senses is thus conceived by Ficino as a reflex of transcendent beauty, inhering in God’s perfect unity (cf. note 98). In such a way this author attempted the reconciliation of “phenomenalistic” Pythagorean apprehension of beauty, proclaimed in the Renaissance period in the most impressive way by Alberti, with Neoplatonic transcendent concepts of beauty, as expressed by Plotin (a similar opinion was shared by G. Pico della Mirandola, Commento sopra una Canzone da Amore composta da Girolamo Benivieni, II, 6—8, ed. Opera, Basel, 1601, I, pp. 301 f.). Ficino’s views of this matter were however, by no means steady as his own criticism of beauty of proportions proved, included in his commentaries upon Symposium by Plato and Enneads by Plotin (M. Ficino, Opera, pp. 1335, 1574, cf. also Panofsky’s, perhaps slightly unilateral, presentation of Ficino’s theory of beauty “Idea”, 1924, pp. 28—30, 122—26, and Studies in Iconology, p. 133) where he aimed above all to show the transcendent origin of beauty (see P. O. Kristeller, Il pensiero di Ficino, p. 285, Engl. ed., p. 265).
99 Ficino’s theory of Love was discussed by E. Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, pp. 141—45, and A. Chastel, Marsile Ficin, pp. 121—28.
102 M. Ficino, Opera, pp. 1361 ff. See also E. Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, p. 140, and A. Chastel, Marsile Ficin, pp. 127—35.
An attempt was made toward the identification of the church with one of two churches in the close neighbourhood of Bologna either with S. Giovanni in Monte for which the picture was commissioned at Raphael (G. B. Cavalcaselle, J. A. Crowe, Raffaello, III, p. 78) or S. Maria del Monte, which did not preserve up to the present days (F. Filippini, “Raffaello a Bologna”, Cronache d’Arte, II, 5, 1925, p. 30).

See R. Hammerstein, Die Musik der Engel, p. 250, and also W. Gurlitt, Die Musik in Raffaels Caecilia, p. 95, and L. Spitzer, Classical and Christian Ideas, p. 444 f.

“Due sono le generazioni della Musica, l’una è grave et constante, l’altra molle et lasciva. Quella è utile a chi l’usa, questa è dannosa ... Altri amano la prima generazione di Musica, altri la generazione seconda. Allo Amore de’primi si debbe consentire et concedere quest’uoni, che essi amano, allo Appetito degli altri si debbe resistere, perché lo Amore di coloro è celeste, et degli Altri vulgare” (M. Ficino, Sopra lo amore, III, 3, ed. cit., pp. 57 f.).

Neoplatonic hierarchies found its pictorial reflection also in other Italian Renaissance works of art as the designs for the Tomb of Julius II and the Tombs of Medicis by Michelangelo (E. Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, pp. 190—212). A similar music hierarchy, namely, the music impinging only on senses, the sacral one and the divine music of the Universe, was represented by Carpaccio in Scuola di San Giorgio dei Schiavoni (E. E. Lowinsky, “The Music in ‘St. Jerome’s Study’“, The Art Bulletin, XL1, 1959, pp. 298—301).

M. Ficino, Opera, pp. 825 f. See also A. Chastel, Marsile Ficin, pp. 103 f.

For another of Puccis, Giannozzo — a brother of already known to us Lorenzo — Botticelli painted in 1483 four pictures on the themes from Boccaccio; one of the members of the family — Francesco Pucci (1462—1512), a humanist, who lived since 1485 at Naples, an author of Latin orations and translator from Greek, was a pupil of Angelo Poliziano and corresponded with Ficino (M. Ficino, Opera, pp. 898 f.; A. Poliziano, Opera, Lyons, 1550, I, pp. 164—172; M. Pocciantius, Catalogus scriptorum florentinorum, Florence, 1389, p. 65; G. Negri, Istoria degli scrittori fiorentini, Ferrara, 1722, p. 215; M. Santoro, Uno scolaro del Poliziano a Napoli. Francesco Pucci, 1948, and M. E. Cosenza, Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary of the Italian Humanists, 1962, IV, pp. 2968 f., V, pp. 1486 f.— where he is confounded with his namesake about 8oty years younger).


L. Dolce, Dialogo della Pittura intitolato l’Arteino, Venice, 1557, p. 42, who quoted the “quadro della santa Cacilia dell’organo, che è in Bologna nella chiesa di san Giovanni in Monte” as an example of the “inventioni mirabili” of Raphael.

Celio Calcagnini to Jacob Ziegler in 1519 (see V. Golzio, Raffaello, p. 282).

Even in Raphael's own works; in the artistic production of this painter St. Cecilia appeared for the first time in 1504 among the saints assisting the Virgin on the altar painting executed for St. Anthony’s Church at Perugia, now preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and, subsequently, in a cycle of frescoes painted after his designs in the time between 1513—20 in the chapel at Leo’s X villa La Magliana near Rome, which were destroyed and are known to us only from the engravings by Marcantonio Raimondi (see V. Golzio, op. cit., pp. 200, 216, 348; C. Justi, Raphaels heilige Cacilia, col. 132; O. Fischel, Raphael, pp. 32 f.; H. Aurenhammer, Lexikon, pp. 433 f.).


These frescoes, preserved only in fragments, are known to us from the 17th century drawings, see J. Wilpert, Die römischen Mosaiken und Malereien der kirchlichen Bauten vom 4. bis 13. Jahrhundert, 1916, II, 2, pp. 985 ff., figs. 474 and 477, and IV, pl. 238 (2).
The Virgin Mary in the scene of the Acknowledgement of Jesus to be Son of God by Aphrodosius (J. Wilpert, op. cit., I, pp. 489 ff., and III, pl. 68). A similar, even if slightly finer arranging of hair may be seen on the 6th century mosaic with the representation of St. Cecilia in San Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna, to which Justi (op. cit., col. 134) compares the clothes of our Saint, but it is not sure whether Raphael could have seen it.


