

Patronage, Liturgy, Art and Devotion under the Tribune of the Santissima Annunziata, Florence, Mid-Fifteenth to Early Seventeenth Centuries

Abstract

The church of the Santissima Annunziata was one of Florence's most significant pilgrimage churches, due to the presence of a purportedly miraculous fresco of the *Nunziata* painted on the counter-façade. The *Nunziata* enjoyed both local and international fame and was appropriated as a dynastic cult by the Medici Grand-ducal family. The focus of this article, however, is the tribune, located at the high altar end of the church. Art historians have scrutinized the progress of the tribune's construction between 1444 and 1471/1480, which was built as part of a program to expand the number of chapels available for lay patronage. Little attention has previously been paid, however, to the early patronage and use of the tribune chapels. This article explores the early history of the patronage of the chapels, the political connections of the families who acquired them, evidence of the liturgy performed there, the art produced for these spaces, and the special devotions that developed in several chapels from the time of the tribune's construction up to the early seventeenth century. The article presents a substantial quantity of new archival material and a reinterpretation of some previously published documents. New insight is offered into the function and use of the space, which embraced the friar's choir, by the friars, patrons and the broader public.

Introduction

The Servite church of the Santissima Annunziata in Florence underwent a major renovation program during the fifteenth century, just as occurred in many other Florentine churches around the same time. Developments in the cult of memory and the laicisation of sacred space were part of the impetus leading to higher demand for private chapels, altars and burial sites.¹ The perceived need for more chapel and burial space at the Santissima Annunziata resulted in the construction of a tribune beyond the high altar with radiating chapels and a centrally placed choir, an oratory, and an atrium in front of the church (the latter allowing space for sepulchres). New chapels were built in the nave and transept, and those which had risen haphazardly along the nave over the previous century were regularised. The new chapels in the nave and transept were all pledged to foundation patrons, many of whom then furnished, embellished and eventually endowed the chapels. Construction of the tribune began in 1444, and by 1446 most of the tribune chapels had appointed patrons. By the time of the tribune's completion in 1476–1479, however, all but one original patron had withdrawn their interest (figs. 1–3).

The tribune was sharply criticised during its construction. In the final years, the Florentine Giovanni Aldobrandini, in a letter of 2 February 1470/1471 to the Marchese of Mantua Ludovico III Gonzaga (1412–1478), the tribune's primary patron, outlined several critical liturgical problems. He argued that the size of the chapels and the area between the chapels and choir were inadequate and would result in overcrowding when mass was being celebrated. The singing of daily mass in the choir would probably interfere with the celebration of mass in the tribune chapels. The choir would be too small for sixty friars. The proximity in which laywomen and friars might be placed would be inappropriate. Furthermore, the closing of exits planned by Michelozzo would result in the friars and the laity having to share narrow spaces between the high altar and the archway giving access between the nave and the tribune.²

The Santissima Annunziata was one of the most important Marian devotional sites in Florence due to the presence on the counterfaçade of the *Madonna della Nunziata*, a purportedly miraculous fresco depicting the Annunciation, after which the church came to be named.³ The *Nunziata*'s popularity transformed the church into a pilgrimage site of international significance, and it is this aspect of the *Nunziata*'s cult that has received the most focus in the literature. Consequently, there has been a tendency to view this church principally as a pilgrimage site, and its users primarily as pilgrims, or to focus on the Medici family's usurpation of the *Nunziata* for a dynastic cult. Less focus has been given to the local community, the lay impact on the church's liturgy (beyond the

* I would like to acknowledge the debt that this study owes to Robert Gaston's article "Liturgy and Patronage in San Lorenzo, Florence, 1350–1650" (Gaston 1987) both for my approach and for the article's genesis. I extend my gratitude to Robert Gaston and Joan Barclay Lloyd for their insightful comments at various stages of this research project, and to the reviewers for their observations and suggestions. My research for this project has benefited from conversations with Odir Dias and Niccolò Capponi, whom I thank for their time. In this year that has been particularly difficult for access to libraries, I also wish to thank Bruce Edelstein, Chrissy Zappella, Nicoletta Baldini, Elizabeth Pilliod, and Eliana Carrara for their help in acquiring bibliographical material.

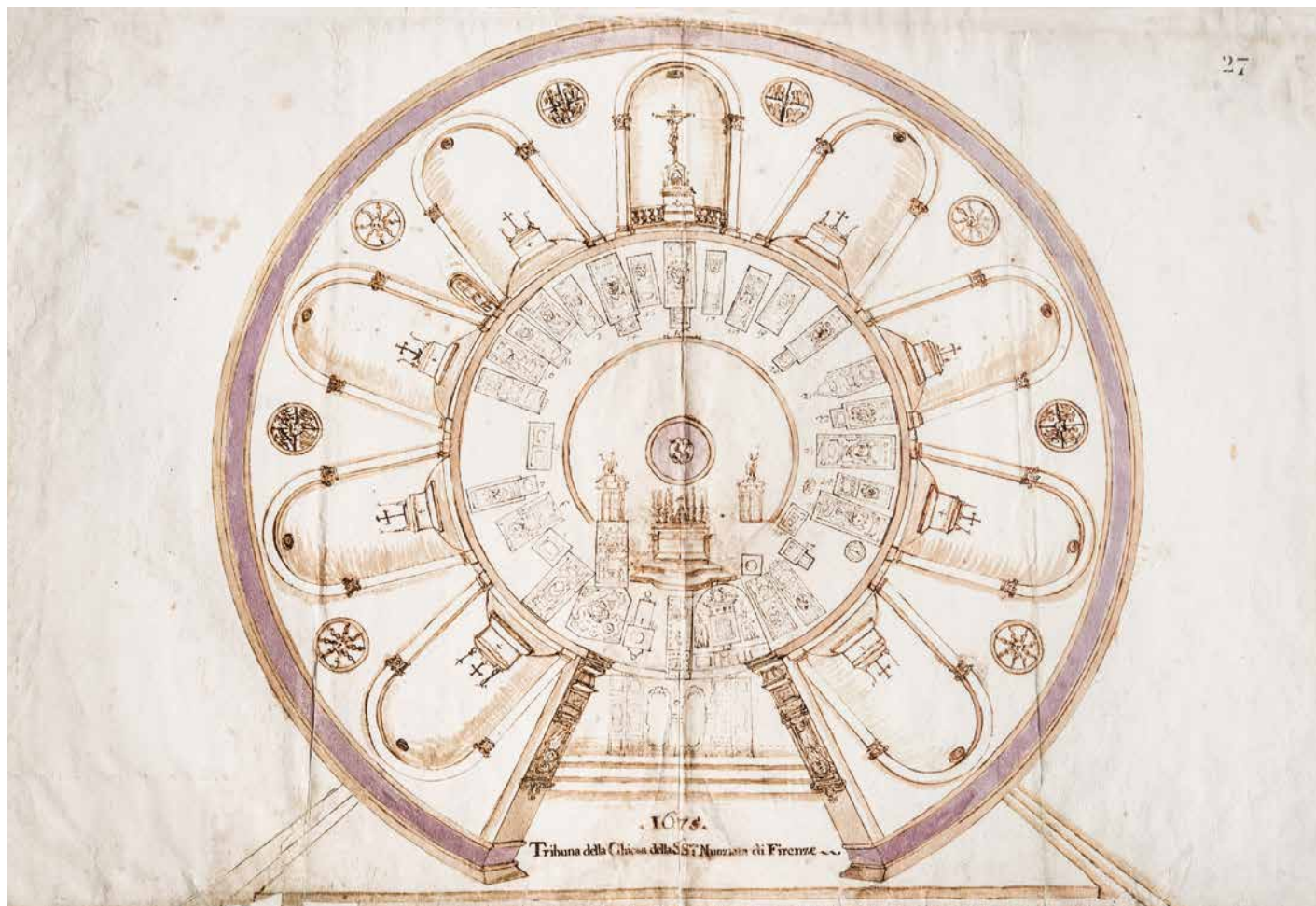
1 Goldthwaite 1993, pp. 122–124.

2 Brown 1978, pp. 329–331, doc. 43; Brown 1981 pp. 98–100. Dates before 25 March will be shown with the Florentine and modern reckoning, for examples, dates between 1 January and 24 March 1471 (modern style), will appear with the year 1470/1471.

3 Abundant literature has been published on this image beginning with Francesco Bocchi's *Opera sopra l'immagine miracolosa della SS. Nunziata di Fiorenza*, Florence 1592, and more recently Holmes 2004, pp. 97–121. Regarding "Madonna" cults in Florence: Trexler 1972, pp. 7–41.

► 1 Florence, Santissima Annunziata, interior view from nave toward tribune (photo Antonio Quattrone)





chapel of the Nunziata), or other thriving devotional cults developed in the church, beyond that of the *Nunziata*. For instance, few scholars today are aware that another Marian cult developed in the tribune's main chapel, that of the *Madonna del Soccorso*.⁴ New material published here indicates that several devotional cults would develop within the more intimate space of the tribune.

The tribune's fabrication is another feature of the church's history that has been amply explored in the literature.⁵ The moment of its creation, however, has been privileged over how it would come to function, or how chapels were allocated; little attention has been given to the space's use and the private patronage of the chapels over the century and a half following the tribune's completion. Furthermore, there are significant lacunae in the literature, repeated errors and inconsistencies, especially for the earliest years of the patronage of the tribune chapels. Some of these issues will be addressed here by reconsidering the known documentation and presenting new archival research.

The current article will focus on the 'life' of the completed tribune space, this leads to a different set of questions and considerations than those usually asked. Rather than interrogating the tribune as an object of architectural design,

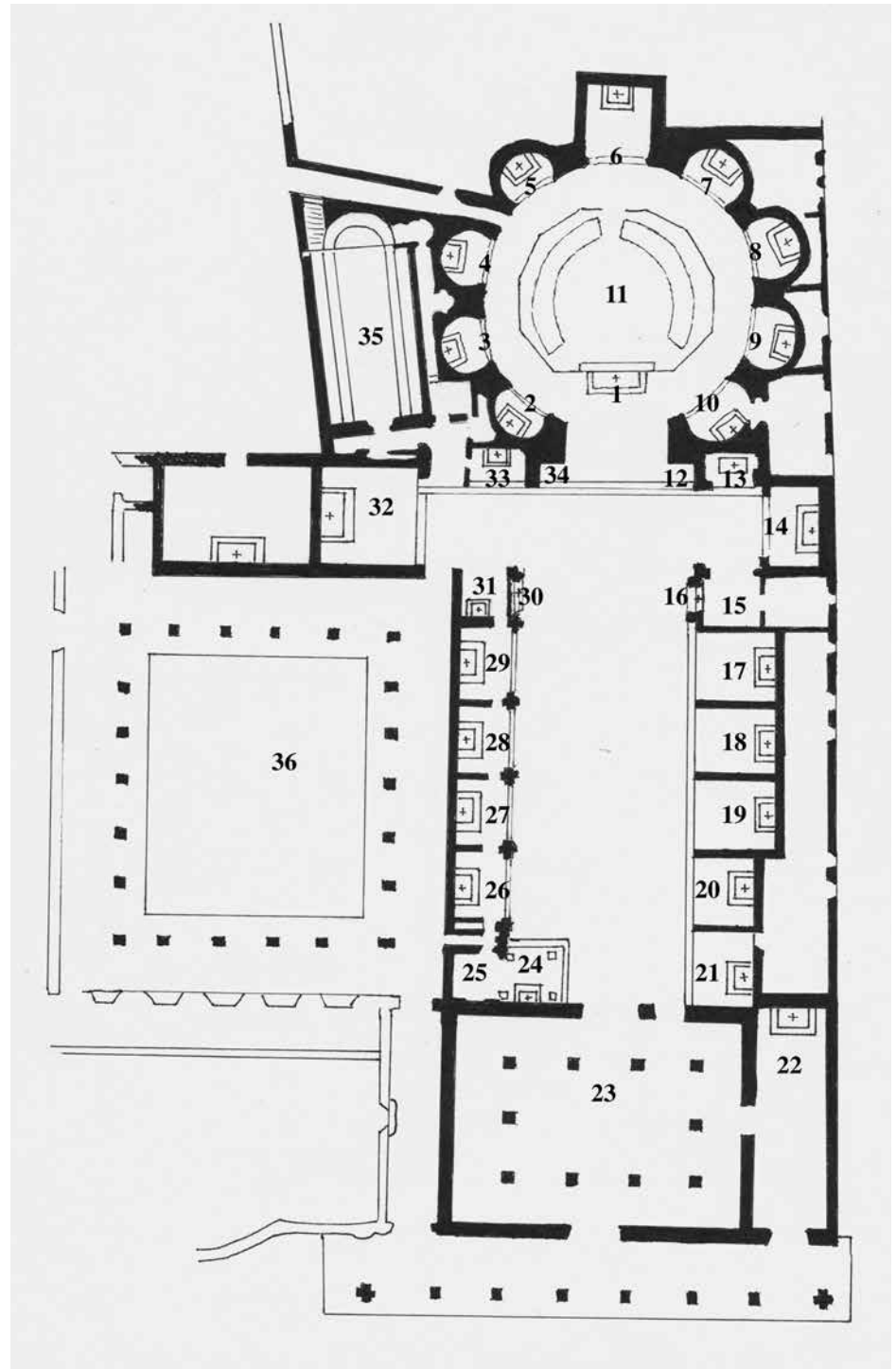
2 *Tribuna della Chiesa della SS.ma Nunziata di Firenze* (Groundplan drawing of tribune), 1675, ink on paper, 46 × 74 cm. ASF, CRSGF119:1273, fol. 27 (photo Caterina Pardi)

4 Eugenio Casalini wrote briefly on the image and its cult in the *Bollettino SS. Annunziata* in 1990 (republished as: Casalini 1998, pp. 165–169). Devotion to the image is, however, still largely unstudied and only the barest of details on this cult appears in Holmes 2013, pp. 82–83, 302, n. 100.

5 Heydenreich 1930; Roselli 1971; Bulman 1971, sect. 2, pp. 36–41, sect. 3, pp. 1–36; Brown 1978; Brown 1981, pp. 59–146; Ferrara/Quinterio 1984 pp. 219–226; Casalini 1995, pp. 41–51, 105. This is by no means a comprehensive list; for further bibliography on the tribune's construction and a review of the literature, cf. Calzona 2006, pp. 402–417.

3 Groundplan of the Santissima Annunziata with numbers indicating chapel titles, 2021, ink on paper, 29.6 x 21 cm (drawing by author)

1. Main Altar
2. Chapel of St. Ignatius / Nativity of the Virgin/ dell'Antella
3. Chapel of St. Michael Archangel / Benivieni
4. Chapel of St. Andrew Apostle / Romoli
5. Chapel of St. Sigismund / del Tovaglia / Guadagni
6. Chapel of the Madonna dietro il coro / Madonna di Soccorso / Dolci / Giambologna
7. Chapel of St. Jerome / Of the Martyrs / Giocondo
8. Chapel of St. Simon / Sts Cosmas e Damian / della Scala
9. Chapel of St. Ives / St. Catherine of Alexandria / Bardi / Accolti
10. Chapel of St. Anne / Giacomini-Tebalducci
11. Choir
12. Original site of the Chapel of St. Anne; site of the altar chapel of Jacopo Federighi
13. Chapel of St. Jerome / Immaculate Conception / Pietà / Pazzi / Bandinelli
14. Chapel of St. Dominus / Resurrection/ Immaculate Conception / Falconieri
15. Compagnia di Santa Barbara
16. Chapel of Our Saviour / Billi (original site considered by Romoli)
17. Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene / Orlando de' Medici
18. Chapel of the Pietà / Rustici / Cortigiani
19. Chapel of St. Lucy of Syracuse / Cresci-Tragualzi
20. Chapel of St. Anthony Abbot
21. Chapel of St. Nicolas of Bari / Palagio
22. Oratory of St. Sebastian / Pucci
23. Chiostro dei Voti
24. Chapel of the Santissima Annunziata
25. Sacristy, Choir of the Chapel of the Santissima Annunziata / Medici
26. Chapel of St. Julian / da Gagliano
27. Chapel of St. Jerome / Corboli / Ciani da Montauto
28. Chapel of the Archangel Raphael / Crucifixion / Galli
29. Chapel of St. John the Baptist / da Rabatta
30. Chapel of St. Roch / Boccianti
31. Chapel of St. Ansanus / St. Ignatius of Antioch / Buti
32. Chapel of St. James / del Crocifisso / Villani
33. Chapel of St. John the Evangelist / St. Filippo Benizi / Tedaldi
34. Original site of the dell'Antella chapel / Site of Tomb Monument of Agnolo Marzi, Bishop of Assisi
35. Sacristy
36. Chiostro dei Morti



I wish to explore how it was used, by whom; to consider it as a “matrix of sacred space”⁶ in which liturgical and para-liturgical activity was performed and observed. Liturgy is often discussed from the perspective of the high altar; while I will also discuss this, my primary interest is to explore the lay contribution to liturgical practice in this space. Exploring the patronage of the tribune chapels, the liturgy established for them, the artworks made for them and recognising evidence of special devotions that developed in them, will enrich our comprehension of the historical appearance of the tribune and its chapels, and how people used it. This article is part of a broader project exploring how the Florentine community used the Santissima Annunziata.

6 Williamson 2004, p. 341.

Santa Maria a Cafaggio, the Servites Building in the Florentine Context

In 1250 three Mendicant Religious Orders, the Humiliati, the Augustinians, and the Servants of Mary, acquired land around the edges of Florence on which to build their churches of Santa Lucia, Santo Spirito and Santa Maria a Cafaggio.⁷ The Franciscans and the Dominicans already had churches on the outskirts of Florence by this time. Such locations offered several advantages: they were less likely to provoke the ire of the regular clergy, the local communities offered denser popular and artisanal populations, the land was cheaper than in the centre, and they were more conducive to a partially contemplative life.⁸ Of these Mendicant groups, the Servants of Mary (Servites) had the special distinction of having been founded in Florence (ca. 1233–1245).

Chiarissimo Falconieri provided funds (in expiation for a lifetime of usuary) to extend the Servites' first oratory at Cafaggio in 1264 (the site of the future Santissima Annunziata). Others were extended similar benefits through a papal indulgence offered by Clemente IV in May 1265 to provide funds for the church's construction.⁹ The building was completed by the end of the 1280s.¹⁰ Santa Maria a Cafaggio was a modest structure formed by a rectangular hall with a shallow apse. A walled choir with wooden stalls stood in front of the main altar. The church's measurements have been established as being about 14 metres wide by 44.65 metres long.¹¹ By the fourteenth century, a bell tower was raised on the church's cloister side. Through the fourteenth and early fifteenth century, a random assemblage of chapels and altars were founded near the apse, built out from the church nave, or extended to create a transept. Among the latter, the most notable was that constructed by Falconieri's family.¹² The church would be embraced by Florence's final wall (completed by 1333).

