It is clear that Vasari dismisses the idea that northern artists should exhibit any pride in their work as belonging to northern Europe artistic tradition, and should instead strive to ensure their work isn’t recognisable as ‘Flemish at all, but Italian. This reflects the ‘highly personal projection of stylistic and social ideals’[[1]](#footnote-1) that Vasari’s ‘Lives’ is a product of; Vasari’s view of the more ‘Italian’ a work of art, the higher its artistic value, derives from the sixteenth century Italian idea that ‘artists of other regions and schools who failed to study the lessons of Central Italy and antiquity, literally to draw from them, lacked the ability to understand or express the true profundity of art through diesegno’.[[2]](#footnote-2) The disapproval exerted on northern artists for failing to follow the intellectual process of diesegno can be clearly seen through Durer’s letters from Venice; ‘I have many good friends among the Italians who warn me not to eat and drink with their painters, for many of them are my enemies and copy my work in churches and wherever they can find it; afterwards they criticise it and claim that it is not done in the antique style and say it is no good’

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)