

*Graham Pollard: A DOCUMENT FOR THE CAREER OF RICCIO*

The conventional date of birth for Andrea Briosco has been accepted as ca. 1470-75, based on references to his having died aged 62 years in 1532.<sup>1</sup> The earliest document for Briosco's career is the date suggested by his continuing Bellano's Roccabonella monument after the death of that artist, 1496-97.<sup>2</sup>

The documents accompanying the new edition of Michelangelo Tanaglia's poem "De Agricultura" include an incidental reference showing that Briosco was resident in Florence in 1480.<sup>3</sup> The document is a deposition of Tanaglia's property, and begins as follows:

*Quartiere Sancto Giovanni, Ghonfalone Chiavi.  
Michelagnolo di messere Ghuglielmo Tanagli, quartiere detto, abita nel popolo di Sancto Bro-  
colo in detto gonfalone. Ebbi di chatasto l'anno 1470 per composizione soldi xii a oro.*

*Sustanzie*

*Una chasa per mio abitare in detto popolo e ghonfalone, confinata a primo via, sechondo Alle-  
xandro di messer Carlo Pandolfini, iij<sup>o</sup> vico, iiij<sup>o</sup> el duca Hercole da Hesti, v<sup>o</sup> Andrea di Brioschi  
detto Riccio...*

It may be noted that Tanaglia's father was *rettore dei giuristi* in Padua in 1419, so that Briosco was staying in Florence near a person with Paduan connections.<sup>4</sup>

If this document can be accepted it would accord with the tradition given by Pomponius Gauricus that Briosco was associated as a terracotta artist with Luca and Andrea della Robbia. As Luca died in 1482 Briosco may have been a direct pupil. Pomponius also says that Briosco began as a goldsmith but turned to sculpture because of the gout. Could the *Andrea vocato El Riccio Orafo* who appears amongst the artists giving opinion on the proper siting of Michelangelo's David in 1503 be a reappearance of Briosco in Florence? The list of artists is headed by Andrea della Robbia.<sup>5</sup>

Although Briosco's journeyings are not documented it is possible from the deposition made by his father in March 1507 to infer that the son was absent from Padua. The father says that he no longer worked in the goldsmith's shop, but is keeping it at rent, and for his son, until he is „not wasting his time“.<sup>6</sup> Rigoni's documents show the father, Ambrogio, to have been aged 76 in 1518, and so have been born in 1442. The son could therefore have been born as early as 1460.

<sup>1</sup> *Leo Planiscig*, Andrea Riccio, Vienna, 1927, p. 474 for the inscription on Riccio's memorial slab.

<sup>2</sup> *Terisio Pignatti*, Gli inizi di Andrea Riccio, in: *Arte Veneta*, VII, 1953, pp. 25-38 (at p. 26 the Roccabonella monument is dated 1498 but *Pignatti* notes that *Marcantonio Michiel* records the date as 1492).

<sup>3</sup> Michelangelo Tanaglia, *De Agricultura*, ed. *A. Roncaglia* and *Tammara de Marinis* (Commissione per i testi di lingua), Bologna, 1953, p. xv. The document is Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Catasto, no. 1022; Campione del Gonfalone Chiavi, 1480, fogli 90-91. I am grateful to my wife for drawing my attention to the document in the new edition of Tanaglia.

<sup>4</sup> Tanaglia, l. c., p. ix.

<sup>5</sup> *Giov. Gaye*, Carteggio inedito d'artisti dei secoli XIV.XV.XVI., Florence, 1839-40, vol. 2, pp. 454-463 (at pp. 455/56, 459). Translated in *R. Klein* and *H. Zerner*, *Italian Art 1500-1600, Sources and Documents*, New Jersey, 1966, pp. 29-44.

<sup>6</sup> *Erice Rigoni*, Testamenti di tre scultori del Cinquecento, in: *Archivio Veneto*, V<sup>a</sup> ser., 22, 1938, pp. 86-106 (at p. 87, note 5: "... In un'altra polizza del marzo 1507... dichiarava: *E non trafego piu in bottega, ma la tegno per redetto e per mio fiolo chel non vada perdando tempo*". This may of course simply be a complaint by the father that the son had changed from being goldsmith to sculptor. Page 86, note 4, records the age of the father).

## RIASSUNTO

L'autore, sulla base di alcuni documenti riguardanti le proprietà di Michelangelo Tanaglia, compilatore del libro „De Agricultura“, prova che Andrea Riccio ha soggiornato a Firenze già nel 1480. Forse a quel tempo il Riccio era a bottega dai della Robbia e poteva anche identificarsi con l'omonimo orafo, che nel 1503 fu nominato perito per la sistemazione del David di Michelangelo.