The miracle-working fresco of the *Nunziata*, painted between ca. 1340–1360 on the counterfaçade, was the most significant element for the continuing expansion and development of the church and its community. Pope Innocent VI's concession of an annual indulgence in 1361 of one year and forty days (offered to the penitent and confessed who visited the chapel of the Annunziata on specified feast days) testifies to the rapid development of the cult.¹³ Less than a decade later, Urban V (1362–1370) reconfirmed the indulgences with a few variations in the feasts specified.¹⁴ By the 1460s, the Servites were claiming that the *Nunziata* was painted as early as 1244 (though 1250–1252 became the official date).¹⁵ Stylistically the fresco confirms a date around the middle of the fourteenth century.¹⁶ Further demonstrating the fresco's profound influence was the decision of several patrons in the second half of the fourteenth century, to build their new chapels toward the façade rather than the usually favoured high altar end of the church.¹⁷

7 Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, p. 840; vol. 2, 205–206, doc. III. 6; *Sources* 2000, p. 25. The Cafaggio district was frequented by prostitutes (Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, p. 940, n. 67). On the early history of Santo Spirito, cf. Fondaras 2020, pp. 37–38.

8 Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, p. 893; Benvenuti Papi 1976, pp. 127–145.

9 Casalini 1967, p. 85; Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, pp. 945–946; vol. 2, pp. 29–30, 34–35, doc. I.11, doc. I.13; *Sources* 2000, p. 37.

10 Tuccci 1942, pp. 101–107; Casalini 1995, p. 53.

11 Tuccci 1942, pp. 101–103; Casalini 1995, pp. 52–55.

12 Tuccci 1942, pp. 107–109.

13 Soulier 1908–1909, p. 64. On the cult, see also Holmes 2004, pp. 97–121; O'Brien 2001, vol. 1, pp. 90–96.

14 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 5, fol. 1, 1370.

15 Attavanti ed. 1910, pp. 94–95, 111–112. Attavanti describes the fresco as being painted before Florence's last ring of walls embraced the church and that Filippo Benizi had a vision in front of the fresco. In his life of Filippo Benizi, Attavanti had given 1244 as the date of the vision (Attavanti ed. 1899, pp. 101–103 paras. 3–6). For the dates 1250–1252: Poccianti ed. 1915, p. 28; Ballottini ed. 1916, pp. 25–27.

The Mendicant Orders' observance of evangelical poverty and penitential practices led to the belief that their prayers were exceptionally valuable in aiding souls in Purgatory. As a result, their churches became popular among the laity as locations for memorial masses, sepulchres, and chapels. The income this generated quickly became an essential source for the Mendicant Orders.¹⁸ The Servites had already allowed lay patrons to transform areas of their church to build chapels at least since the fourteenth century. New building programs at the churches of Santa Croce and Santa Maria Novella were already underway by the end of the thirteenth century. They created space for new chapels, altars and burial sites to meet the demand for lay patronage in a more unified way, at the same time transforming the churches into monumental structures.¹⁹ In situations where Mendicant Orders did not receive funds from the local comunes to build their churches, the laity could provide essential financing for the building and extension of churches, including the chapels themselves.

Where chapel structures already existed, the patrons might pay for the privilege of owning a chapel space where they could display their heraldic insignia, potentially nominate a dedication, and provide their choice of embellishments. For the lay patrons, these purchases – chapel, liturgical paraphernalia, memorial services – were an investment both for the continuation of their memory by the living and their spiritual subsistence in the next life.²⁰ In both cases, the friars of the building might hope that the individual or family would also provide funds for masses. The most desirable outcome was an endowment through which a certain amount would be provided annually in remuneration for the various regular masses that the patron might request.²¹

In the decades just proceeding the Servites' major renovation of their church, several rebuilding projects in Florence were initiated that would transform and beautify the churches to the developing Renaissance standards of visual simplicity.²² Some churches benefited from the direct financial involvement of the Medici, others with the support of their influence. Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici offered to sponsor San Lorenzo's reconstruction in 1419, a promise fulfilled by his son Cosimo, who took over complete responsibility in 1442.²³ Filippo Brunelleschi's work on San Lorenzo was continued under Antonio Manetti or Michelozzo after his death.²⁴ The Medici were friendly with Pope Eugenio IV, then taking refuge in Florence, and with his assistance dislodged the Silvestrines from the church of San Marco, allowing the Observant Dominicans to move in. At San Marco, under the Medici's largess, Michelozzo Michelozzi renovated the church and convent between 1436 and 1443.²⁵ Medici interests, either directly or indirectly, reached across Florence, touching the Camaldeuse of Santa Maria degli Angeli, the Franciscans at Santa Croce, and on the other side of the river, the Franciscans at San Salvatore al Monte, and Olivetans at San Miniato al Monte (as well as other churches beyond Florence's walls).²⁶

Brunelleschi was also responsible for the renewal of the church of Santo Spirito. He built a model for the church in 1435; construction began in 1444.²⁷

16 Holmes 2004, pp. 107–108.

17 Tauci 1942, pp. 112–113.

18 Bruzelius 2014, pp. 5–6, 145, 150–160.

19 Goffen 1988, pp. 7–11; Goldthwaite 1993, pp. 105–106; Peterson 2017, p. 73.

20 Goldthwaite 1993, p. 109; Cohn 1992, pp. 137–146, 161, 211–227.

21 Bruzelius 2014, p. 145.

22 On beauty and simplicity as ideals for churches in this period, Burke 2004, p. 127.

23 Kent 2000, p. 180.

24 Heydenreich 1996, p. 16; Kent 2000, p. 186.

25 Kent 2000, pp. 171–178.

26 Paoletti 1995, pp. 30–31; Peterson 2017, p. 85.

27 Fondaras 2020, p. 52.

the same year the foundation stone for the Santissima Annunziata's tribune was laid. Santo Spirito, too, would only be completed after his death; it was consecrated in 1481.²⁸ The resultant buildings offered a new vision of the spaces, providing both order and harmony. Lay patronage at Santo Spirito was initially a primarily local affair, but in 1489, Lorenzo de' Medici il Magnifico financed the sacristy's construction by his favourite architect, Giuliano da Sangallo.²⁹ Eugenio IV transferred the Cistercian monks to Cestello (current day Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi) in Borgo Pinti in 1442. They, too, would rebuild and expand their church, though commencing in the 1480s, just as works finished at the Santissima Annunziata. At Cestello, funds for rebuilding were primarily provided by Medici partisans, probably with Lorenzo de' Medici's encouragement.³⁰

The *Nunziata's* location had a dominant influence over how the mid-fifteenth century expansion could be undertaken at the Santissima Annunziata; as it was painted directly on the counterfaçade, the church nave could not be extended forward. This may have provided the impetus for building a space behind the high altar and perhaps also inspired the construction of an elegant atrium in front of the church, permitting extra space for sepulchres. In the nave and transept, they regulated the existing chapels and built new ones. Once completed, there were six transept chapels, ten nave chapels (plus two shallower altar chapels), and nine tribune chapels (plus the high altar). Although the restructuring works completed over the second half of the fifteenth century would have regularised and given greater order to the Santissima Annunziata, the church would nevertheless have retained a somewhat cluttered appearance. From the church ceiling hung life-sized wax figures dressed in real clothing, even kings and knights wearing armour, astride horses. Attached to walls and columns were other ex-votos: smaller figures, body parts and diverse objects made from wax or other materials, as well as painted panels depicting miracles that had occurred through the Madonna della *Nunziata's* mercy and intercession.³¹

The Medici's very public intervention at the Santissima Annunziata commenced with Piero di Cosimo's enclosing of the space in front of the miraculous *Nunziata*. According to an inscription (now in the Museo Bardini, Florence), Piero commissioned the tabernacle to fulfil a vow, possibly in gratitude for Lorenzo's birth (maybe at Cosimo's instigation).³² He also furnished the choir (*coretto*) next to the *Nunziata* for the musical accompaniment of liturgical performances at the *Nunziata's* altar.³³ In circumstances reminiscent of what Cosimo had done at San Marco, Piero de' Medici had private rooms constructed above the forecourt and above the *Nunziata's coretto*.³⁴ Piero's actions were part of the broader Medici strategy extending their patronage across a broad area of Florence, but more specifically, his intervention at the Santissima Annunziata created a bridge that reinforced their presence in north-eastern Florence.³⁵

Lorenzo il Magnifico continued the family interest and growing possessiveness over the chapel of the *Nunziata*. He was a close associate of Santissima Annunziata's prior, Antonio Alabanti, who developed the church's musical life, most notably with the creation of the musical chapel.³⁶ Lorenzo is known to have left various ex-votos to the *Nunziata*,³⁷ the most famous of which was one of

28 Fondaras 2020, p. 60.

29 Fondaras 2020, p. 52.

30 Luchs 1975, pp. 5, 8, 11–12.

31 Holmes 2004, p. 99; O'Brien 2001, vol. 1, pp. 90–96.

32 Casalini 1992, p. 119.

33 Bulman 1971, sect. 5, pp. 21–22, 25.

34 Casalini 1971, p. 29.

35 Paoletti 1995, pp. 30–31.

36 Gori 1987, pp. 164–166; Zanovello 2014, pp. 383–387.

three votive figures of himself made following the Pazzi attempt on his life. Lorenzo's figure, dressed in the traditional sleeveless *lucco* of a Florentine citizen, was placed above the small doorway (financed by his father) between the nave and the atrium.³⁸

As has been well documented by Caroline Elam, Lorenzo was interested in developing the urban landscape around the Santissima Annunziata. Evidence suggests he intended to transform the land in front of the church into a formal piazza, and to refurbish the via dei Servi (the street that runs between the Santissima Annunziata and the Cathedral) to a state more suitable to its role as the primary ceremonial route leading to the Santissima Annunziata. His abandonment of the project may have been due to lack of funds or the crises of 1478–1479 (the Pazzi conspiracy and resulting war).³⁹ In 1491 Lorenzo bought land to the east of the church between the current-day via degli Alfani and via Giuseppe Giusti. The area, embraced by Florence's outermost ring of walls built before the population decline caused by the Black Death, had remained primarily agricultural. Two roads were made: the via Laura (today via della Colonna) and via del Rosaio (today via Laura), and land plots divided up for housing. Within a year, four houses had been completed. In the years following Lorenzo's death, Piero di Lorenzo de' Medici sold off the plots. Many went to artists and artisans, foreshadowing a population pattern that would continue into the seventeenth century.⁴⁰ The via dei Servi would also be redeveloped from the early sixteenth century and later became a popular residential area for members of the Medici court.⁴¹ Lorenzo's engagement in the area's development would have reinforced the interest of Medici partisans when considering their own investments in the Santissima Annunziata.

The early history of the tribune's development primarily occurred while Florence was under Medici rule. The Servites are generally perceived as pro-Medici. The broader evidence certainly suggests this to be correct, but little research has been done to test the hypothesis. Eugenio Casalini reveals that at times the relationship with Lorenzo il Magnifico could be somewhat strained.⁴² During the final years of the Republic, the Servites may have modified visual signs regarding their loyalties (at least to ensure their safety or survival). Although the Servites had apparently attempted to stop a few youths from removing Medici effigies of Popes Leo X and Clemente VII in the church in 1527 after the Medici had been exiled from the city, the young men, caught in flagrant, pulled the effigies down and beat them to pieces.⁴³ In July of the same year, the Servites paid someone 1 lire 15 soldi "per ffare guastare l'arme de Medici."⁴⁴ The *Nunziata's* silver was literally put in the Republic's service when it was taken and melted down for the city's needs in 1527.⁴⁵ Soon after the Medici returned, however, in demonstration of their loyalties, the Servites had the damaged Medici effigies and coats of arms repaired.⁴⁶ In the early years of his rule, Duke Cosimo I (1539) would be named among the church *operai*,⁴⁷ and the Grand-ducal family

37 Dina 1995, pp. 243–244, 247, 272, 276.

38 Trexler 1980, p. 123.

39 Elam 1994, pp. 362–368.

40 Elam 1978, pp. 51–52; Brües 1966, pp. 346–350; O'Brien 2014, p. 373.

41 Spini 1976, pp. 71–73; Fantoni 1989, pp. 777–778; Ceccanti 2014, p. 74.

42 Casalini 1998, pp. 287–288.

43 Varchi ed. 1857, vol. 1, Libro Quinto, pp. 256–257; Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 5, pp. 492–493; Mazzoni 1928, pp. 27–29.

44 ASF, CRSGF, 119:708, fol. 34r.

45 Dina 1995, pp. 252, 300–308.

46 Casalini 1978b, p. 128, n. 1. On some of the anti-Savonarolian sentiments of the Florentine friars: Dall'Aglio 1988.

47 ASF, CRSGF, 119:33, fol. 82v. Giovanni dell'Antella and Giuliano Scala were also nominated on the same occasion.

continued to develop strong connections with the church.⁴⁸ Their courtiers would also manifest interest in the chapels, including those within the tribune.

Sources

Early published sources on the church, such as the monographs by Ottavio Andreucci and Pellegrino Tonini, and other encyclopaedic works such as Giuseppe Richa and the Paatzs' volumes on Florentine churches have provided significant starting points for research on the patronage of the tribune.⁴⁹ A vast collection of archival material survives for the Santissima Annunziata in the Archivio di Stato in Florence collected together in the *Corporazione Religiose Soppresse dal Governo Francese* series 119. Volume 59, a collection of notes listing art commissions, liturgical obligations and patronage at the Santissima Annunziata, as well as property owned by the Order, has been advantageously utilised by art historians and historians interested in the tribune, the church and convent and the artworks that embellished these spaces.⁵⁰ The author, the Servite Fra Eliseo Biffoli (b.ca.1522–d.1587),⁵¹ was officially given the task of compiling information on the church in October 1565.⁵² The filza's final pair of booklets bear the title *Notizie delle Cose Memorabile del convento e chiesa della Nunziata dell'Ordine dei Servi di Firenze*, and contain both an account of the Order's origins and the beginning of a description of the Santissima Annunziata. Biffoli commenced by reporting on works done on the high altar and the chapel of St. Anne (in the tribune) – of which he was a witness – before describing several other tribune chapels. Biffoli began writing this section in June 1587 but only described the chapels around to that of the Madonna del Soccorso; his work was interrupted by his death in August.

Biffoli's research into the administrative books also permitted his creation of the *Libro di obblighi di Sagrestia, Segnato A* (1569),⁵³ in which he verified and consolidated the Florentine Servites' religious obligations toward various benefactors, tomb and chapel patrons and other benefactions. His work contributed to the development of a site-specific liturgical calendar. Fra Alessandro Maria

48 Substantial literature exists on the Medici grand-ducal connection with the church. Here I will mention only the critical study by Fantoni 1989.

49 Andreucci 1857; Richa (1754–1762) 1972, vol. 8, pp. 1–113; Paatz/Paatz 1952–1955, vol. 1, pp. 62–196.

50 ASF, CRS GF, 119:59. Listed in the archive catalogue as a *Libro di memorie*, it is actually a collection of booklets containing lists and notes on the church and convent regarding altars, patrons, liturgical obligations, indulgences, privileges, decorations, and sepulchres. The earlier booklets in Filza 59 are extremely valuable, primarily as an initial source for relocating material in the broader archive or – where the volumes he consulted no longer exist – as an indication of what once existed.

51 ASF, CRS GF, 119:53, fol. 161, 18 August 1587: reports that he died about 65 years old.

52 ASF, CRS GF, 119:53, fol. 26v, 10 October 1565 “Ricordo questo di detto fu per partito dei padri del convento nostro determinato che fra Eliseo Biffoli rivedessi le scritture tutte della casa, e scrivessi li ricordi che occorranano alla giornata per detto convento come tutto appare al libro dei partiti di detto convento segnato E.” Unfortunately, the volume *Libro dei partiti, segnato E* alluded to in the reference does not appear to have survived.

53 ASSAF, *Libro di obblighi di Sagrestia, Segnato A* (1569), fol. 1, “Questo libro è del capitolo e convento dei frati dei Servi della Nuntiata di Firenze, e chiamasi Libro di obblighi di Sagrestia. In sul quale si scriveranno tutti gli obblighi che ha el detto convento, con diversi nostri benefattori, sì di cappelle come di sepulture e altri lasciti fatto al detto convento. Cavati detti obblighi da libri da protocolli, da testamenti e altri scritture autentiche di detto convento, quale si scriverrà per mano di me, fra Eliseo Biffoli presente rivisore delle scritture di detto convento comunicato detto libro al tempo del Padre Maestro Damiano priore di detto Convento al primo suo anno questo di 15 settembre 1569 e detto libro è segnato di lettera A.” I have only had the opportunity to explore the material on the chapels in these volumes. I have been unable to fully explore these volumes due to difficulties in accessing the Archives of the Santissima Annunziata over the years.

Lapini compiled a similar, updated volume in 1603, due to a decree from the Servite General Chapter held that year in Rome.⁵⁴ In conjunction with the Santissima Annunziata's surviving administrative volumes in the Florentine State Archives, these volumes facilitate the elaboration of a much richer understanding of the patronage and liturgical history of the tribune chapels.

