

The Compagnia di San Giovanni Battista commonly called 'lo Scalzo', a Florentine flagellant confraternity, is best known today for the fresco cycle of the life of its patron saint in the courtyard (the 'Chiostro dello Scalzo') that led to the confraternity's meeting rooms. Andrea del Sarto and Franciabigio painted the cycle in monochrome between about 1508 and 1526. Some have argued that Andrea was a member of this confraternity, a notion probably inspired by Giorgio Vasari's claim in the second edition of his *Vite* that the Scalzo buried Andrea in its sepulchre at the SS. Annunziata.¹ Andrea's burial by the Compagnia dello Scalzo is generally accepted in the literature², but previously unpublished documents, discussed below, suggest that Andrea could not have been buried in the Scalzo's sepulchre. Nevertheless, it can now be conclusively demonstrated that he was a member of the confraternity.

Prior to exploring Andrea's relationship with the Compagnia di San Giovanni Battista dello Scalzo, it is necessary to establish a few details about the confraternity itself. The Scalzo (as the confraternity's name is frequently abbreviated) was founded in 1376 in the church of San Jacopo in Campo Corbolini (located in present day via Faenza).³ It was eventually suppressed in 1785 by Pietro Leopoldo, together with most other Florentine confraternities.⁴

Giuseppe Richa suggests that the confraternity transferred from San Jacopo in Campo Corbolini to a small house in the garden of the Celestine officiated church of San Pietro del Murrone in via San Gallo in about 1390.⁵ He does not specify on what source he bases this date, but I see no reason to doubt him. Maestro Agnolo Nuti della Sambuca, *medico*, left a bequest to the *Societas Sancti Johannis Baptiste qui congregatur in ecclesia S. Petri del Murrone* in his testament dated January 1400 (st. m. 1401). This document is a crucial piece of evidence for placing the confraternity on the property of San Pietro del Murrone by 1401, but the testament's connection with the confraternity has been obscured in recent decades due to variations in the copy that is usually consulted in the historical literature. The Scalzo's administrative books contain both full copies and extracts of the testament.⁶ However the copy that scholars usually cite is held in the books of the *laudese* confraternity of San Zanobi, which also benefited from the testament.⁷ In that copy, though, the confraternity dedicated to S. John the Baptist and meeting at San Pietro del Murrone, is identified as *laudese*, while the Compagnia di San Giovanni Battista detto lo Scalzo was a *disciplinati* confraternity. A document recording indulgences that Bartolomeo Oleari, the Archbishop of Florence, conceded to the confraternity for the principal feasts of the Virgin and the feasts of the Apostles, San Giovanni Battista and San Jacopo, in July 1386, while it was still at San Jacopo in Campo Corbolini, already refers to the confraternity as a *societas disciplinatum*.⁸ It was probably a *disciplinati* confraternity from its inception. It is unlikely that two confraternities dedicated to the same saint would have been meeting in the same church during the same period. Using the San Zanobi version as a source, John Henderson identifies the *laudese* group in his list of confraternities as distinct from the confraternity of the Scalzo, but one that was also dedicated to S. John the Baptist, and meeting at San Pietro del Murrone.⁹ Blake Wilson questions the designation of *laudese* for the Compagnia di San Giovanni that Henderson identified through the San Zanobi document, suggesting rather that it "was one of the four primary Florentine Bianchi companies spawned by a great flagellant procession in 1399."¹⁰ These groups, while not *laudese*, did sing penitential lauds. If, however, the group in Agnolo Nuti's testament can be identified as the Compagnia di San Giovanni Battista eventually designated *dello Scalzo*, it cannot be one of the Bianchi group, the origin of which it preceded by about fifteen years.