For the bibliography concerning Raphael’s introducing into arcana of theory of architecture Fra Giovanni Giocondo was responsible, the man, who was the editor of the first illustrated Vitruvius’ treatise (Venice, 1511) and who was helping the artist at his works at St. Peter’s. In a letter of 1 July 1514 to one of his relatives Raphael wrote about him: “(Papa) mi ha dato un Compagnio Frate doctissimo . . . ch’è uomo di gran riputazione sapientissimo acciò d’io possa imparare, se ha alcun bello secreto in architettura, acciò io diventa perfettissimo in quest’arte, ha nome fra Giocondo” (see V. Golzio, Raffaello nei documenti, p. 32).

Ed. Tutte l’opere d’architettura, Venice, 1619, fol. 64v. For Raphael’s introducing into arcana of theory of architecture Fra Giovanni Giocondo was responsible, the man, who was the editor of the first illustrated Vitruvius’ treatise (Venice, 1511) and who was helping the artist at his works at St. Peter’s. In a letter of 1 July 1514 to one of his relatives Raphael wrote about him: “(Papa) mi ha dato un Com(pagn)o Frate doctissimo . . . ch’è uomo di gran riputazione sapientissimo acciò d’io possa imparare, se ha alcun bello secreto in architettura, acciò io diventa perfettissimo in quest’arte, ha nome fra Giocondo” (see V. Golzio, Raffaello nei documenti, p. 32).


125 For musical interests of Leo X and the role of music at his Court see L. Pastor, Storia dei Papi, IV, I, pp. 130, 325, 334, 333 and 377 ff.; A. Pirro, op. cit., pp. 1—16, and W. Gurlitt, Die Musik in Raffaels Caecilia, p. 86.


131 In spite of the remarkable artistic value of this picture, its signature and evidence traceable back to the 16th century (see V. Golzio, Raffaello, pp. 170 and 217), Raphael’s authorship is contested by some scholars who attempt to ascribe it to Raphael’s pupils (e.g. O. Fischel, Raphael, p. 93, and F. Hartt, “A Drawing of the Fornarina as the Madonna”, in Essays in Honor of Walter Friedlaender, 1965, pp. 90 f.). A solution of this problem would overstep the bounds of the present article, however, it
seems useful to recall here a convincing opinion of J. Shearman who connects the picture with Raphael personally ("Le seizième siècle européen", The Burlington Magazine, Febr. 1966, p. 63), as well as to notice that even those of the scholars, who denied Raphael's authorship considered the picture to be a portrait of Fornarina, they pointed to the resemblance of the represented model to St. Mary Magdalen on the Bologna picture and to other women on Raphael's pictures, particularly the Donna Velata in Galleria Pitti and Sixtine Madonna in Dresden (e. g. O. Fischel, op. cit., pp. 92 f., 184 f.; F. Hartt, A Drawing of the Fornarina, p. 91, and S. J. Freedberg, op. cit., p. 175).

If the assumption is right that the bracelet inscribed with the artist's name on the left arm of the represented girl symbolizes the ties of love bounding her and Raphael, it may be also acceptable that the enigmatic armband on St. Cecilia left arm, foreign to the iconographic tradition and without any costiumological justification, being executed of the same material as the Saint's sacral dalmatic, symbolizes according to the text of the legend mystical ties bounding St. Cecilia "col suo superno sposo".

See A. Zazzaretta, "I sonetti di Raffaello", L'Arte, XXXII, 1929, pp. 85 f.; V. Golzio, op. cit., pp. 31 f., 120, 217 and 264. Vasari's informations on love in Raphael's life induce us to think that during his stay in Rome the artist was constant in love for only one woman (ed. cit., IV, pp. 354 f., 365 f., 380 ff.).


Such are contents of one of Florentine sacra representatione (L. Tonelli, op. cit., p. 238). St. Augustine's staring glance at the beautiful juvenile face of St. John the Evangelist may also be interpreted as an example of human love leading to divine one (cf. M. Ficino, Sopra lo amore, VI, 14, ed. cit., pp. 182 f.).


G. B. Melloni, Atti o memorie degli uomini illustri in santità, III, pp. 437—39. These Elena's formulations, not without influence of Neoplatonic ideas assume a particular expression when considered against Averroism spreading from the Bologna University where since 1512 worked Pietro Pomponazzi. This author of a treatise De Immortalitate animae, published in 1516, proclaimed the criticism of Neoplatonic theory on the immortality of souls, of the same theory, which just in the time under discussion, in 1513, was ranked by the 5th Lateran Council among the dogmas of the Church (see E. Cassirer, P. O. Kristeller and J. H. Randall, The Renaissance Philosophy of Man, 1948, pp. 8—20, 257—79, and H. Jedin, Kleine Konziliengeschichte, 1959, pp. 78 f.). The controversy with the Averroists about the immortality of individual human souls explains why the contemporaries of the artist saw in St. Cecilia's extase on the Bologna picture an image of the very soul of the Saint. Vasari writes "trema la carne, vedesi lo spirito" and quotes the words of an anonymous
poet "Pingant sola alii, referantque coloribus ora / Coeciliae os Raphael atque animum explicuit" (ed. cit., IV, p. 350).


A. Cistellini, op. cit., p. 282.

Photos: 1 and 6 Anderson, Rome, 3 and 4 from J. Wilpert. Die römischen Malereien und Mosaiken der kirchlichen Bauten etc. 5 from R. Wittkower. Architectural principles in the Age of Humanisme, 1952.

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