The Tribune

To understand the early patronage history of the new tribune chapels, we need to lay the foundations with some information on the tribune's construction, a protracted process. The first stone was laid in late 1444, and the tribune was completed by 1476. Three architects – Michelozzo, Andrea Manetti and Leon Battista Alberti – were involved in the tribune's creation. Issues of finance, patronage, and liturgical function, as well as aesthetic and structural concerns, complicated its construction history.⁵⁵

Michelozzo planned for seven chapels to radiate around the tribune; at the centre stood the friar's choir. Between 1444–1446 the Servites assigned six chapels to the patrons: Domenico di Zanobi del Giocondo (*e frategli setaiuoli*), Puccio d'Antonio Pucci, Giovanni de' Borromei, Giovanni di Gualtieri Portinari, Filippo di Stoldo Ranieri and Antonio di Michele da Rabatta. The seventh chapel may have been retained for the church *operai* (board of works or church working committee).⁵⁶ This approach of having families construct the chapels that would contribute to the building's overall construction, had already been undertaken at the Vallombrosan church of Santa Trinita during the fourteenth century. However, the model was not without problems; it could potentially leave a financial lacune for the project.⁵⁷ The fiscal requirements for the construction of the tribune were enormous. The Marchese Ludovico Gonzaga of Mantua was approached due to his father Gianfrancesco's bequest of 200 ducats, promised toward construction at the church. Reluctantly, Ludovico became the major financier of the project.⁵⁸

The building of the tribune commenced three years after Pope Eugenius IV installed the Observant branch of the Servite Order in the Santissima Annunziata (1441).⁵⁹ Their presence and the initiation of building works may not be a coincidence. Richard Goldthwaite has observed a connection between the reconstruction of older houses of an Order and the respective Order's Reform groups.⁶⁰ The provenance from Lombardy of some of these friars could have, in part, inspired the original bequest from the Marchese.⁶¹ Cosimo de' Medici played a pivotal role in convincing the reluctant Ludovico to honour his father's bequest. Ludovico eventually decided to redirect to the Servites for the tribune's construction, money that the Florentine Signoria owed him for military services.⁶² The Observants were present only briefly.⁶³ The tribune's completion, chapel patronage, and ornamentation was achieved under the Conventual Servites.

Building was already in progress for some years when the Falconieri family raised litigation against the friars in 1455. They protested that the tribune and

54 ASSAF, *Libro di obblighi di Sagrestia, Segnato A* (sic) (1603), fol. 1.

55 For bibliography on the tribune, cf. note 5.

56 ASF, CRSGF, 119:842, fols. 1r–2v; Ferrara/Quinterio 1984, pp. 219, 294; Bulman 1971, sect. 3, p. 7; Brown 1981, p. 62, 112, doc. 5.

57 Peterson 2017, pp. 73–74.

58 Brown 1981, p. 63.

59 *Fonti* 2002, pp. 176–177.

60 Goldthwaite 1993, pp. 91, 97.

61 Calzona 2006, p. 407.

62 Brown 1981, pp. 62–63.

63 They left between June–July 1447 (*Fonti* 2002, pp. 190–192).

atrium respectively threatened their ancient privileges over the high altar and their rights to display their coat of arms above the church's main entrance, rights acquired through Chiarissimo Falconieri's donation in 1264.⁶⁴ Archbishop Antonino Pierozzi ruled in January 1455/1456 that the Servites could finish building the tribune – including destroying the main altar – but imposed several obligations on the friars.⁶⁵

Construction resumed briefly under Antonio Manetti in May 1460 until 18 November of the same year, when he died. Works continued intermittently during the following years before coming to a complete halt again.⁶⁶ New negotiations to recommence work on the tribune appear in correspondence between Florence and Mantua in 1469–1470. The Florentine silk merchant, Piero del Tovaglia, made his debut at this time, as Gonzaga's self-appointed on-site advisor and representative consultant. Following a visit to Florence, Gonzaga donated further funds and was promised exclusive patronage rights over the tribune and its chapels.⁶⁷ Leon Battista Alberti, who was engaged for the project during 1470, quickly diverged from Michelozzo's plan. Alberti determined that the opening between the tribune and nave would be too narrow, so it was necessary to destroy the chapels immediately flanking the main chapel.⁶⁸ A notarial document made for Piero del Tovaglia on January 1471 approved the destruction of these chapels.⁶⁹ However, an earlier contract between Gonzaga and the *Monte* protected the rights of the dell'Antella, and thus two chapels had to be added to the seven planned for the tribune to replace those to be destroyed.⁷⁰ Alberti also closed the two exits planned by Michelozzo, one of which was to provide the friars with access to the tribune.⁷¹

The Florentines broadly criticised the tribune throughout its construction history. Although not a chapel-patron at the Santissima Annunziata, Giovanni Aldobrandini, a friend of Ludovico Gonzaga,⁷² was amongst those who protested its form. In a letter of 1471, Aldobrandini broached some compelling liturgical and spatial issues. When Ludovico made it clear that he would willingly withdraw from the project, the Florentines accepted the works' continuation without demanding further alterations; Alberti completed it in September 1476.⁷³ Nevertheless, the tribune's interior ornamentation and the triumphal arch opening between the church and the tribune were only finished in 1479, and the transept/nave roof had to be raised by 8 metres – work completed by 1481 – to allow the tribune and transept to be joined.⁷⁴ The friars' dilemma of having to pass through the narrow entrance to the tribune together with laypeople was resolved in 1480 with the construction of a corridor leading from the convent's second cloister and opening in the pilaster dividing the chapels of St. Andrew and St. Sigismund (third and fourth from the left) (fig. 2).⁷⁵

The patronage rights changed substantially during the tribune's construction. Puccio Pucci had reserved the main chapel directly behind the choir.⁷⁶ After

64 Brown 1981, p. 85.

65 Teubner 1978, pp. 49–50, doc. V; Ferrara/Quinterio 1984 pp. 218, 292–293, nn. 40, 41.

66 Brown 1981, pp. 86–90.

67 Brown 1981, pp. 90–93.

68 Brown 1981, pp. 93–96.

69 Brown 1981, pp. 94.

70 Tonini 1876 pp. 278–279, doc. XXVII; Bulman 1971, sect. 2, p. 3; Brown 1981, pp. 72, 94, 96, 98.

71 The other gave access to the Confraternity of St. Barbara's rooms behind the Pazzi chapel (Brown 1981, pp. 69, 94–95).

72 Vasić Vatovec 1996, p. 86.

73 Brown 1981, pp. 93–109.

74 Casalini 1987, p. 86.

75 Brown 1981, p. 110.

Puccio's death, his family transferred their interest to the Oratory of St. Sebastian, then being built beside the atrium in front of the church. They formally relinquished all rights to the main chapel in 1464/1465.⁷⁷ Their loss of interest in the main chapel may have been well known. Giovanni de' Borromei, in his will drawn up in 1455, indicated his desire to have three tribune chapels, comprising the principal and flanking chapels; in 1456, he acquired the main chapel.⁷⁸ By 1453 Antonio da Rabatta had acquired the patronage of the Chapel of St. John the Baptist in the nave.⁷⁹ On 6 September 1470, Rabatta and Filippo di Stoldo Ranieri formally relinquished their rights to the tribune chapels (and Borromei would cancel his will in 1472, showing no further interest in the tribune chapels). The following day, 7 September 1470, the Servites signed over patronage rights of the main chapel and the six new tribune chapels to Gonzaga, who then became the primary source of funds for the construction.⁸⁰ The following year, celebrating the conclusion of his financial responsibility for the tribune, Ludovico Gonzaga conceded the rights over six chapel spaces to Pietro del Tovaglia and the privilege of deciding who could be buried in the tribune, on condition that the Gonzaga arms and devices were displayed.⁸¹ Only Domenico del Giocondo would maintain his rights to a tribune chapel (which may have been immediately returned to him following the Servites' negotiations with del Tovaglia/Gonzaga).⁸² The permission given to a major benefactor to distribute chapels was not unknown in Florence; a similar situation occurred at San Lorenzo when the chapter authorised Piero de' Medici to assign the chapels on one side of the nave to patrons of his choice.⁸³

Studies into chapel patronage find that patrons commonly justified the significant expenditure undertaken in their acquisition, furnishing and endowment, as being for the greater glorification of God and the saints, to display their status, and for the performance of votive and commemorative masses for the salvation of their souls. The Religious Orders also received benefits by relinquishing liturgical space within their churches to lay patrons. They could offset the initial expenses of constructing the spaces and furnishing them with an altar, they would receive funding to service the altars, and the patron would also be obliged to supply the chapel with the liturgical paraphernalia necessary for the divine cult to be celebrated there. The churches would also benefit visually from the decorations provided for these chapels and altars.⁸⁴ While the Servites no doubt hoped that the patrons would grandly embellish their chapels, thus adding to the church's overall magnificence, this was not necessarily of primary concern for the patron. As Robert Gaston writes: "It is a common error of emphasis among art historians to speak of chapels as though they were built principally for architectural reasons or to house paintings on their walls or altars. This is reversing the founder's priorities."⁸⁵ The performance of liturgy and desire for facilitating salvation were of prime importance.⁸⁶ Some chapels at the Santissima Annunziata, such as that of the Bardi (discussed below), were barely decorated.

76 Tonini 1876, p. 168.

77 Brown 1981, p. 120, doc 23; ASF, CRSGF, 119:1270, pp. 158–160, no. 412, 1464/1465, p. 159, clause 14.

78 Brown 1981, pp. 86, 117, docs. 16, 17.

79 Tonini 1876 pp. 300–301, doc. LXIII.

80 Brown 1981, pp. 92, 122–123, docs. 37, 38; Brown 1978, p. 320, doc. 36.

81 ASF, CRSGF, 119:1270, p. 166, no. 424; Brown 1981, pp. 94.

82 Bulman 1971, sect. 1, p. 7; Brown 1978, pp. 331–338, doc. 44 (esp. 335); Brown 1981, pp. 93, 100.

83 Kent 2000, p. 183.

84 Katz Nelson/Zeckhauser 2003, pp. 143–179; Katz Nelson 2006, pp. 353–375.

85 Gaston 1987, p. 120.

86 Gaston 1987, p. 120.

Alternatively, Marchese Ludovico III Gonzaga provided substantial financial assistance to a church in which he actually had little interest. On 1 April 1445, early in the proceedings, the Order's prior general, Fra Niccolò da Perugia, sent Ludovico Gonzaga a letter offering him and his family the spiritual benefits of the Servite Order.⁸⁷ While Gonzaga would have a votive statue made of himself to be hung within the tribune, as Brown states, no document has come to light suggesting that he had any intention of using the space for his own funerary chapel;⁸⁸ indeed he bequeathed nearly all the chapels to another individual. Neither do *Libro di obblighi* (1569 or 1603) record any liturgical obligation required by Gonzaga from the Servites.⁸⁹ Ludovico died in 1478 without seeing the tribune finished. Nevertheless, his emblem would adorn one of the most important Marian shrines in Florence. He was buried in the Cathedral of Mantua, and his testament was lost,⁹⁰ so we cannot be certain that he did not have plans to impose on the liturgy of the Santissima Annunziata. His previous disinterest and the lack of documentation demonstrating his desire to have it as a burial site suggests, however, that in Gonzaga the Servites had acquired a patron who would have imposed very little on the liturgy of their high altar.

The High Altar

The most ancient altar under the tribune was the church's high altar. Before the fifteenth century renovations, the high altar had stood several metres forward from its current location.⁹¹ The Servites' *Constitutiones Antiquae* required that, where there were no obstacles, all Servite churches and high altars should be consecrated in honour of Mary.⁹² The *Constitutiones Antiquae* were the earliest surviving legislative principles governing the Order. Most were probably drafted at the General Chapter held in Florence in 1289 (certainly completed by 1295), but some of the rules likely reflect those that had evolved and governed the life of the Servites over the preceding decades.⁹³ In the Servite churches at Siena (established in the same year the Florentine church was founded), Orvieto (acquired 1260) and Bologna (founded by 1265), we know that the high altars were adorned with majestic images of the Enthroned Madonna and Child within a decade or two of their establishment. Coppo di Marcovaldo produced those for Siena (*Madonna del Bordone*, 1261) and for Orvieto (1268), while Cimabue painted that of Bologna (ca. 1286).⁹⁴ A similar image undoubtedly graced the high altar of Santa Maria a Cafaggio. During the early fourteenth century, a more elaborate decorative program was produced for the main chapel and its altar when Taddeo Gaddi (ca. 1300–ca. 1366) painted scenes from the life of Mary on the chapel's wall and produced a polyptych for the altar depicting the Virgin and many saints.⁹⁵ For reasons not entirely clear, in 1449, during the early years of the tribune's construction, the Servites had Ventura di Moro produce a new high altarpiece.⁹⁶

Originally, the Servite friars' choir stood in the middle of the church before the high altar, as was common in pre-Tridentine churches. During the tribune's

87 Mantova, Archivio di Stato, Fondo Gonzaga, busta 3348: *Fonti* 2002, pp. 122, 183, 632.

88 Brown 1981, pp. 109, 145 n. 159.

89 ASSAF, *Libro di obblighi di Sagrestia, Segnato A* (1569), fol. 16r/v ; ASSAF, *Libro di obblighi di Sagrestia, Segnato A* (1603), fols. 2r–3r.

90 Lazzarini 2006, p. 424.

91 Katz Nelson 2004, p. 23.

92 Chap. I: *Constitutiones Antiquae* ed. 1897, p. 29; *Sources* 2000, p. 113.

93 Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, pp. 206, 217–235, 1044–1073; *Sources* 2000, p. 107.

94 Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, pp. 819, 979–980, 994, 997, 1000–1004; *Sources* 2000, pp. 392–397; Taucci 1942, p. 104.

95 Ghiberti ed. 1998, p. 85; Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 2, p. 206.

96 Taucci 1942, p. 104.

4 Florence, Santissima Annunziata, interior view from main tribune chapel toward choir and nave, with views of the dell'Antella and Giacomini-Tebalducci chapels and the tabernacle of the Santissima *Nunziata* at far end of the church (photo Antonio Quattrone)



construction, the choir was temporarily moved into the left transept,⁹⁷ and on the tribune's completion, a new choir was built behind the high altar, in the centre of the tribune (fig. 4). The 'architecturally' uninterrupted view down the nave to the high altar was rare in fifteenth-century Florentine churches (fig. 1). Friars' choirs were usually divided from the congregation by a wall, *tramezzo* or *ponte*, and their placement between the high altar and the people would obscure the view of the high altar. Nevertheless, the new arrangement, although rare, was not unknown in Florence; Brunelleschi had already transferred the canons' choir behind the high altar of San Lorenzo.⁹⁸ Giovanni di Alessio, also known as Nanni Unghero, built a new wooden choir for the friars between 1528–1539 on which, Fra Biffoli reveals, was spent 228 scudi.⁹⁹

The choir's placement behind the high altar required an inventive solution for the altarpiece that needed to accommodate both the congregation in the nave and the friars in the choir. Baccio d'Agnolo, woodworker and architect, responded by creating a grandiose, monumental frame—the largest to be manufactured in Florence—allowing paintings to be displayed, not only on the front and the back but also on the sides. Fra Zacharia di Lorenzo da Firenze (d. 1505) commissioned the frame from Baccio d'Agnolo in 1500, and it was finished by June 1502, for 150 florins. The appearance of the frame was enriched with gilding by a painter called Francesco di Nicolò for 240 florins.¹⁰⁰

97 Brown 1981, p. 74. Giani, in his *Annales* of the Servite Order, indicated that the choir built in 1288–1290 was demolished in 1443 at the suggestion of Pope Eugene IV (Casalini 1995, pp. 62–63, n. 29). Documents regarding the dismantling of the high altar and *per raconciare el choro*, and other work around the altar: Casalini 1962, p. 59.

98 Hall 1974, pp. 167–170; Hall 1976, p. 4.

99 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 8, p. 14v; Paatz/Paatz 1952–1955, vol. 1, p. 128; Doti 2001, p. 651.

100 Canuti 1931, vol. 1, pp. 185–187; Katz Nelson 1997, p. 84; Katz Nelson 2004, pp. 22–24. Canuti also published numerous documents on the high altar and its afterlife (vol. 2, pp. 241–253).



The original contract for the paintings no longer survives, but in the second contract, dating 1503, Fra Zacharia commissioned Filippino Lippi to paint two large panels, one of which was the *Deposition of Christ from the Cross* (Accademia, Florence) (fig. 5), and six smaller panels with individual (unnamed) saints. The *Deposition* was to face the nave. The second panel's subject was still to be decided. According to Vasari, soon after Filippino Lippi received the commission, Leonardo da Vinci returned to Florence, and Filippino stepped aside when Leonardo showed interest in the project.¹⁰¹ Vasari further claimed that Leonardo (together with his household) enjoyed the Servites' hospitality; Carmen Bambach suggests this possibly occurred sometime between April 1500– Spring 1502.¹⁰² Leonardo's father, Piero da Vinci worked for the Servites as a notary for many years, and it is certainly possible that Leonardo enjoyed their hospitality – but no documentary evidence of Leonardo's stay in the convent has yet been published.¹⁰³ Instead of executing a panel for the high altar (either an *Assumption of the Virgin* or a *Deposition from the Cross*), Leonardo apparently produced a highly acclaimed drawing of the Virgin and Child with St. Anne, before departing for other commissions.¹⁰⁴

5 Pietro Perugino and Filippino Lippi, *Deposition from the Cross*, completed by 1507, oil on panel, 334 × 225 cm. Florence, Galleria del Accademia (photo Gabinetto Fotografico degli Uffizi)

6 Pietro Perugino, *Assumption of the Virgin*, completed by 1507, tempera on panel, 332.5 × 232 cm. Florence, Santissima Annunziata (photo Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut)

101 Katz Nelson 2004, pp. 24–27.

102 Bambach 2005, pp. 40–41.

103 In this regard, one tantalising though inconclusive document was partly published by Martin Kemp and Giuseppe Pallanti (Kemp/Pallanti 2017, p. 242, n. 28). The document indicates that in November 1500, Fra Zacheria (possibly the same identified as commissioning the altarpiece and frame from Filippino Lippi and Baccio d'Agnolo) was having a document drawn up to “oblige” the convent to a certain “Lionardo.” While this might possibly refer to Leonardo da Vinci, lacking further identifying details, such a connection cannot be ascertained.