Agnolo Nuti's testaments still survive amongst the *Notarile Antecosimiano*, consisting of two wills and one codicil.¹¹ The first testament, dated January 27th 1400 (st. m. 1401), describes the confraternity as: *Societas Sancti Johannis Baptiste qui congregatur in ecclesia S. Petri del Murrone de Florentia*.¹² However, the second testament, dated January 28th 1400 (st. m. 1401), refers to it as *Societas Laudum* (emphasis mine) *Sancti Johannis Baptiste que congregatur in ecclesia Sancti Petri del Murrone de Florentia*.¹³ On the second occurrence in the second testament of the confraternity being described as the *Societas Laudum Sancti Johannis Baptiste ...*, the *Laudum* has been added afterwards (it appears as a marginal addendum). After this the confraternity is consistently referred to as *Societas Laudum*. By contrast, all the other confraternities mentioned in the document are always referred to as *Laudum* confraternities. It is conceivable that the notary made a mistake.¹⁴ He made several corrections in this paragraph (fig. 1). At the end of the seventh line there is an above-line insert of *Marie* between *beate* and *virginis*. At the beginning of the following line *Marie* has been struck out. A large section of text inserted in the margin is indicated as belonging toward the end of the fifth line of the paragraph.

The connection of the testament with the Compagnia dello Scalzo is nevertheless secure as the Scalzo both claimed the benefits and undertook the obligations of the contract. In the testament dated January 28th, the *Societas Sancti Johannis Baptiste qui congregatur in ecclesia S. Petri del Murrone* was to obtain half of a farm that Agnolo Nuti had received from his wife in dowry. The other half was to be left to the Compagnia delle Laude di Santa Maria d'Orto San Michele. However, in the codicil of February 3rd Agnolo Nuti left the entire farm to the Compagnia di San Giovanni Battista. In return the confraternity was obliged to pay eight gold Florins every year in perpetuity to the Compagnia delle Laude della Beata Vergine Maria that met in the cathedral of Santa Reparata,