The contract mentioned above of September 1503 enticed Filippino to return to the project with an offer of an increased fee of 150 florins. Filippino died on 20 April 1504, having finished only the *Deposition's* upper part. Pietro Perugino received the commission to complete the *Deposition* and to paint the *Assumption of the Virgin* (Santissima Annunziata, Florence) (fig. 6) and the six individual figure panels in 1505. His contribution was finished by about 1507.¹⁰⁵ The altar and its altarpiece were set just back from the opening between the nave and tribune. The panels on the short side were visible to friars and laypeople once they passed through the opening into the tribune.¹⁰⁶

The apparently Christocentric theme of the *Deposition from the Cross* makes it a curious choice for the high altar of the Order of the Servants of Mary's motherhouse. As already noted, the Servites' constitution required that the high altar should be consecrated in Mary's honour. Consequently, in this context, this *Deposition* should be considered equally, if not primarily, a reflection on the Virgin's sorrow, rather than purely a contemplation of the tragic figure of Christ. Indeed, Mary's equal importance with Jesus in this panel is indicated through the similarity of their poses – the identical angle of their heads, the curve of the left arms and the right legs. This correspondence would have been even more pronounced had Filippino completed the panel; a copy of his original design produced by his workshop (Maestro di Memphis, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) shows Mary's eyes closed like those of Christ.¹⁰⁷ As Harvey Hamburgh suggests, through this panel the Servites were manifesting the Virgin's participation "in the redemptive sacrifice of Cavalry."¹⁰⁸ Indeed, a devotional text by the Servite Paolo da Faenza, published in August 1500, included the *Deposition* among the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin – while the *Assumption* was among the Seven Joys.¹⁰⁹

The black mantle that Mary wears in the Filippino/Perugino *Deposition* furthermore celebrates a key element of Servite identity. The habit's meaning was explained by Bl. Filippo Benizi in the *Legenda Vulgata* (the most popular *vita* tradition of this saint, who at the time was the Order's most celebrated early blessed). Filippo, accompanying one of the Servite brethren, met some Dominican friars, who enquired who they were. Filippo responded, "If your question is about our place of origin, we are sons of this land. But if you wish to know our status, we are called Servants of the glorious Virgin, the habit of whose widowhood we wear. We lead the life instituted by the holy Apostles [...]."¹¹⁰ Cosimo dei Servi made the connection of the habit's symbolism with Christ's crucifixion more explicit in his account (dated ca. 1527) of the same episode. There, Bl. Filippo described the Servite habit as follows: "The black *veste* demonstrates the sadness and pain of the death of her only Son, in memory of which this religious order was founded in the heights of *Monte Synaio*."¹¹¹ He further explained that the friars were happy to wear the honour of her widowhood, through which they

104 Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, pp. 29–30; Katz Nelson 2004, pp. 26–27.

105 Katz Nelson 2004, pp. 24–25.

106 For recent reconstructions of the arrangement of the altarpiece and frame: Katz Nelson 1997, pp. 84–94; Katz Nelson 2004, pp. 22–43; Fastenrath Vinattieri/Schaefer 2011, pp. 23–29, 34–38.

107 Reproduced in Katz Nelson 2004, fig. 7. X-rays of the lower section of the *Deposition* confirm the relationship of several workshop panels with the Filippino's original composition (Katz Nelson 2004, pp. 30–34).

108 Hamburgh 1981, p. 63.

109 Besutti 1984, pp. 77–78, 109–111.

110 *Legenda Vulgata*, para. 8: *Legenda Beati Philippi* ed. 1898, p. 71; *Sources* 2000 p. 272. The identification of the habit with Mary's widowhood was repeated in later lives of Bl. Filippo Benizi, for instance: *Ystoria* ed. 1898, p. 94; *Attavanti* ed. 1899, p. 104, para. 7; and Cosimo dei Servi (see below).

111 This indicates Monte Senario, but plays on the name of Mount Sinai.

would be “different and distinct from other religious.”¹¹² Filippo’s explanation that the Servites led “the life instituted by the Apostles,”¹¹³ would seem to make the *Assumption of the Virgin* a consummately ideal image with which to decorate the friars’ view of the altar, as has been noted by Jonathan Katz Nelson. When the Servites gazed up at the Virgin, they were emulating the very action that the Apostles perform in Perugino’s *Assumption of the Virgin*.¹¹⁴ However, this was not the only association that might have entered the thoughts of the Servite friars in the choir. The lives of Bl. Filippo Benizi – considered the ideal model of a Servite friar – revealed that he died on, or in the octave of the Assumption of the Virgin.¹¹⁵ Fra Paolo Attavanti added that Bl. Filippo Benizi was also invested into the Order on the same feast day.¹¹⁶

Andrea del Sarto and Franciabigio assisted Andrea di Cosimo Feltrini to paint the curtains to cover the main images. They painted an *Annunciation* to cover the *Assumption* facing the friars (potentially a copy of the *Nunziata*) and a *Deposition* to cover the *Deposition* facing the nave (1509).¹¹⁷ The individual saints and *beati* painted to flank the two main panels and to adorn the sides of the monumental frame have been identified as follows: Sts. John the Baptist (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), Lucy of Syracuse (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), Catherine of Alexandria (Private collection) and Margaret of Antioch (Lindenau-Museum, Altenberg), and the Bls. Filippo Benizi (Galleria Nazionale d’Arte Antica, Rome) (fig. 7) and Francesco da Siena (Lindenau-Museum, Altenberg).¹¹⁸ Until recently, the figure of St. Margaret of Antioch was usually identified as the Empress St. Helen, however, she does not wear a crown, and although she holds a small cross – potentially a reference to her finding of the Cross on which Christ was crucified – the book is not a usual attribute for Helen. The book and cross are instead appropriate symbols for St. Margaret of Antioch, who is, moreover, often associated with St. Catherine of Alexandria.¹¹⁹ The figure of Bl. Francesco of Siena, though bearing rather generic attributes – a book and a lily – was already identified as such by the Servite chronicler Fra Michele Poccianti in 1567.¹²⁰

Various attempts have been made to establish the altar frame’s appearance and the arrangement of the panels upon it.¹²¹ The most recent studies place the Baptist and St. Catherine on either side of the front panel showing the *Deposition*, Sts. Margaret and Lucy on either side of the *Assumption* and the two Servite *Beati* on the short sides.¹²² While several of the holy figures – Sts. John the Baptist,

112 Cosimo dei Servi ed. 1913, pp. 145–146, para. 14.

113 *Legenda Vulgata*, para. 8; *Legenda Beati Philippi* ed. 1898, p. 71, *Sources* p. 272.

114 Katz Nelson 1997, p. 91.

115 O’Brien 2001, vol. 1, pp. 30, 36, 38, 147–148, 165, 224, vol. 2, pp. 174, 178, 180, 185; *Legenda Vulgata*, para. 23; *Legenda Arcaica Perugina*, para. 22; Adimari ed. 1913, pp. 39–40, para. 30; Attavanti ed. 1899, pp. 117–118, paras. 29–30.

116 Attavanti ed. 1899, p. 103, para. 6.

117 Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, pp. 344–345; Shearman 1965, vol. 1, p. 18; vol. 2, p. 316. Casalini 2001, p. 15, located a document indicating that the curtains suffered damage by mice (“rose dai topi”).

118 Katz Nelson 2004, p. 36.

119 Fastenrath Vinattieri/Schaefer 2011, p. 21.

120 Casalini 1990, p. 139.

121 Katz Nelson 1997, pp. 84–94; Casalini 2001, pp. 22–24; Katz Nelson 2004, p. 36; Fastenrath Vinattieri/Schaefer 2011, pp. 34–38. Casalini claimed that a drawing found in Biffoli’s manuscript (ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 19) was drawn up by Baccio d’Agnolo for the back of the altar (Casalini 2001, pp. 11–14). The drawing clearly does not date to the early sixteenth century, but rather to the seventeenth century. The importance of Casalini’s article lies in the wealth of documentation that he adds for the high altar from not easily accessed volumes in the archive of the Santissima Annunziata.

122 Fastenrath Vinattieri/Schaefer 2011, pp. 36–37. Considering their argument that Margaret and Catherine of Alexandria were often paired (Fastenrath Vinattieri/Schaefer 2011, p. 21), it is curious that they have not paired the figures in their hypothetical reconstruction of the



7 Pietro Perugino, *San Filippo Benizi*, completed by 1507, oil on panel, 79.5 × 62.5 cm. Rome, Galleria Nazionale di Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini (photo Bibliotheca Hertziana/Enrico Fontolan)

Lucy and the Bl. Filippo Benizi – had chapels dedicated to them, formally or popularly,¹²³ other reasons might be suggested for their inclusion. The Servites possibly already owned one of St. Catherine’s relics (Bocchi reported its presence, though in 1591), and Pope Martin V had conceded an indulgence of 40 years and 40 *quarantene* at the church for her feast.¹²⁴ Alternatively, considering the importance that the Servites placed on learning, her position as the patron saint of theologians may have made her a suitable candidate.¹²⁵ Indeed, when Fra Taddeo Adimari was about to introduce the discovery of Filippo Benizi’s wisdom in his *Legenda Philippi Benizi* he specially noted St. Catherine of Alexandria’s learning.¹²⁶ Saints Catherine and Margaret were numbered among the fourteen auxiliary saints (saints thought to be especially efficacious in interceding for specific ailments or situations).¹²⁷ Relics for Sts. Lucy, John the Baptist and Bl. Filippo Benizi were also found at the church.¹²⁸ Nonetheless, as patron of Florence, little justification is required for St. John the Baptist’s appearance. The presence of the two Servite *beati* reflects the contemporary Servites’ growing interest in promoting the Order’s members.¹²⁹

Giorgio Vasari claimed that Perugino’s completion of the high altarpiece was greatly criticised due to his reuse of figures, leading to the decline of Perugino’s reputation.¹³⁰ Indeed, the *Assumption*’s composition and many of the figures were almost wholly lifted from an altarpiece depicting

the *Ascension of Christ* 1496–1499 (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon) that he had recently painted for the Benedictine church of San Pietro in Perugia.¹³¹ Several of the saints and *beati* in the side panels can also be easily associated with other Perugino figures. Indeed, some can even be matched with another Perugino altarpiece within the Santissima Annunziata, his *Madonna and Child enthroned with*

panels on the altar. Notably, the altarpieces of two other chapels in the church, those of the Villani and the Tedaldi, paired these two female saints (Geronimus 2006, pp. 208–210).

123 Antonio di Michele da Rabatta’s chapel of St. John the Baptist, three chapels removed from the *coretto* of the *Nunziata*, was constructed by 1453, on the same site as an earlier chapel with the same dedication (Tonini 1876, pp. 300–301, doc. LXIII; Tauci 1942, p. 109; Casalini 1995, p. 90). The third chapel on the right upon entering the church was dedicated to St. Lucy. It was founded by the Cresci in ca. 1364 (Tauci 1942, pp. 112–113). During the fifteenth century, Bl. Filippo Benizi’s devotional cult came to be located in the Tedaldi Chapel dedicated to St. John the Evangelist (in the transept). The friars referred to it colloquially as the chapel of Bl. Filippo Benizi (O’Brien 2001, vol. 1, p. 158).

124 Bocchi 1591, p. 228; Giamboni 1700, pp. 256–257, 401.

125 Records of special meat or fish dinners celebrating St. Catherine of Alexandria’s feast at the Santissima Annunziata, are recorded at the beginning of the fourteenth century (Ircani Menichini 2004, pp. 49, 156). Casalini notes that Catherine was the patron of the Servite Studium at the Santissima Annunziata, though he does not provide a source for this information (Casalini 2001, p. 23).

126 Adimari ed. 1913, p. 28, para. 8.

127 Murray/Murray 1996, p. 560.

128 Bocchi 1591, p. 228; Giamboni 1700, p. 272.

129 On San Filippo Benizi’s cult at the Santissima Annunziata: O’Brien 2001, vol. 1, chaps. 3–4. For Bl. Francesco da Siena: Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, pp. 36, 108, n. 199, 238, 445, 1276, 1300, 1327–1328; Casalini 1990, pp. 134–140.

130 Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 3, 608–610.

131 Hiller von Gaertringen 2004, pp. 335–336; O’Malley 2007, pp. 679–687. For an image of the *Ascension*, see O’Malley’s fig. 3.

Sts. Onuphrius, Andrew the Apostle, Romulus Bishop of Fiesole and Francis of Assisi, (fig. 17) produced for the Romoli chapel of St. Andrew (discussed below). The figure of Bl. Francesco da Siena, who stands reading a book, for example, repeats the figure of St. Francis of Assisi in the St. Andrew Chapel (an interesting adaptation considering their shared name). St. John the Baptist is a slightly revised version of St. Onuphrius, St. Catherine is reminiscent of the figure of St. Romulus, and St. Margaret of Antioch and Bl. Filippo Benizi recall in their stances the figure of St. Andrew (though with a slight readjustment of the hands).

A large wooden crucifix carved by Giuliano and Antonio da Sangallo crowned the massive altarpiece (fig. 8). Like Michelozzo before him, Giuliano da Sangallo was an artist favoured by the Medici. The Servites commissioned the crucifix in 1481, soon after the link between the nave and tribune was completed and the roof of the church nave was heightened. The crucifix was set in place by 1482.¹³² This crucifix was one of three by the Sangallo brothers that Vasari praises in his *Vita* of Giuliano da Sangallo.¹³³

The Servite Constitutions ruled that their liturgy follow the rite of the Roman Curia. Supplementary acts of devotion to Mary were implemented through the first chapter of the Servite Constitutions, called the *De Reuerentiis Beatis Marie Virginis*. Their annual liturgical calendar runs on two cycles; the first following the feasts of Christ, the second those of the saints, including the Virgin.¹³⁴ The Servites gave emphasis to their Marian devotions with the celebration of the mass of the Virgin on Saturdays and Wednesdays, and within the celebration of the office on the Marian feasts (Assumption, Purification, Annunciation, and Nativity) through embellished versions of the Ordinary Mass.¹³⁵ The feast of the Presentation of the Virgin was added in the Servite Constitutions of 1556.¹³⁶ The Servites were also required to take communion on these and certain other feasts,¹³⁷ and to fast for their vigils.¹³⁸ The feast of St. Joseph, Mary's husband (19 March), was added to the Servite calendar in 1324 and celebrated as a double rite.¹³⁹ The vigil of the Conception was added to the above observances in 1580.¹⁴⁰ The masses celebrated at the high altar of the Santissima Annunziata were primarily sung in chant or celebrated with simple polyphony.¹⁴¹ The Servites added solemnity to certain feasts, such as Easter, Christmas or the Marian Feasts, through the employment of musicians.¹⁴²



8 Antonio and Giuliano da Sangallo, *Crucifix*, 1482, wood. Florence, Santissima Annunziata (photo Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut)

132 Amato 2012, pp. 62, 99 n.7. The crucifix is now found on the side wall of the second chapel upon entering the church.

133 Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, p. 139

134 Chap I-II: *Constitutiones Antiquae* ed. 1897, pp. 28–31; *Sources* 2000, pp. 112–116. Crociani 1987, pp. 137–160. He also discusses the Order's daily and weekly cycles.

135 *Sources* 2000, pp. 112–114; Zanovello 2014, pp. 408–409.

136 *Constitutiones Recentiores* ed. 1903–1904, p. 83, para. 17 (*Constitutiones*, Bologna 1556, Chap. II).

137 E.g., the first Sunday of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, the Last Supper, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, Sts. Peter and Paul and All Saints: Chap. II: *Constitutiones Antiquae* ed. 1897, pp. 30–31; *Sources* 2000, pp. 115–116.

138 Chap. VII: *Constitutiones Antiquae* ed. 1897, pp. 34–35; *Sources* 2000, pp. 119–120. For comparison with prescribed Dominican and Franciscan feasts, see: Dal Pino 1972, pp. 1058–1059.

139 *Constitutiones Novae* ed. 1898, p. 22; *Sources* 2000, p. 161.

Various popes applied indulgences and privileges to the church and its high altar. Popes Sixtus IV and Paul II allowed mass to be celebrated before sunrise and after Nones at the Santissima Annunziata.¹⁴³ Martin V had conceded 1,000 years and 1,000 *quarantene* for the faithful who visited the Santissima Annunziata on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.¹⁴⁴ Barely a month after his election, the Medici pope, Leo X confirmed the concessions of Sixtus IV and Paul II; he also doubled the indulgence conceded by Martin V to 2,000 years and 2,000 *quarantene* adding to this Christmas, and an indulgence of 1,000 years and 2,000 *quarantene* for those who visited the Santissima Annunziata for the Marian feasts.¹⁴⁵ In 1516 Leo X directed the Servite Cardinal Protector, Antonio Chiocci del Monte to consecrate the high altar of the Santissima Annunziata; special annual indulgences were conceded in memory of the event.¹⁴⁶

Although the monumental structure embellishing the high altar was only completed about 1507,¹⁴⁷ it did not maintain its form for long. Fra Lattanzio di Francesco, in 1546, argued, together with several other friars, that it was more appropriate for the Blessed Sacrament (then held in the Villani Chapel *del Crocifisso*) to be conserved on the high altar, the “*più honorato luogo della chiesa*.”¹⁴⁸ Protestant Reform attacks on the Eucharist were probably central to the decision to place the tabernacle containing the Eucharist on the high altar.¹⁴⁹ The Servites, in their constitutions developed at the General Chapter at Budrio in 1548, voiced their concern for protecting the centrality and sacrificial meaning of the Eucharist.¹⁵⁰ Although the Council of Trent had not yet broached the question of the Eucharist, Goldthwaite indicates that those who attended were already stimulated by a new “spirit of reform” to promote the importance of the Eucharistic cult with greater solemnity and propriety.¹⁵¹ A number of Servite friars from the Santissima Annunziata (including several who had acted as regent to the Studium at the Santissima Annunziata, as priors of the convent or the Order) would be engaged in debates confuting various Lutheran doctrines. Fra Romolo Lorenzi did so in his writings, while Fra Lorenzo Mazzocchi and Prior General Agostino Bonucci were both present when the Council of Trent opened in December 1545.¹⁵²

Baccio d’Agnolo’s multi-sided high altarpiece frame was transformed into a triumphal arch suitable for displaying the ciborium made to hold the Eucharist. The central and end paintings were removed, and the depth of the framing structure was decreased. Two of the panels with saints/*beati* were cut down and the resulting half-figures placed above the saints flanking the arch on the front of the frame. The large wooden ciborium for the Eucharist and Holy Oil was commissioned from Baccio d’Agnolo’s sons, Giuliano and Filippo, and decorated with terracotta figures by Santi di Michele Buglioni, and all the new elements were gilded.¹⁵³

140 Besutti 1984, p. 66.

141 Zanovello 2014, p. 407.

142 Zanovello 2014, p. 409.

143 Giani 1618–1622, II, fol. 81v. A note alluding to this privilege was recorded in one of the *Libri di ricordanze* (ASF, CRSGF, 119:58, p. 69).

144 Giamboni 1700, pp. 334, 337.

145 Giani 1618–1622 II, fol. 83r/v.

146 ASF, *Diplomatico Normali 1516 Gennaio 17 SS. Annunziata Firenze*; *Fonti* 2008, vol. 1, p. 131.

147 Katz Nelson 2004, p. 25.

148 ASF, CRSGF, 119:34, fol. 129v, 30 March 1546; ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 19, fols. 14v–15r.

149 Casalini 2001, p. 16.

150 Di Candido 1982, p. 44.

151 Goldthwaite 1993, p. 99.

152 Paoli 2006, p. 24; De Candido 1963, p. 162; Aldrovandi 1963, pp. 69–72.

153 Tonini 1876, pp. 66–67; Casalini 2001, pp. 15–17; ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 19, fols. 14v–15r.

Upon removing the main panels of the high altar, the Servites decided to appeal to potential patrons who might like to ‘adopt’ one of the paintings and establish a suitable altar for it on the pilaster immediately to the right of the high altar under the old organ.¹⁵⁴ Jacopo d’Antonio di Carlo Federighi chose the *Deposition* for this site. He supplied the altar with a dowry of 100 scudi and the obligation that mass be said there every morning, and two offices of the dead annually (one for himself, the other for his ancestors). He also promised a barrel of oil *in perpetuo* to keep a lamp lit there.¹⁵⁵ Thus, although the *Deposition* was no longer the focus of the high altar, it was still visible in connection with the high altar, allowing a direct association of the Eucharist with Christ’s sacrifice. Perugino’s *Assumption of the Virgin*, by contrast, was relocated to the sacristy.¹⁵⁶

With the mid-fifteenth century restructuring of the main chapel, the Servites managed to extricate the high altar from the Falconieri family. In the mid-sixteenth century, the high altar was briefly the focus of a new ‘patronage’ attempt. Louis Alexander Waldman’s vast corpus of documents on Baccio Bandinelli reveals a series of proposals and counter-proposals between Bandinelli and the Servites regarding a potential site for Bandinelli’s sepulchre monument. Consultations were underway by November 1558 when the Servites, in a memorandum, exhorted Duke Cosimo I to reject Bandinelli’s request for a sepulchre at the foot of the steps leading to the high altar. The Servites argued that the site carried too much honour, being appropriate only for Popes.¹⁵⁷

Next, Bandinelli proposed providing sculptures for the two pilasters of the archway between the nave and the tribune, though still wishing to have his monument standing at the foot of the stairs leading to the high altar. This application was also rejected; the Servite sculptor Fra Giovan’Angelo Montorsoli, recently returned from Bologna, apparently had other plans for those spots¹⁵⁸ (though it possibly points to the rivalry between the sculptors).¹⁵⁹ Bandinelli appears to have considered the site where the monument to Mario Nari then stood against the counterfaçade wall in the del Palagio chapel, but only briefly.¹⁶⁰ Then with characteristic Bandinelli arrogance, he proposed that his *Pietà* and *St. John* be placed on the high altar *dove oggi è il santissimo chorppo di Nostro Signore Ihesù Christo* and that his sepulchre be located in the friars’ choir where the choir book lectern stood. The Servites repudiated the request, but not wishing to lose his patronage, they suggested Bandinelli could place the *Pietà* in the Chapel of St. Anne and the figure of St. John could be positioned between the chapels of Giuliano Scala and the Bardi.¹⁶¹ In July 1559, Alamano dei Pazzi conceded Bandinelli his family’s chapel, then under the title of the *Concezione della Vergine*, on the proviso that the Pazzi coat of arms not be removed. Furthermore, it was stipulated that while Bandinelli could display his insignia within the chapel space, he was prohibited from placing it on the pilasters or archway outside of the chapel.¹⁶² Bandinelli accepted these conditions, and his *Pietà*, a Christ supported by either Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathea (with a self-portrait), on an elaborately carved plinth, still inhabits this chapel between the high altar and the Falconieri’s chapel in the right transept. Through the acquisition of this family funerary chapel Baccio Bandinelli, Medici sculptor and knight, proudly

154 ASF, CRSGF, 119:34, fol. 136, 8 March 1546/1547.

155 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 6, fols. 14, 39.

156 The *Assumption* was only transferred to the Chapel of the Rabatta in 1677, where it remains in situ (Tonini 1876, pp. 119–120).

157 Tonini 1876, pp. 309–310, doc. LXXVII; Waldman 2004, p. 697, doc. 1263.

158 Waldman 2004, p. 703, doc. 1268.

159 Barzman 2000, p. 23.

160 Waldman 2004, p. 724, doc. 1291; Davis 1977, pp. 69–94.

161 Waldman 2004, p. 726, doc. 1294.

162 Waldman 2004, pp. 729–732, doc. 1299.



9 Maestro dei Cassoni Campana, *Saint Ignatius of Antioch accompanied by Saints Blaise of Sebaste, Erasmus, and two Child-Martyrs*, ca. 1515. Florence, Santissima Annunziata, chapel of Sant'Ignazio, formerly chapel of Sant'Ansano (photo Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut)

manifested his social elevation. The Servites, for their part, having liberated the high altar from the clutches of lay patronage, were not willing for it to fall again under lay control.

The ciborium placed on the high altar in 1546 proved to be impractical, and in 1576 (or 1578) Fra Sebastiano del Favilla had a smaller one made to be placed on the altar.¹⁶³ The tabernacle and triumphal arch were dismantled in 1655 and replaced with the silver tabernacle commissioned by Cardinal Antonio di Vitale de' Medici, which is still in situ.¹⁶⁴ By placing the Eucharist and Holy Oil on the high altar, the Servites anticipated another practice that would become more common following the Council of Trent.

The Dell'Antella Chapel of St. Ignatius of Antioch (today: Chapel of the Natività della Vergine)

Donato di Bartolomeo dell'Antella claimed continuous patronage of the first tribune chapel on the left, by his family since 1360 through an inscription that he had placed under the altar when he renovated it in 1600–1602: *Americus Antellensis Joannis Filius erexit an. 1360 Ludov. Gonzaga Marchio Mantue annventibus D.nis transtulit mcccclxxv: Donatus Bartholomei Fil auxit, ornavit dotemo dixit, sibi, et consanguineis posuit A. MDC* (in situ). Despite the assurances of the *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603)¹⁶⁵ and the inscription, the chapel's early sixteenth-century patronage has also been associated with another family, the Squarcialupi. Among the early sources to

make this connection were Ferdinando Leopoldo del Migliore in *Firenze Città Nobilissima Illustrata*, (1684) (who specified that it was owned by the “Squarcialupi di Mortenana”); Giuseppe Richa in his *Notizie Istoriche delle Chiese Fiorentine* (1759); and Ottavio Andreucci in his monograph on the Santissima Annunziata (1857).¹⁶⁶ More recently the claim has appeared in an article discussing the painting that once embellished the chapel's altar, *St. Ignatius of Antioch accompanied by Sts. Blaise of Sebaste, Erasmus, and Two Child-Martyrs* (fig. 9)¹⁶⁷ (now in the former chapel of St. Ansanus, western transept, Santissima Annunziata). The source for these references would appear to be Stefano di Francesco Rosselli in his *Sepultuario Fiorentino* (1650–1657), where it is stated that: “Cappella di S. Ignazio, oggi titolata nella Natività di Nra Donna. La condusse Lionardo di Niccolò Squarcialupi. Oggi è stata adornato così riccamente dal Clarissimo Signor Donato di Bartolommeo dell'Antella.” Rosselli then referenced the inscription found under the altar claiming that Amerigo dell'Antella had founded the chapel in 1360.¹⁶⁸ Pellegrino Tonini, in his book on the church, associated the chapel's foundation with the dell'Antella.¹⁶⁹ Apart from the aforementioned references, the belief that the dell'Antella had founded the chapel appears to be

163 Fra Eliseo Biffoli recorded the small ciborium's construction as 2 May 1576 (ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 19, fol. 15r), published: Casalini 2001, p. 32. A reference dated 1 September 1578 in a *Libro di ricordanze* alluded to Favilla having financed both the ciborium and the choir door (ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 124v).

164 Tonini 1876, pp. 67–68.

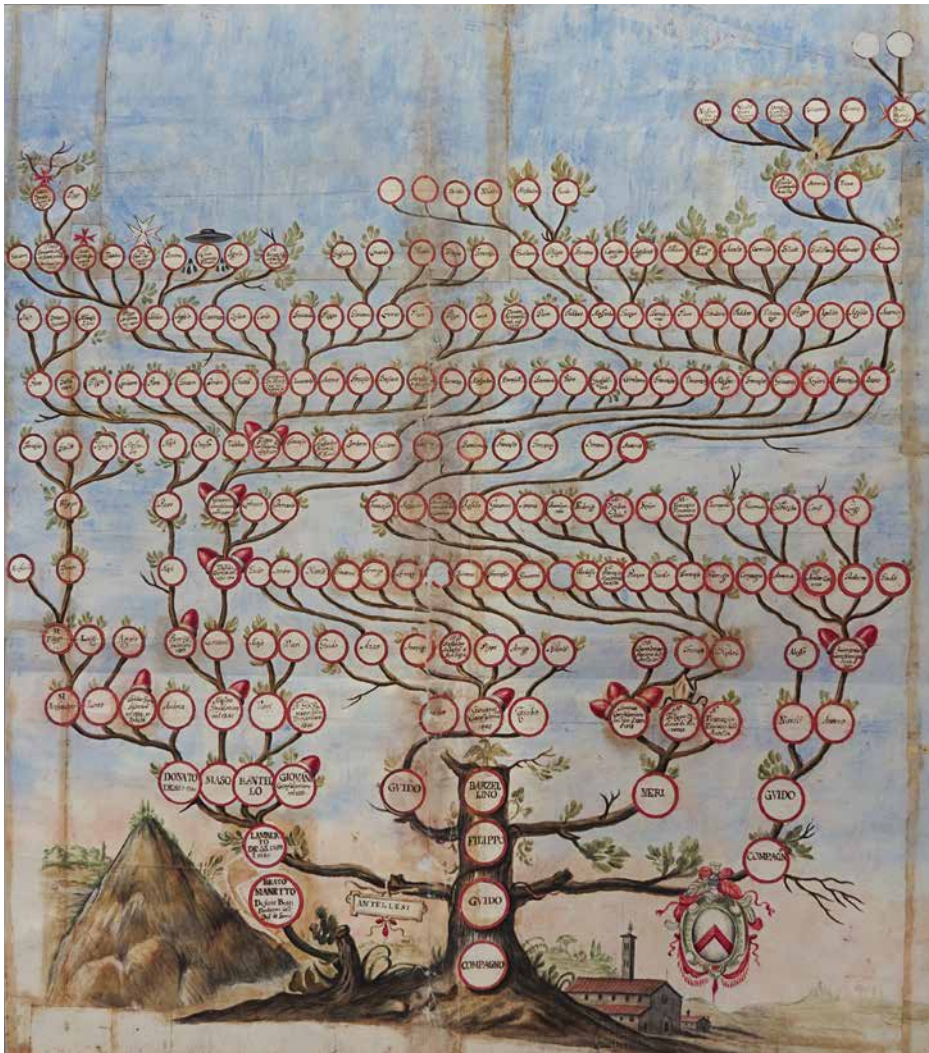
165 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 13r/v.

166 Del Migliore 1684, p. 279; Richa (1754–1762) 1972, vol. 8, p. 41; Andreucci 1857, p. 62.

167 Bernacchioni 2011, pp. 120–121; Bernacchioni 2013, pp. 38–39.

168 ASF, *Manoscritti*, 625 (Stefano di Francesco Rosselli, *Sepultuario Fiorentino*, 1650–1657), p. 1278.

169 Tonini 1876, pp. 154.



10 Family Tree of the dell'Antella.
 ASF, *Manoscritti, Carte Pucci* 592, ins. 30
 (photo author)

the general consensus.¹⁷⁰ What is, therefore, the respective evidence for the association of these two families with the chapel?

Amerigo di Giovanni di Filippo di Guido di Compagno dell'Antella, in a will of 1350, initially showed interest in establishing a chapel in the church, though if the date of 1360 under the altar gives any indication, the formal rights may have been settled or the chapel finished only a decade later.¹⁷¹ A dell'Antella family tree (fig. 10) found amongst the *Carte Pucci* (Florence archives) indicates no sons for

170 Bulman 1971, sect. 2, pp. 3–4; Brown 1981, pp. 72, 94, 96.

171 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 140v: “Chopia d’una scritta ch’è messa in filza che nota le sotto schrite chosse cioè Amerigo di Giovanni del Antella fece testamento nel mile 1350 [sic] d’otobre a Buda in U[n]g[h]eria per la quale la[s]cia a Zanobi del Antella suo zio fiorini 50 d’oro e a Simone di Giovanni del Antella suo fratello charnale fiorini 50 d’oro.

Item la[s]cia fiorini 1000 d’oro per fare e dotare una chapella nela chiesa de Servi di Santa Maria di Firenze.

Item la[s]cia a Giovanni di Guido del Antella suo padre fiorini 1000 d’oro. Tuti deti danari ag[i]ungano in tuto fiorini 2200 d’oro secondo deta scritta la[s]cia nele mane di Nicolo di Taldo Valori che gli aveva nella chonpangnia ch’avevano insieme.

A pagatto Nicholo deto tuti e sopradeti la[s]cij salvo che fiorini 1000 dela chapela e quali non [h]a pagato per che ...[sic] piu termini ...[sic].

Domatina vi priego portiate a singniori per l’achordo vi sapette pregandogli voglino che noi diciase ina[n]zi acholegi e lorro la bisongnia.

Item disse Sandro del Antella in questo richordo era di manno del padre Puti [Punti?] el piovano loro, p. di [padre?] Cosimo di Giovanni del’Antella, fra Diodatto, frate servorum, e a me, fra Mariano de Servi, padre indetto.”

Amerigo. The dell'Antella connected with the church and the chapel in the late sixteenth to seventeenth centuries descended from Amerigo's great uncle, Lamberto di Compagno.¹⁷² The Servites relocated Amerigo's testament in 1538.¹⁷³ Drawn up while Amerigo was in Budapest, Hungary, in 1350, it indicated that he planned to leave 1000 gold florins to establish and endow a chapel at Santa Maria dei Servi (one of the original names of the church). In 1538, the Servites may have been raising doubts about whether the money promised by Amerigo to found the chapel was ever paid. Other documents possibly became known between 1538 and 1600 regarding the chapel's foundation, permitting the dell'Antella to claim ownership of the chapel since 1360.

Little information can be ascertained about the early chapel (either for when it was facing the church nave or the tribune), including its dedication. The Servites recorded payments for prayers said for the soul of the wife of Alessandro dell'Antella (July and August 1384) and for the burial of the wife of Leonardo di Antonio dell'Antella (May 1385).¹⁷⁴ Alessandro may have been the brother of Amerigo.¹⁷⁵ Paola Ircani Menichini, in her book on daily life at the Servite church and convent in the first half of the fifteenth century, identified various references to the dell'Antella family in the church's administrative books: the death of two members of the family; a donation of 25 lire in the will of Leonardo dell'Antella; and donations of oil for a lamp promised by Bartolomeo dell'Antella (delivered by his heirs, 1411, 1416, and 1419, the second identified the donation as *in perpetuo*).¹⁷⁶ None of the references noted by Ircani Menichini specifically mentioned the chapel, which could have been under a different dedication, but the donation of oil for a lamp is certainly suggestive of having been intended for a chapel. Biffoli appears to have found a reference indicating that it was left to the *Nunziata* (although it is possible that this simply indicates the church).¹⁷⁷ A contract of 1453 protected the dell'Antella rights obliging Alberti to provide replacement chapels in the tribune when he destroyed the chapels flanking the high altar.¹⁷⁸

Nothing is known of the furnishings that the dell'Antella might have supplied for their reoriented chapel, nor of their use of it from the 1480s and through the sixteenth century. The Servites, however, paid for pieces of red marble to make a set of the dell'Antella coat of arms and to remake a tomb closure (possibly of the dell'Antella) near the high altar in 1473.¹⁷⁹ Initially, elements of the old altar, its decoration and other paraphernalia may have been transferred to the new chapel. What were the most basic requirements of a chapel? By the thirteenth century, the minimum requirement was an altar table (which needed to be consecrated, either as a permanent altar or to contain a consecrated stone, a 'movable altar'), a cross and two candles.¹⁸⁰ The Servites often required, or the patrons promised, other liturgical equipment essential for the celebration of mass, such as liturgical books, bells, candlesticks, chalices, and vestments for the priest.¹⁸¹ The altar also required a dedication.¹⁸² The early documentation regard-

172 ASF, *Manoscritti, Carte Pucci*, 592, ins. 30. The genealogical tree cannot be considered entirely accurate, it does not include Amerigo's "fratello charnale," Simone di Giovanni dell'Antella, mentioned in Amerigo's testament.

173 See note 171.

174 ASF, CRSFG, 119:683, fols. 51 v, 52, 57.

175 Casprini 2000, pp. 95–96 and family tree [here: fig. 11]. For Leonardo: Caprini 2000, p. 140.

176 Ircani Menichini 2004, pp. 57, 79, 166, 172; ASF, CRSFG, 119:59, book 6, fol. 4r.

177 ASF, CRSFG, 119:59, book 6, fol. 4r.

178 Brown 1981, pp. 72, 94, 96.

179 ASF, CRSFG, 119:196, fol. 151 r; Bulman 1971, sect. 2, p. 4, n. 9.

180 Gardner 1994, p. 9.

181 Katz Nelson 2006, pp. 356–357. See below on the Bardi and Scala chapels.

182 Gardner 1994, p. 10.

ing the dell'Antella chapel does not mention its title. Indeed, the first document to mention the chapel's dedication to St. Ignatius is dated 1522 (discussed below), though it implies that the dedication had existed for some time.¹⁸³ Ircani Menichini reported no references to altars, chapels or feasts in honour of St. Ignatius of Antioch in the early fifteenth-century church.¹⁸⁴

The dell'Antella always maintained good relations with the Medici.¹⁸⁵ Their houses were traditionally situated in the Gonfalone del Carro, part of the Quartier of Santa Croce, in the Piazza della Signoria and nearby via della Condotta, close to the via delle Farine.¹⁸⁶ Members of the dell'Antella *consorterie* (the extended family) were still a part of the church community in the early sixteenth century. Taddeo di Bernardo dell'Antella was a church *operaio* in 1509, then in 1526, Giovanni dell'Antella had this same role.¹⁸⁷ In July 1527, the Servites recorded in their *Libro di ricordanze* that Francesca, the widow of Taddeo dell'Antella, donated 50 gold florins obliging the Servites to celebrate masses for herself and her sons. The reference, however, does not state whether the memorial mass was to be said in the chapel.¹⁸⁸ Various masses are recorded for her in a *Libro d'ufficio dei Morti*,¹⁸⁹ but a later hand (seemingly that of Biffoli) wrote underneath the reference in the *Libro di ricordanze*: "qui non vi si legge obbligo di messe."¹⁹⁰

Giovanni dell'Antella¹⁹¹ appeared as a crucial player in a disagreement regarding a small commemorative monument placed in the church. Domenico Conti had Raffaello da Montelupo carve a marble plaque with an epitaph written by Piero Vettori in honour of his master, the painter Andrea del Sarto (1486–1530), and attached to a pilaster in the Santissima Annunziata.¹⁹² Giovanni dell'Antella, then the head *operaio*, soon demanded the plaque be removed, claiming it had been placed there without permission of the *operai*. Although Domenico Conti petitioned Cosimo I that he not be obliged to take down the plaque (5 October 1538), the decision was ratified by Monsignor Agnolo Marzi (bishop of Assisi).¹⁹³ Luigi Biadi suggested that the plaque had been placed on the pilaster to the left of the high altar (roughly where Marzi's tomb now stands).¹⁹⁴ If Biadi is correct, it is possible that both Giovanni dell'Antella and Monsignor Marzi were protecting certain interests. Dell'Antella perhaps was driven by a desire to protect his family's ancient rights, for despite the dell'Antella chapel having been turned in toward the tribune, they still had their arms on

183 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 112r, 3 July 1522.