- ⁷² SS. Annunziata: ASF, Corp. Relig. Sopp. dal Gov. Francese, 119/34, Libro di Partiti, 1538-1550, November 3rd, 1549, fol. 173: "El Reverendo padre priore propose alli presenti del convento numero dieci come molte volte la compagnia de S. Giovanni alias lo Scalzo desiderava d'haver una sepultura nella nostra chiesa et invero ateso che sono huomini da bene e buon numero et anchora si vede che detti hanno divotione nella nostra chiesa hora detti pregevano a questa impresa però si propone alle benedecte padre se e' pare che insieme col padre priore sia el padre maestro Zacheria et fra Lactanio a determinare che detta compagnia sia compiaciuta di una sepultura in chiesa che non habbia padrone così si messe.
El partito fu vinto per tucte le fave nere Reverendo padre priore maestro Zacheria, maestro Mauro, frate Angelo, frate Andrea, fra Phema, frate Johanni Baptista, frate Carlo, frate Lactanio et frate Augustino."
Scalzo: ASF, Comp. Relig. Sopp. da Pietro Leopoldo, 1195/13, fol. 83: "Richordo questo di 29 di ottobre 1549 chome se n'è vinto che Antonio di Giovan[n]i Buttasas[s]i e Santti di Michele ischuttore ch'eglino abino alturità di pottere chonvenire cho' f[r]atti de' Servi e chonperane da loro una sepultura la quale ci à[n]no promesa e chosi posino vendere el marmo che noi abiamo e posino rischuoettere a chi volesse fare bene a detta sepultura e vinesi per fave ventticinque nere e dua bianche." SS. Annunziata: ASF, Corp. Relig. Sopp. dal Gov. Francese, 119/58, Libro di Memorie Estratte dai Documenti dell'Archivio, 1560-1746, p. 80: "1549 Sepultura concessa a detta Compagnia nella Tribuna a 174 vedi a Part. D a 7 dopo F a 139."
- ⁷³ Scipione Braccesi was the notary of the contract. An Italian translation of the contract appears at ASF, Comp. Relig. Sopp. da Pietro Leopoldo, 1189/2, Protocollo di Contratti e Testamenti, 1400-1735, fols. 6-7v. The location of the site is described as follows: "et per la detta Compagnia et huomini di essa et loro successori riceventi, et stipulanti el sito pavimento et luogho esistente inanzi et appresso all'Altare Maggiore di detta Chiesa et tanta parte del detto luogho quanto di spatio, e danno all'altro sedimento nel quale, o, vero quali riseggonno e' sacerdoti, o, vero frati quando celebrano la messa Cantata et el sepolchro et lapida di marmo del sepolchro dell Ill[ust]re S[ign]or Marchionne di Mantova, o, vero della famiglia del Tovaglia insino alle scaglioni, o vero gradi per li quali si ascende, et discende di detto luogho, et sul quale spatio et pavimento gli huomini della Compagnia [so]p[ra]detta di consensu di detti frati di già feciono et construxono tre sepulture" Stefano Rosselli also described the precise location of the sepulchre in his *Sepoluario* of 1652. The citation from Rosselli was published by *Andrea Corsini*, *Un ritratto di Antonio Cocchi eseguito da Domenico Tempesti*, in: *Rivista d'arte*, X, 1917-1918, pp. 129-224, p. 163.
- ⁷⁴ ASF, Comp. Relig. Sopp. da Pietro Leopoldo, 1872/2, Libro dei Fratelli Defunti e Uffici per i medesimi, fol. 25v. Published in *Shearman* (n. 2), II, p. 403.
- ⁷⁵ Biblioteca Riccardiana, Moreni 351.
- ⁷⁶ Biblioteca Riccardiana, Moreni 351, fol. 63.
- ⁷⁷ A contract drawn up between the Servites and the Compagnia di San Sebastiano in 1498 places the confraternity's sepulchre in the Chiostrino before the church. Biblioteca Riccardiana, Moreni 351, fol. 81: "Ac etiam ut supra dederunt et concesserunt dictis hominibus et personis unum locum et seu spatium terreni pro una sepultura recipienti fiendum per dictos homines dictae societatis in primo Claustro introitus dicti Conventus versus Plateam et viam publicam" I do not know the location of any other sepulchres that they might have had at SS. Annunziata.
- ⁷⁸ Andrea del Sarto painted at the SS. Annunziata five frescoes for the *Filippo Benizi cycle*, *The Nativity of the Virgin*, *The Journey of the Magi*, all in the Chiostrino dei Voti; a *Head of Christ*, for the chapel of the Annunziata; the *Madonna del Sacco*, in the Chiostrino dei Morti. All of these remain *in situ*. He painted a *Man of Sorrows* for the novices' stairway (today displayed at the Accademia); a *Pietà* for the room of the Servite prior Alessandro Aretino (possibly that today in Vienna); and two frescoes for the chapel in the convent's garden (destroyed). An *Annunciation to the Virgin* originally commissioned from Andrea by Benedetto Celsi in 1528 through Giuliano Scala, to crown an altarpiece, also by Andrea, for the Church of San Domenico, Sarzana, eventually adorned the Scala's chapel in the tribuna of the SS. Annunziata (now Palazzo Pitti). Andrea furthermore produced an *Annunciation* for the Badia di San Godenzo (now Palazzo Pitti), which was under the custody of the Florentine Servites (*Serena Padovani*, *L'Annunciazione di Andrea del Sarto secondo Vasari*. Un restauro rivelatore, in: *Flor. Mitt.*, XLV, 2000, pp. 37-59). Louise Bulman (*Artistic patronage at SS. Annunziata 1440-c.1520*, Ph.D. Thesis, London University 1971, II, pp. 30 and 52 n. 16) claims to have found Andrea del Sarto named in a list of convent *ministeri* at ASF, Corp. Relig. Sopp. dal Gov. Francese, 119/199, c. 352, 1509. My examination of this folio, and several folios around it, located only an *Andrea di Giovanni dipintore*.
- ⁷⁹ Full testament published in *Freedberg* (n. 2), pp. 272-274; ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano, 5963 (ser Antonio Dainelli da Bagnano, 1525-1530), fols. 194-195, fol. 194.
- ⁸⁰ This was specified, for example, in the testament of Niccolò di Raffaello Pericoli, called 'il Tribolo', dated August 28th 1550: ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano 223, fols. 367v-369v (notary: Benedetto di Francesco Albizi), fol. 368.