184 Ircani Menichini 2004.

185 Casprini 2000, p. 19.

186 Orgera 2000, p. 31.

187 ASF, CRSGF, 119:199, fol. 1r; ASF, CRSGF, 119:707, fol. 10v.

188 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 123r; ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 6, fol. 10v (Biffoli named as sources both of the just cited reference and another volume, which is not among the volumes in the ASF). The family tree (ASF, *Manoscritti: Carte Pucci*, 592, I, ins. 30) offers two possible husbands for Francesca: Taddeo di Giovanni or Taddeo di Bernardo, both grandsons of Taddeo di Giovanni di Masino (*gonfaloniere* 1435). Taddeo di Giovanni had three sons, and was a great uncle to Donato di Bartolommeo dell'Antella who decorated the chapel. He was uncle to Giovanni and Bartolomeo di Filippo dell'Antella who the *Libro di ricordanze* (ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 123r) mentioned in relation to this bequest. Taddeo di Bernardo dell'Antella was slightly further removed from Donato dell'Antella. Nevertheless, as Taddeo di Bernardo was identified as an *operai* in 1509, he remains a possibility (ASF, CRSGF, 119:199, fol. 1r).

189 ASF, CRSGF, 119:814, fols. 43r, 47r, 55r, 66r, 75r, 94r.

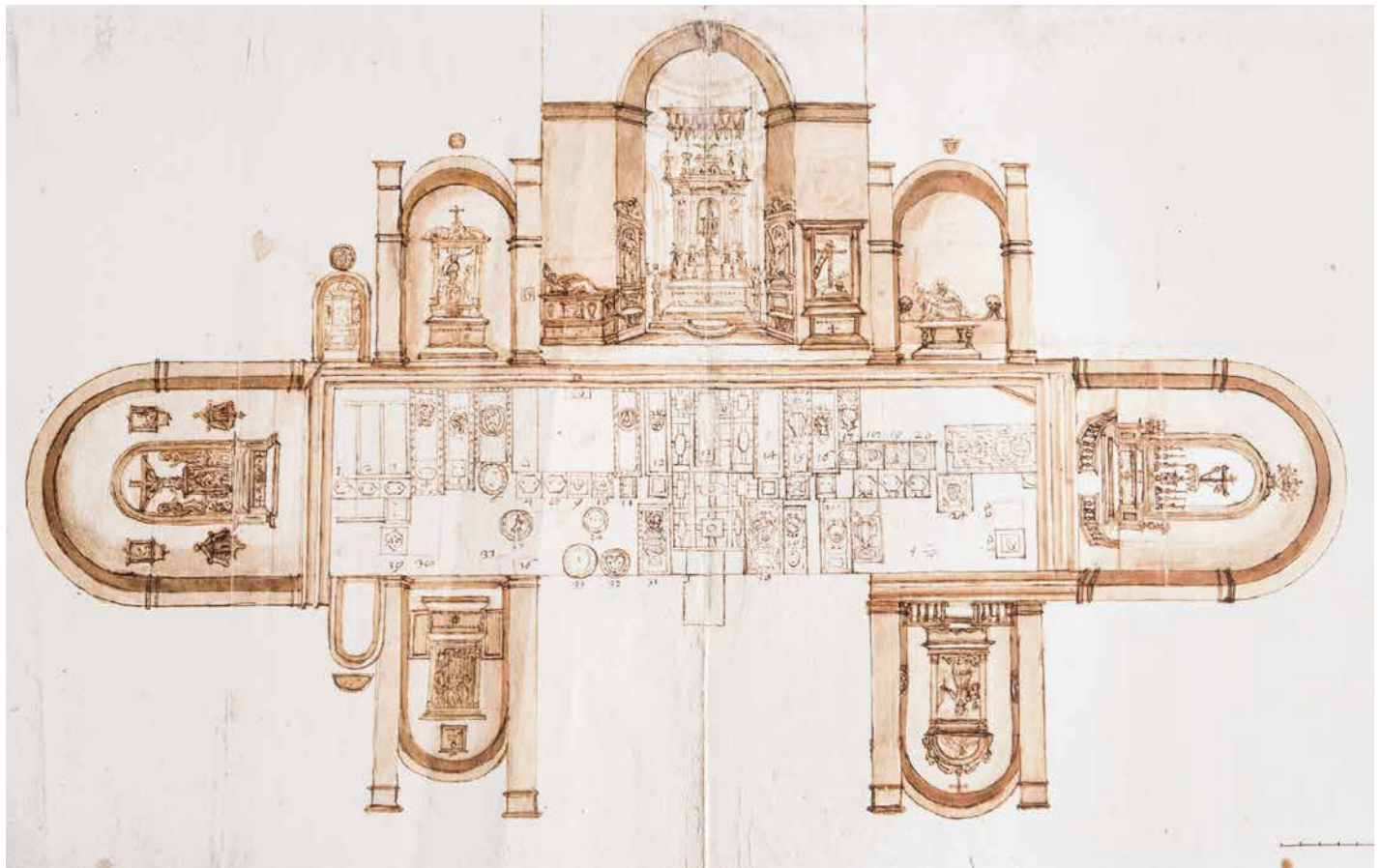
190 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 123r.

191 Possibly Giovanni di Filippo di Giovanni dell'Antella (1474–1548); buried in Santa Croce (Casprini 2000, pp. 129–131).

192 Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, p. 396.

193 Gaetano Milanese, in Vasari (1568) 1906, vol. 5, p. 60; Guinness 1901, p. 53.

194 Biadi 1831, pp. 130–132.



11 *Croce della Chiesa della Ss.ma Nunziata di Firenze*, 1675, drawing of transept showing the dell'Antella coat-of-arms on the step, tombs and the pilaster between the Tedaldi Chapel and tomb-monument of Monsignor Angelo Marzi, sepulchres, high altar, Federighi Chapel, ink on paper, 48 × 73.5 cm. ASF, CRSGF 119:1273, fol. 26 (photo Caterina Pardi)

the pilaster that their original chapel had shared with the Tedaldi chapel in the transept (fig. 11).¹⁹⁵ Monsignor Marzi, by contrast, was protecting newly acquired rights. In 1534, he had requested the site in front of the arch and between the chapel of 'Sancto Filippo' (Tedaldi Chapel) and the high altar, for a sepulchre for himself,¹⁹⁶ possibly with the intention of modifying the space to create a chapel with a sepulchre-monument-altar where daily mass could be celebrated commemorating himself, his wife and his ancestors.¹⁹⁷ Francesco da Sangallo's monument to Marzi now stands on the site.

Returning to the tribune chapel, the first information on its embellishment appears in the early decades of the sixteenth century when a new altarpiece depicting *St. Ignatius of Antioch accompanied by Sts. Blaise of Sebaste, Erasmus, and Two Child-Martyrs*, was set there. An altarpiece was not a mandatory prop for the performance of mass at an altar,¹⁹⁸ but this and other 'unnecessary' decorations would have reflected positively on the honour and status of the family patronising the chapel and on the church in which it stood.¹⁹⁹ In the painting, Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch, holds his heart with the monogram of Jesus on it and a

195 Rosselli reported that in 1635, under cover of darkness, the friars employed someone to remove the escutcheon with the arms of the dell'Antella, and those of the Macci on the opposite pilaster, with a scalpel. The dell'Antella, however, protested, and their arms were replaced (ASF, *Manoscritti*, 625, p. 1300).

196 ASF, CRSGF, 119:33, fol. 56v, 12 November 1534, "Adì 12 el padre priore raghunò e padri e prepose come monsignore de Marzi era desideroso haver qua nella nostra chiesa una sepoltura e domando al Padre Priore quello chantone in cupola a preso alla sagrestia a lato a Sancto Filippo decto padre priore e li padri furono contenti farglitene uno presente e cosi fu vinto per tuctte le fave nere furono 13."

197 Roisman 1995, pp. 53–55, 287–288.

198 Gardner 1994, p. 6.

199 Katz Nelson 2006, p. 373.

martyr's palm. According to his legend, when Ignatius' heart was extracted following his death, Jesus' name was found written on it.²⁰⁰ Two auxiliary saints appear in the panel: Blaise, who holds an iron wool comb, the instrument of his martyrdom, was thought to be especially efficacious in the treatment of sore throats – his legend tells that he saved a child who was choking on a fishbone;²⁰¹ and Erasmus, who was especially invoked against epidemics.²⁰² Swords pierce the throats of the children, suggesting they might represent the Holy Innocents. All the saints' names were inscribed along the lower edge of the altarpiece; unfortunately, the names of the children are the least legible. Tonini recorded the inscription as: S. TEDALLVS SAS. BLASIVS S. MISSILLA S. IGNATIUS. S. ERASMUS.²⁰³ I have not found information on child saints with these names.

Once thought to be by Davide Ghirlandaio, the altarpiece has since been attributed to the Maestro dei Cassoni Campana, active in Florence during the first quarter of the sixteenth century.²⁰⁴ Federico Zeri identified this *maestro* as a French artist working in Italy. Anna Maria Bernacchioni has recently suggested that he was likely part of the community of artists associated with the Santissima Annunziata, and more specifically, with the German and Flemish Compagnia di Santa Barbara (whose membership could also extend to the French). Bernacchioni links the master to a certain “Antonio di Jacopo, detto Antonio Gallo,” and she argues that the Benedictine monk Ignazio di Manfredi Squarcialupi commissioned the panel.²⁰⁵ We thus need to consider what connection the Squarcialupi had with the chapel.

In 1522 a donor, identified only as “a friend of Fra Salvestro,” gave 100 gold florins to be invested in property to provide an endowment. In return, the Servites were obliged to solemnly celebrate at the altar of St. Ignatius the feasts of St. Ignatius of Antioch (1 February), St. Blaise (3 February), and St. Erasmus (2 June), then every Saturday a mass for Our Lady, plus all the designated feasts and every Monday a mass for the dead. They were also to maintain a lighted lamp in the chapel.²⁰⁶ The donation raises two possibilities: either the donor was responding to the chapel's saintly patronage announced by the dell'Antella through the altarpiece, or this donor had provided the panel with these saints and was extending the chapel's devotional focus beyond St. Ignatius of Antioch. One of the functions of altar panels was to indicate the chapel's dedication – whether in the name of the Virgin, a saint, or a mystery. This bequest is actually the first document to provide evidence of the chapel's dedication to St. Ignatius of Antioch. By contrast to the lack of early records of a chapel or altar dedicated to St. Ignatius, there was an altar dedicated to St. Blaise. Cardinal Niccolò da Prato had bestowed an indulgence on it in 1304 (together with those of St. Anne and St. Martin).²⁰⁷ Nothing, however, is known of its location or patronage. A stone medallion carved with a figure of St. Blaise (original location unknown, current location: Santissima Annunziata, Chiostro Grande) is the only remaining physical evidence of the chapel.²⁰⁸ Nevertheless, the document of 1522 clearly indicates that the tribune chapel was already dedicated to St. Ignatius by that time.

200 Bosio/Colafranceschi 1966, col. 665.

201 Gordini et al. 1963, col. 165.

202 Balducci/Negri Arnoldi 1964, col. 1289.

203 Tonini 1876, p. 123. While Tonini's transcription is not exact (he wrote SAS only in front of Blasius, but it appears before all the saints' names), a close examination of the panel suggests that his transcription of the children's names is correct.

204 Fabbri 1990, pp. 58, 76, n. 25.

205 Bernacchioni 2011, pp. 120–125; Bernacchioni 2013, p. 39.

206 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 112r, 3 July 1522.

207 Tauci 1942 pp. 107–108.

208 Casalini 1995 p. 87, tav. XXII, 42.

A new benefaction was offered to the chapel in 1547 (a house in the parish of San Lorenzo, near to the convent of Sant'Orsola) by Agnolo di Sandro di Piero, also known as “*Sancto nostro becchaio*” (our butcher). He obliged the Servites to provide him with a sepulchre, and wished for masses to be said at the altar of St. Ignatius. Originally, he wanted a daily mass to be said, but later established an annual office in June for himself and his wife, and a weekly mass to be said for them at the altar.²⁰⁹ In 1569 Lionardo di Niccolò di Simone Schaccialupi *cimatore* (a textile trimmer) living in piazza Santo Spirito, left 300 gold *scudi* to the church, specifically as an endowment for the altar of St. Ignatius, for the remedy of his soul and that of his ancestors. He obliged the friars to provide him with a sepulchre in the church and to celebrate two offices of the dead annually *in perpetuo* and twice-weekly mass for himself and his ancestors at St. Ignatius' altar.²¹⁰ Lionardo was buried in the Santissima Annunziata on 3 August 1569. His sepulchre, located in the nave under the organ, next to the Torrigiani family tomb, was not in close vicinity to the Chapel of St. Ignatius of Antioch.²¹¹ Although Lionardo's surname was originally written “Schaccialupi,” Biffoli and Fra Lapini recorded “Squarcialupi.”²¹² One or both sources must have provided the inspiration for later writers to associate the chapel with the noble Squarcialupi family. The potential connection with the Schaccialupi/Squarcialupi substantially post-dates the altarpiece's production, so unless the unidentified friend of Fra Salvestro was Ignazio di Manfredo Squarcialupi, there seems no compelling reason to connect the commission of the painting with this individual.

Nevertheless, these generous donations to the chapel – for which there is no indication of any change of ownership or *ius patronatus* – reflect the importance of a cult that must have developed around the altarpiece depicting *Sts. Ignatius of Antioch, Blaise, Erasmus, and Two Child-Martyrs*. Through the agent of sacred paintings, Florentines could also develop spiritual client-patron relationships with Christ, the Virgin, and the saints, that imitated relationships in daily life.²¹³ If an image was perceived as particularly efficacious devotees might leave offerings, money for masses to be said before the image, or votive objects. Such activity is well known in relation to the *Madonna della Nunziata*, but it also appears to have occurred with the image of *Sts. Ignatius, Blaise, Erasmus, and Two Child-Martyrs*, to a lesser degree. When Donato dell'Antella decided to redecorate the chapel, the Servites transferred the painting to the chapel of St. Ansanus. A note in the *Libro degli Obblighi* of 1603 explained that this was due to the great veneration received by the saints, who were performing miracles daily, “come si vede.”²¹⁴ The phrase “as one sees,” seems to indicate that some visual evidence of this cult, such as ex-votos (objects left *per grazia ricevuta* or

209 ASF, CRSGF, 119:34, fols. 142, 143v; ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1569), fol. 5v.

210 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fols. 56v–57, Agosto 1569. The contract was drawn up by Ser Agniollo del Favilla, notary at the palagio del Podesta. Andreucci was aware of the donation through a book of *Obblighi delle Messe* drawn up by Padre Costantino Chellini, though he dated it 1559 and cited this as proving Rosselli's claim that the Squarcialupi founded the chapel (Andreucci 1857, p. 62).

211 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 6, fol. 26v; ASF, CRSGF, 119:815, fol. 76. An office performed for his soul was recorded 14 February 1569/1570 (ASF, CRSGF, 119:815, fol. 182). For the location of the Torrigiani sepulchre: ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 10, fol. 9.

212 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 6, fol. 26v; ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 13.

213 Trexler 1980, pp. 61–72.

214 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 13, “Cappella di Santo Ignatio, hoggi detta la Cappella della Nativita della Beata Vergine / La Predetta fù et è della Nobile famiglia dell'Antella et per il passato nella tavola di detta Cappella vi era il Ritratto di Santo Ignatio, di Santo Biagio, et di Santo Erasmo, detti Santi erano et sono in gran veneratione, faccendo giornalmente miracoli, come si vede.”

received from a holy figure),²¹⁵ were being attached to the chapel. Giamboni, in his *Diario Sacro* (published 1700), revealed the enduring devotion focused on Sts. Ignatius of Antioch and Blaise through this painting, when he reported the continued celebration of their feasts at the Santissima Annunziata.²¹⁶

Donato di Bartolomeo dell'Antella (1540–1617), whose father died when he was only 18, rose quickly through the Medici court's bureaucracy, with the assistance of his cousin Filippo di Giovanni dell'Antella (1513–1590).²¹⁷ Filippo had succeeded Donato's father as senator of the *Quarant'otto*. Donato moved to Rome, where he worked for Paolo Giordano Orsino before transferring, in ca. 1570, to the service of Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici. Donato returned to Florence with the cardinal when Grand Duke Francesco died and immediately was invested with significant administrative roles. When his cousin Filippo died, Donato inherited the role of Senator of the *Quarant'otto*;²¹⁸ he was also nominated in Filippo's place as an *operaio* of the Santissima Annunziata.²¹⁹ Donato turned his attention to the family chapel in 1600, transmuting its devotional focus to the Nativity of the Virgin and to his holy ancestor, the Bl. Fra Manetto dell'Antella, one of the Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order.²²⁰ Only one of the Holy Founders was named in the earliest account of the Order's origins (Fra Alessio).²²¹ A "Fra Manetto" was identified as one of the Seven by the late fifteenth century.²²² The Florentine Servite hagiographer Fra Cosimo Favilla, writing in 1512, was the first to associate this Fra Manetto with the dell'Antella family when he identified him as "ex Antellarum familia nobilissima."²²³ Some uncertainty may have remained regarding Fra Manetto's precise connection with the family, as evident in the late family tree in the *Carte Pucci* where his name appears on a tree stump to one side of the main tree (fig. 11). Nevertheless, when Donato dell'Antella decorated his chapel, he could feel confident of the association. The Servite chronicler Fra Michele Poccianti repeated it in his *Vita dei Sette Beati Fiorentini* (first published 1575)²²⁴ and the Servite historian Fra Archangelo Giani would reconfirm it in his *Historia del Beato Filippo* (where he also praised the beautiful paintings depicting the "governi e miracoli" of Fra Manetto in this chapel).²²⁵

Donato's decorations remain in situ. Alessandro Allori composed an elegant scene of childbirth in a wealthy household to represent the chapel's dedication, the *Nativity of the Virgin* (Alessandro Allori, 1602) (fig. 12). This sits centrally above the altar. It is flanked by scenes from the life of the Bl. Manetto dell'Antella: to the left, Alessandro Allori's *Seven Holy Founders at Monte Senario*, and Domenico Passignano's *Election of the Blessed Manetto as Servite General* (fig. 13); and to the right, Jacopo Ligozzi's *Pope Clement IV Concedes Holy Privileges to the Servite Order* and *Blessed Manetto Heals a Crippled Person*, by Cristofano Allori.²²⁶ Fra Alessandro Lapini, acclaimed the marble decorations and paintings – made by "eccelenti pittori" – of this chapel, in the *Libro degli Obblighi* of 1603, noting

215 A vast literature exists on votive offerings. Hugo van der Velden offers a useful analysis and categorisation of a wide variety of ex-voto types in his chapter: *The Iconology of the Votive Image* (Van der Velden 2000, pp. 191–285).

216 Giamboni 1700 pp. 35–36, 38–39.

217 Their shared grandfather, Filippo di Giovanni dell'Antella was gonfalonier in 1493 and 1517 (ASF, *Manoscritti, Carte Pucci*, 592, ins. 30).

218 Vivoli 1989, pp. 113–115.

219 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 202v, 17 July 1591.

220 Tonini 1876, p. 155.

221 *Legenda de Origine Ordinis* 2013, pp. 34–35, 64–65; Dal Pino 1997, pp. 449–466.

222 Dal Pino 1972, p. 155.

223 Favilla ed. 1913, p. 129; Dal Pino 1972, p. 71, n. 62, 153–158.

224 Poccianti 1589, pp. 90–91.

225 Giani 1604, pp. 92–96.

226 Grassi 2014, p. 54.



12 Alessandro Allori, *Nativity of the Virgin*, 1602, oil on panel, 330 x 215 cm. Florence, Santissima Annunziata (photo Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut)

13 Domenico Passignano, *Election of the Blessed Manetto as Servite General*, 1602, oil on canvas, 178 x 143 cm. Florence, Santissima Annunziata (photo Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut)

that Donato had spent more than 2500 scudi on the decorations “con grande reputatione della chiesa nostra, et sodisfatione della città tutta.”²²⁷ The Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin, the chapel’s dedication, was to be celebrated annually at the altar. In his will of 14 March 1602/1603 Donato dell’Antella provided the chapel with a substantial endowment of 1683 scudi invested in the city’s *Monte*, offering an annual *dota* of 15 scudi.²²⁸ The Servites in return were to celebrate mass on Sundays (or another day if they preferred), a Mass for the Dead on Wednesdays for his parents, and a Mass for the Dead on Saturdays for himself. They were to perform an Office of the Dead annually on 25 January for his parents and ancestor’s souls with 30 *Messe Piane*, and when he died, they were to say an Office of the Dead with 30 *Messe Piane* on that day (there not being any impediment).²²⁹ Donato also desired that the Servites keep a lighted lamp in the chapel at the appropriate times.²³⁰ The chapel’s lantern was made of silver, as we are informed only a few years after the chapel’s completion. On 7 February 1606 (st.mod.) a Siense youth was caught “inflagrante” stealing the “lampada d’argento alla cappella delli signori dell’Antella.” He was sent to the court of the Bargello, and was also suspected of other thefts that had occurred in the church in the previous days.²³¹

227 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 13v.

228 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 13v.

229 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 13v.

230 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 13v.

231 ASF, CRSGF, 119:36, fol. 3v.

The Giacomini-Tebalducci Chapel of St. Anne

The first tribune chapel entering to the right was dedicated to St. Anne, and like the dell'Antella chapel, it replaced one that initially faced the nave. An altar dedicated to Mary's mother is thought to have existed in the church since at least 1304. The founder of the early altar and this chapel (they were probably connected) is unknown. The Giacomini-Tebalducci association with the chapel apparently dates to sometime before the mid-fifteenth century.²³² The family initially made their money in banking in the early fifteenth century.²³³ As with the dell'Antella, it is unknown if the Giacomini invested in the chapel's adornment following its move into the tribune. Politically, the years leading up to chapel's reorientation were difficult for the family. In 1466 Piero di Tommaso Giacomini Tebalducci was involved in Luca Pitti's unsuccessful plot against Piero di Cosimo de' Medici, and the family suffered financial setbacks as a result.²³⁴ They may thus have been unable to provide new embellishments when the tribune was completed and the triumphal arch opened 1476–1479, and perhaps simply moved the transferrable elements, i.e., the altar, altarpiece, and liturgical paraphernalia, to the new site.

Biffoli states, in his *Notizie delle Cose Memorabile*, that the family was still wealthy in the sixteenth century, but had moved to France when Fra Lattanzio di Francesco, a Servite confessor of some apparent repute, despairing at the chapel's abandoned state determined to arrange for the altar's embellishment himself. Fra Lattanzio commissioned Antonio di Donnino del Mazziere (1497–1547) to paint the panel, *St. Anne with the Virgin and Child, Sts. Stephen and Laurence, and Bls. Filippo Benizi and Giuliana Falconieri* (in situ) (fig. 14)²³⁵ in 1543 (completed between 14 July and 10 August for 84 lire).²³⁶ St. Anne and the Virgin and Child, sit on a double throne, raised upon two steps. Christ holds a small bird, perhaps a finch, in his left hand. The throne is flanked on either side by a saint: Stephen to the viewer's left and Laurence to the viewer's right. Stephen holds in his right hand the martyr's palm, and with his left presents the stones of his martyrdom cupped in the fold of his tunic. Laurence holds the martyr's palm in his left hand and balances a book, supported by two fingers of his right hand, against his side. The grill on which he was martyred rests against his leg. Kneeling on a step before them are the two Servite blesseds. Filippo Benizi holds a stem of lilies, with which he is often represented. The Papal triregnum lies on the ground near his knee. This motif came to be popularly associated with Filippo during the sixteenth century, alluding to his rejection of the Curia's plans to make him Pope.²³⁷ Filippo's face is seen in *profil perdu* as he looks up toward the Virgin and Child, who both smile warmly down at him. Opposite Filippo kneels Giuliana Falconieri, who with her right hand indicates the host exposed in a split in her habit near her left breast, and holds a rosary in her left hand. Next to her on the step lie a skull and a lily. The position of Giuliana's arms echoes that of St. Laurence, who stands above her. Fra Paolo Attavanti had promoted *beata* Giuliana, identifying her in his *Paulina Praedicabilis* as the niece of Bl. Fra Alessio Falconieri (one of the Seven Holy Founders of

232 Taucci 1942, pp. 107–108; Casalini 1995, p. 56. Ircani Menichini (2004 pp. 32–33) did not, however, note references to the altar during the first half of the fifteenth century. This could either be a record-survival problem, or indicate that the altar and the chapel were separate items that both happened to bear dedications to St. Anne. Ircani Menichini also does not identify any references to the Giacomini-Tebalducci.

233 Arrighi 2000a, p. 173.

234 Arrighi 2000a, p. 173.

235 An organ obscures the painting. For a colour reproduction: Nesi 2017, fig. 7.

236 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 17. The payments, July–August 1543 were identified by Vera Silvani in her tesi di laurea, *Il pittore Antonio di Donnino del Mazziere, 1991–1992* (cited in Cecchi 2004, pp. 194, 198, n. 2).

237 This episode was first recounted in the *Legenda Vulgata*, para. 16: *Legenda Beati Philippi* ed. 1898, pp. 75–76; *Sources* 2000, pp. 276–277.



14 Antonio di Donnino Mazziere, *Saint Anne with the Virgin and Child, with Saints Steven and Laurence, and Blesseds Filippo Benizi and Giuliana Falconieri*. Florence, Santissima Annunziata, chapel of Sant'Anna (photo Gabinetto Fotografico degli Uffizi)

the Servite Order) and an ideal guide for the Servite sisters and nuns. She was a particularly apposite example upon which young noble females could model their spiritual and cultural life due to her noble blood, penitential practices, and love for the Eucharist.²³⁸ While Giuliana wears the crown of a blessed, Filippo appears with a saint's halo, despite the fact that he was not formally recognised as such until 1671.²³⁹

Eugenio Casalini suggested that Leonardo's drawing of *St. Anne with the Holy Family* was a preparatory work for the Chapel of St. Anne,²⁴⁰ but this seems highly unlikely. Nevertheless, the drawing may have had an impact, albeit through a second image, on the panel that would eventually embellish the chapel. Vasari describes how Leonardo's drawing was displayed for two days in the rooms where he was staying and was visited with all the solemnity of a holy feast day by "men and women, young and old," who admired it greatly.²⁴¹ When Leonardo left Florence, he took the drawing with him.²⁴² Antonio del Mazziere was too young to have drawn directly from Leonardo's *Virgin, Child and St. Anne* while it was still in Florence, but among those who did copy it was Fra Bartolomeo della Porta. The central figures of Fra Bartolomeo's Great Hall altarpiece commissioned for the Sala Grande of Palazzo della Signoria (today in Museo di San Marco, Florence) (1510–1513) reflect his study and creative exploration of Leonardo's drawing.²⁴³ St. Anne's upward gaze, raised hand gesture, her billowing mantle that embraces the Virgin, and the central figures' dynamic upward-twisting movement make

it clear that del Mazziere drew inspiration from Fra Bartolomeo's altarpiece. The elevation of St. Anne is achieved in both paintings through a sort of double throne, Anne sitting on the uppermost seat with Mary holding the Child on the lower seat. The throne rests two steps above a floor upon which stand the accompanying saints. Fra Bartolomeo includes six standing and two kneeling saints on this level, Mazziere presents only two standing saints and two kneeling blesseds in his panel, which is smaller in size. Fra Bartolomeo's altarpiece remained unfinished when Piero Soderini's Great Hall decorations were abandoned. Mazziere, however, could have seen the painting on the altar of the Chapel of San Bernardo in the church of San Lorenzo, where the chapel's owner, Ottaviano di Bernardetto di Antonio de' Medici placed it, having acquired it in 1540,²⁴⁴ only a few years before Mazziere's commission.

The Florentines particularly revered St. Anne as a Republican saint. It was on her feast day (26 July) in 1343, that Walter of Brienne, known as the Duke of Athens, a tyrant who had attempted to take over Florence, was driven out. For this reason, she was one of the central figures in the altarpiece of the Great

238 Attavanti, "Dialogus," pp. 119–120; *Fonti* 2002, pp. 458–459. The earliest reference to her appears in Fra Attavanti's *Dialogus*, p. 109; Dal Pino 2001, pp. 106–107.

239 It is not clear if this is a later addition or an original detail. There are certainly many early examples of Bl. Filippo Benizi with a halo, including in Andrea del Sarto's frescoes of the *Life and Miracles of Bl. Filippo Benizi*, in the forecourt of the Santissima Annunziata (1509–1510).

240 Casalini 1998, pp. 146–151.

241 Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, p. 29.

242 Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, p. 30; Hartt 1986, pp. 95–116.

243 Fischer 2016, pp. 145–146.

244 Fischer 2016, p. 143; *L'Età di Savonarola* 1996, pp. 100–101.

Hall.²⁴⁵ Chris Fischer offers a further interpretation of Fra Bartolomeo's *St. Anne Altarpiece* as a *sacra conversazione* in which the participants are discussing the Immaculate Conception, as alluded to by the figures of St. Anne, the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child.²⁴⁶ Both themes were likely relevant to the altarpiece in the Santissima Annunziata. Saints Stephen and Laurence's direct gazes towards St. Anne underline her central importance to the panel's meaning. While this may be due to her role as the chapel's titular saint, it may also connect to Immaculate Conception symbolism – that is, that the Virgin Mary was pre-redeemed before her conception. Although only recognised as dogma in 1854, the Immaculate Conception had a long history, and debate over the feast's legitimacy extends back to the twelfth century. Sixtus IV provided significant support to the feast of the Virgin's Conception in 1477, legitimising its celebration on 8 December and sanctioning two offices.²⁴⁷ This, in turn, stimulated the cult of St. Anne. Although not all images of St. Anne with the Virgin Mary can claim to promote the theme of the Immaculate Conception, when a link (physical or visual) is evident between St. Anne and the Christ Child, it raises the likelihood that there is an allusion to this mystery.²⁴⁸ In Mazziere's painting, the Child and St. Anne make the same raised arm gesture, creating a crucial visual relationship between them.

Evidence for the Servite celebration of the feast of Mary's Conception dates at least to the early fifteenth century, potentially even to the late fourteenth century. The feast was already noted in a breviary (Mazarino Library, Paris) of 1410 written out by a certain Fra Pietro da Forlì dei Servi for an unnamed Servite convent. The form of the feast's celebration was included in a Servite Proper contained in an early quattrocento Florentine manuscript (Municipal Library, Douai).²⁴⁹ Payments for the celebration of the feast of the Virgin's Conception frequently appear in the Santissima Annunziata's administrative books from at least the second half of the fifteenth century. Initially, individual women were requesting the feast. In 1463, Mona Lucretia, daughter of Cristofano *orafa*, wife of Guido di Magio Gerini da Gherezano, donated 160 lire for an annual celebration of the feast *in perpetuo* at the altar of the *Nunziata*.²⁵⁰ In 1469, two women paid for sung masses for the Virgin's Conception; one, unnamed, donated one lire and some bread and wine, the other, the wife of Master Simone doctor, paid a florin. Her husband was identified as the convent doctor when she requested the feast again in 1474. In that same year, Maddalena de' Cortigiani (possibly connected to the Cortigiani chapel in the nave) requested to have the feast commemorated, paying 1 lira 13 soldi.²⁵¹ In 1486, mona Lisa de' Bisdomini offered 1 lire 1 soldo "per pescie" for the feast of the Conception.²⁵² By 1499, the feast came to be clearly associated with the Sisters of the Servite Third Order.²⁵³ The records often simply refer to the feast as of the *Concezione*, however, the Servite Order promoted the feast in the form of the Immaculate Conception.²⁵⁴

245 Fischer 1990, p. 219.

246 Fischer 1990, p. 219.

247 Mayberry 1991, pp. 207–210.

248 Giffin 2017, pp. 150–157.

249 *Fonti* 2002, pp. 423–424.

250 ASF, CRSGF, 119:48, fol. 96v, 13 March 1462/1463; ASF, CRSGF, 119:690, fol. 6v. This mass was still being celebrated, for instance in 1535: ASF, CRSGF, 119:814, fol. 64, 23 December 1535.

251 ASF, CRSGF, 119:692, fol. 3, 7 December 1469; ASF, CRSGF, 119:618, fol. 23, 9 December 1474; fol. 23v, 9 December 1474.

252 ASF, CRSGF, 119:699, fol. 5.

253 Payments for the feast continued into the following years, for example 1500, 1503, 1504, 1506, 1508, 1511, 1525: ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fols. 4v, 13, 32v, 39v; ASF, CRSGF, 119:701, fol. 19v, 1506; ASF, CRSGF, 119:702, fol. 16v; ASF, CRSGF, 119:704, fol. 26; ASF, CRSGF, 119:707, fol. 5.

Fra Lattanzio's concern for the state of this specific altar is notable. Although located next to the high altar it was not highly visible since it faced toward the choir and was hidden within the tribune's curve. The friar took the liberty of having Antonio del Mazziere give the two deacon saints the likenesses of Fra Stefano dei Servi and Fra Eliseo Biffoli, then respectively deacon and sub-deacon.²⁵⁵ This, together with the inclusion of the Servite *beati* Filippo Benizi and Giuliana Falconieri suggests that the altar had a special meaning for the Servite friars or the *Ammantellate* – female members of the Servite Third Order. The presence of an altar dedicated to St. Anne had particular implications for the Servites' liturgical celebrations. The *De Reverentis Beatis Marie Virginis* stipulated that: "Where the church or an altar are dedicated to her, the feast of St. Anne is to be celebrated with a double office."²⁵⁶ The church's administrative books document a special connection of the novices with St. Anne's feast at the Santissima Annunziata.²⁵⁷ We cannot be sure, however, that they always focused their main celebration of the feast at this altar; another altar dedicated to St. Anne was found in the novitiate.²⁵⁸

Alternatively, Niccolò Manetti da Pistoia included a mass of St. Anne in a devotional work that he wrote for the "Fraternità e compagnia dell'Ordine dei Servi della Vergine Maria" – another name for the Servite Third Order.²⁵⁹ In 1528, a group of Servite *Ammantellate* were living in a house donated by Monaldo and Alessandra Macinghi for the sisters. This community's prioress was a certain Tita di Lorenzo Giacomini.²⁶⁰ Tita was possibly a member of the family that owned the chapel. She could have been instrumental in focusing the devotions of the *Ammantellate* toward this chapel, in part inspired by the family connection and in part by the chapel's conformity with the devotions of the *Ammantellate*. This is not the only chapel with which the *Ammantellate* have been associated in the Santissima Annunziata. A document of 1515 situated the investiture of one of the *Ammantellate* in the Tedaldi chapel of 'San Filippo Benizi'.²⁶¹ A convent record of 1558 identified the Pazzi chapel in the transept as the "Cappella delle Suore," but when the chapel was conceded to Bandinelli, they probably transferred their devotional activities to the chapel of the Falconieri.²⁶²

Despite Biffoli's claim that the Giacomini essentially abandoned the chapel, the family began to show renewed interest in the third quarter of the sixteenth

254 *Fonti* 2002, pp. 279, 569–572.

255 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 16r.

256 Chap. I: *Constitutiones Antiquae* ed. 1897, p. 30; *Sources* 2000, p. 114.

257 ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 185, 26 July 1504, "A noviti questo dì 26 detto lire una soldi dieci sono per lasangnie e pescie pella festa di Santa Anna porto Lorenzo el maestro de noviti"; ASF, CRSGF, 119:703, fol. 73r, July 1506, "A noviti lire due e l[h]ano e noviti per la festa di Santa Anna"; ASF, CRSGF, 119:706, fol. 131r, 4 September 1524; ASF, CRSGF, 119:707, fol. 26v, 22 August 1525; ASF, CRSGF, 119:708, fol. 59r, 26 August 1528; ASF, CRSGF, 119:714, fol. 66, 22 July 1534; ASF, CRSGF, 119:717, fol. 39r, March 1540, "A straordinari questo dì lire sette sono che tanti se ne date a nostri noviti di casa che avevano avere per la festa di Santa Anna di conmesione del Padre Vicario porto frate Arsenio loro maestro."

258 ASF, CRSGF, 119:706, f. 17r, 29 October 1523, "Da limosine questo dì 29 lire ventiocto sono per tre messe cantate alla Nuntiata e una al altare di sancta Anna in novitiate per Giovanni carretteno che sta alla porta achattane"; ASF, CRSGF, 119:54, p. 28, 5 August 1608, "Ricordo come questo dì detto fecero solenni professione nell'ordine nostro nella Cappella di Santa Anna del novitiate nelle mani del Reverendo Padre Priore Maestro Filippo Maria Corona, fra Ridolfo chiamato nel secolo Jacopo di Giuliano Gugliantini e fra Hilario chiamato nel secolo Girolamo di Francesco Sali, piaccia a Dio che l'uno e l'altro sia buon religioso."

259 Manetti da Pistoia ed. 1905, pp. 183–186.

260 *Fonti* 2008, p. 150.

261 Geronimus 2006, pp. 279–280.

262 ASF, CRSGF, 119:35, fol. 112v, 29 January 1557/1558; Waldman 2004, pp. 636–637, doc. 1190. ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1569), fol. 11; Giani 1604, p. 351. I will present further information on the Florentine Servite *Ammantellate* in a future publication.

century. In 1568, Jacopo di Lorenzo Giacomini, who only a few years previously had returned to Florence with his young family,²⁶³ declared that he wished to establish an annual donation of a barrel of oil to keep the lamp lit in the chapel. He requested twice-weekly masses to be said at the altar: on Mondays and Saturdays, one an office of the dead and the other of the Virgin.²⁶⁴ In the *Libro degli Obblighi* (commenced 1569) Biffoli noted that three members of the Giacomini family had made contributions toward the decoration “hoggi” (today – though he does not specify the date): Papi di Tomaso (1 scudo d’oro), Luca di Francesco (lire 22 soldi 10), and Antonio di Lorenzo (lire 22 soldi 10). He added, however, “ma ve ne speso molto di più” (but much more was spent),²⁶⁵ which is borne out by the payment of 84 lire to Mazziere (see above).

The Giacomini-Tebalducci’s Republican sentiments remained strong into the sixteenth century. Jacopo’s father and uncle had been significant figures in the Republican government, and the rebellion against the Medici – his uncle Antonio (1456–1518) had been the *commissario della Repubblica*, his father Lorenzo was one of the *dieci di balia*. Jacopo himself had to leave Florence in 1530 and his brother Giovanni Battista, known as *Piattellino*, a *fuoriuscito*, was decapitated in 1537 following the battle at Montemurlo.²⁶⁶ His son, Lorenzo, would nonetheless declare his fealty to Cosimo I and the house of the Medici.²⁶⁷ The oscillations of political fortune could impact on a family’s engagement with their chapel. This renewed attention toward the chapel by a member of the family reminds us of how greatly family interest in a chapel could vary over time, from generation to generation – an issue that affected many chapels in the Santissima Annunziata. Despite the renewed interest, Fra Biffoli closed his discussion of the Chapel of St. Anne in the *Libro degli Obblighi*, with the comment: “non vi sono obblighi.”

Other individuals also demonstrated an interest in this chapel. According to the *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), the Balducci family sent wax, “già” in 1547 to celebrate St. Anne’s feast.²⁶⁸ On 7 June 1572, Niccolò Pagni paid the Servites 40 ducats, obliging them to celebrate an annual mass at the Chapel of St. Anne for a member of the della Stufa family.²⁶⁹ This final celebration must have been forgotten or abandoned by 1603, as it does not appear in the list of obligations for the chapel in the *Libro degli Obblighi* of that year.²⁷⁰

The Del Giocondo Chapel, Chapel of St. Jerome, Chapel of the Martyrs (today Chapel of St. Lucy)

The only original patron of the tribune chapels to retain his chapel was Domenico di Zanobi del Giocondo.²⁷¹ The chapel, dedicated to St. Jerome, was intended as a family chapel; Domenico del Giocondo took it together with his brothers,²⁷²

263 Siekiera 2000, p. 181.

264 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 44, 22 February 1567/1568, “Limosina di Jacopo Giacomini di un barilo d’olio/Ricordo come Messer Jacopo di Lorenzo Giacomini cittadino fiorentino e padrone della Cappella di Santa Anna vuol dar’ogni anno un ^mezzo^ barile d’olio perché si tengha la lampana accesa e si dica dua messe la settimana una il lunedì e l’altra il sabato, uno morti e l’altra della Madonna al detto altare e vuol che e sua figlioli sieno obblighati al tal donativo doppo la sua morte dar’ il detto olio e questo anno presente a cominciato e addi 22 del presente mese di febraio ne mando un baril’ acciaio si cominciassi tal bene per l’anima sua.”

265 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1569), fol. 9v.

266 Siekiera 2000, p. 181; Arrighi 2000a, pp. 173–179; Arrighi 2000b, pp. 179–180.

267 Siekiera 2000, p. 181.

268 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 23v.

269 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 77v, 7 June 1572, “Ricordo questo di sette detto come per partito de e padri fu accettato dal honorando Niccolo Pagni ducati quaranta d’oro con obbligo di fare ogni anno uno officio dei morti alla cappella di Sta Anna e le messe di santo Gregorio per l’anima già del m.o M.r [space] della [proposed reading: Stuffa]”.

270 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 23v.

with whom he shared a business as *setaiuoli*, silk merchants. Evidence of the family's relationship with the church and convent of the Santissima Annunziata appears throughout the administrative books. Domenico del Giocondo, as the owner of a still-to-be built tribune chapel, acted as one of the *operai* in 1447–1448.²⁷³ He was owed money in 1453 for a debt created by Fra Ambrogio, a novice at the church.²⁷⁴ Domenico's son Zanobi acted as the convent's *risquottitore*, collector and *factore*,²⁷⁵ and the Servites were clients of the family business.²⁷⁶ The family lived in the parish of San Lorenzo.²⁷⁷ Presumably, the del Giocondo would have supplied the minimum necessary to celebrate the liturgy in the chapel. They may have organised a tomb, as a funerary slab was once found in the chapel that read: DE GIOCONDI MCCCCXXXV.²⁷⁸ Nothing is known of the family's engagement with the chapel until 1526, when Domenico del Giocondo's nephew, Francesco di Bartolomeo di Zanobi del Giocondo,²⁷⁹ commissioned Domenico Puligo (d. 1527) to paint the *Stigmatisation of St. Francis of Assisi*.²⁸⁰ A decade later, the chapel was mentioned in Francesco's will.²⁸¹

Francesco del Giocondo, a merchant and banker,²⁸² is better known for having requested a portrait of his second wife, Lisa Gherardini, from Leonardo da Vinci, resulting in the painting now known as the *Mona Lisa* or *La Gioconda*.²⁸³ He may not have had any interest in the chapel initially. His first wife and six children (five from his first wife, and Piera (d. 1499), possibly his daughter by Lisa Gherardini) were buried in the del Giocondo tomb in Santa Maria Novella.²⁸⁴ How Francesco del Giocondo became the chapel's principal patron is unclear. Like Domenico, Francesco assisted the Servites with finances. In 1502, he loaned them a large sum of money "for the convent's needs."²⁸⁵ According to Raffaello Taucci, Francesco del Giocondo was an *operaio* of the church in ca. 1514 or 1515, but he does not indicate his source;²⁸⁶ only chapel, altar or sepulchre patrons at the church (either personally or as part of a family) could assume the

271 See note 82.

272 ASF, CRSGF, 119:842, fol. 1.

273 Finiello Zervas 1988, pp. 469, 474.

274 ASF, CRSGF, 119:48, fol. 74v, May 1453.

275 Between 1479–1484, ASF, CRSGF, 119:197, openings: 104, 212, 213, 387, 439, 442. 1484, ASF, CRSGF, 119:198, openings: 140, 153, 192, 223. ASF, CRSGF, 119:49, fol. 79v, 22 August 1483.

276 Casalini 1971, p. 34, n. 18; Andrea di Antonio di Zanobi del Giocondo, ASF, CRSGF, 119:197, fol. 201, 1481.

277 Kemp/Pallanti 2017, pp. 21–22.

278 Tonini 1876, p. 175. Tonini found the inscription in a late seventeenth-century manuscript: *Iscrizioni Elogii Epitaffi e motti che sono nel convento e Chiesa della SS Annunziata*, of Fra Antonio Fabbri OSM. The current sepulchre marker in the chapel was placed there by the Anforti. Its inscription states that the chapel/tomb once belonged to the Giocondi and now belongs to the Anforti (Olim familia lucundi nunc de Anfortis).

279 See family tree in Pallanti 2006, plate III. The tree is selective; it is missing for example, Zanobi di Domenico and Andrea di Antonio di Zanobi (both mentioned above).

280 Silvani 2002, pp. 148–149.

281 Pallanti 2006, pp. 103–111.

282 Hatfield 2014, pp. 19–20. On the cowardly, rather despicable personality of Francesco del Giocondo, especially in relation to his wife Lisa Gherardini: Hatfield 2014 pp. 7–8, 129–131, 138–139.

283 Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, p. 30. Numerous books and articles regarding the painting and the identity of the sitter have been written. Regarding debate surrounding the sitter's identity, see Martin Kemp's comments in Kemp/Pallanti 2017, pp. 3–6, 227.

284 Hatfield 2014, p. 153, n. 412.

285 Hatfield 2014, p. 20; ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 26r, November 1502, "Dal Francesco del Giocondo adì 10 fiorini cento sessanta larghi d'oro in oro e quali ci presta per bisogni del convento valsono lire 1162." This may have been for the church's new pavement, the reason given for 25 large gold florins lent to the Servites by Agnolo de' Bardi earlier the same year (see note 450).

286 Taucci 1976, p. 108.

role of *operaio*. This, together with the inscription on the funerary slab, provides support for the family's uninterrupted ownership of the chapel. Francesco del Giocondo, in his will of 29 January 1536/1537, requested burial in the church of the Santissima Annunziata, in the Chapel of the Martyrs – which (according to his will) he himself had recently had painted – and in the sepulchre of his predecessors.²⁸⁷ Some have presumed that Francesco del Giocondo was the chapel's original patron,²⁸⁸ however, Francesco was merely the first for whom we have evidence of his embellishing the chapel.²⁸⁹

Giorgio Vasari admired Puligo's *Stigmatisation of St. Francis of Assisi* – commissioned by Francesco del Giocondo – describing it as having “very sweet colour and softness, and beautifully worked.”²⁹⁰ By contrast, he was highly critical of a *Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand*, painted for the chapel by Antonio del Mazziere. Apparently, it was so poorly done that Mazziere “lost all credibility” and afterwards had to take any work that came his way.²⁹¹ According to Fra Biffoli, Francesco del Giocondo's son Bartolommeo had commissioned Antonio del Mazziere, as a cheap artist (*a buon mercato*) to paint the *Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand*, although in his will, Francesco claimed responsibility for all the chapel's decoration.²⁹² While the *Stigmatisation* celebrated Francesco's name saint, the *Martyrdom* announced the chapel's dedication. Recently, Giuseppe Pallanti has raised the question of whether the *Stigmatisation* was actually placed in the chapel. Pallanti argues that Biffoli's description of the chapel indicates that Francesco del Giocondo decided to keep Puligo's painting for himself.²⁹³ His argument is based on a line of Biffoli's text that immediately follows his description of the painting: “Q.o [Questo] Francesco no' [non] l'ha dato q.a cappella ne vi fece arme della sua casata.”²⁹⁴ The abbreviations in this section of the text are awkward and instead seem to question Francesco del Giocondo's rights over the chapel, whether it had been formally given or perhaps if Francesco had provided an endowment. Biffoli reveals that Francesco did not place his crest in the chapel. Furthermore, Biffoli himself confirmed the panel's presence in the chapel elsewhere stating: “Tavola della Cappella dei Martiri / Domenico Puligo pittore fiorentino fece quella tavola dove è Santo Francesco ch'è nella cappella di Martiri.”²⁹⁵

Francesco required in his will that his sons arrange for the Mass of St. Gregory, with an Office of the Dead, and all the customary masses, be celebrated at the sepulchre. He also requested that they offer the amount of wax and a *piatanza* as they saw fit.²⁹⁶ Finally, he obliged them to provide a barrel of oil yearly to main-

287 Pallanti 2006, pp. 103, 108.

288 ASF, *Manoscritti*, 625, p. 1279; Hatfield 2014, pp. 139, n. 367; 153, n. 412.

289 Others have recognised the early foundation of the chapel by the family, including: Petrucci 1992, p. 60.

290 “[...] molto dolce di colorito e morbidezza, e lavorata magnificamente,” Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, pp. 250–251.

291 Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, p. 514.

292 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 17v; Silvani 2002, pp. 148–149. Pallanti 2006, pp. 103, 108. Biffoli cites Vasari, but the latter attributes the commission to Francesco (Vasari (1550/1568) 1966–1987, vol. 4, p. 514).

293 Pallanti 2006, pp. 94, 117, n. 29; repeated: Kemp/Pallanti 2017, p. 51; ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 17v.

294 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 17v, “Cappella de Martiri che è la 4a, 1526: Francesco di Bartolommeo del Giocondo conduce la 4 [quarta] cappella in ordine a mano destra e fece vi far' la tavola dipintovi S.o Francesco la quale tavola la dipinse Domenico Puligo dipintore fiorentino le quali figure a giuditiosi dell'arte piace assai, Q.o [Questo] Francesco no' [non] l'ha dato q.a cappella ne vi fece arme della sua casata.”

295 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 5, fol. 23v. As noted above, Vasari also alluded to the painting as being in the chapel.

296 Pallanti 2006, pp. 104, 108.

tain the chapel's lamp lit.²⁹⁷ The Servites conducted Francesco del Giocondo's funeral on 8 June 1538, with a sung mass, an eleven-pound wax torch, and candles that were both hung on the walls and held in hands.²⁹⁸ Francesco's son, Bartolomeo "Baccio" del Giocondo was buried in the chapel on 11 December 1561. The strength of the Servite friars' connection with the family is indicated by the note that all the friars attended Bartolomeo's funeral.²⁹⁹ The family, however, does not appear to have arranged an endowment for the chapel and both *Libri degli Obblighi* state that no special obligations were established there.³⁰⁰

The Del Tovaglia Chapel of St. Sigismund – the Guadagni Chapel

Piero del Tovaglia (d. 1487), a wealthy silk merchant, acquired a position of great power regarding the distribution of the chapel and burial rights in the tribune through his assumed role as onsite adviser to Ludovico Gonzaga.³⁰¹ The two reversed chapels retained their original patronage. Of the remaining chapels, Gonzaga gave del Tovaglia a chapel for his own use and the power to decide who might patronise the other six tribune chapels in 1471.³⁰² As just mentioned, Domenico del Giocondo somehow managed to hold onto his chapel. Del Tovaglia selected for his own chapel that found immediately to the right of the main tribune chapel, naming it in honour of the Burgundian King, St. Sigismund. The question of why Pietro del Tovaglia dedicated his chapel to St. Sigismund never seems to have been raised. One wonders if the Gonzaga were not somehow involved in this dedication. St. Sigismund was the name saint of the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg, who had not only vested Gianfrancesco Gonzaga as marchese, but on the same occasion, had given his niece, Barbara of Brandenburg, in marriage to Gianfrancesco's son Ludovico. A portrait attributed to Pisanello is thought to have been made during Sigismund's visit to Mantua. This same portrait was copied various times, including for the head of St. Sigismund in a votive fresco by Piero della Francesca depicting *Sigismondo Malatesta kneeling in prayer before St. Sigismund*.³⁰³ While the name Sigismondo does not appear among Ludovico and Barbara's children, it was the name given to one of their grandsons, born in 1469.³⁰⁴ Piero del Tovaglia included iconographical elements referring to the Gonzaga in the decoration of the villa he built in Santa Margherita a Montici, near Florence.³⁰⁵ This supports the possibility that this connection could have influenced his choice of patron saint for the chapel.

According to his will of February 1484/1485, Piero del Tovaglia returned the rights of four chapels to the Servites and committed part of a shop in porta Santa Maria as an endowment. He obliged the Servites to celebrate the feast of St. Sigismund (1 May), daily morning mass, and on the feast of the *candellaia* (Purification of the Virgin, 2 February) eight Servite novices were to deliver eight white

297 Pallanti 2006, pp. 106, 110.

298 ASF, CRSGF, 119:814, fol. 77, "Adi octo di giugno dal mortorio di Francesco del Giocondo un torchio di libre undici et cera in candele per appiccare et per in mano et per la messa cantando fatto el tutto i peso el resto libre trenta dua fra ogni cosa." Regarding the Religious holding candles in their hands during a funeral: Gaston 1987 pp. 123–124.

299 ASF, CRSGF, 119:815, fol. 20v.

300 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi* (1569), fol. 8; *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 20. This also appears to be emphasised by Biffoli's statement already quoted above (ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 17v).

301 On his role: Brown 1981, pp. 90–93.

302 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 19, fol. 12v; Tonini 1876, pp. 283–284, doc. XXXIII; Brown 1981, p. 94.

303 D'Elia 2016, pp. 131–133; Battisti 1992, vol. 2, p. 426.

304 Lazzarini 2006, p. 419; Tamalio 2001, p. 854.

305 Guza 2019, p. 116.

wax candles to the del Tovaglia's house. These were then returned to the church for the feast of St. Sigismund.³⁰⁶ Del Tovaglia lived in the parish of San Firenze, within the quarter of Santa Croce³⁰⁷ – beyond the Duomo from the Santissima Annunziata – allowing the novices to perform a visually notable procession. If the Servites were negligent in their obligations, they could be fined 25 *scudi* to be spent on liturgical paraphernalia and ornamentation for the chapel.³⁰⁸

Rather than establishing his sepulchre within his chapel, Piero del Tovaglia, through the Marchese's concession, was able to select one of the traditionally most privileged locations, that is, before the high altar of the church (still within the tribune).³⁰⁹ Del Tovaglia decorated it with the coat of arms of his own family and those of the Gonzaga.³¹⁰ He requested in his will that his body be brought to his tomb by his *confratelli* of the Compagnia di Gesù (a confraternity based in Santa Croce) and dressed in their habit.³¹¹ Despite providing part of a shop to contribute toward the chapel's endowment, del Tovaglia managed to acquire and provision a chapel and sepulchre in a major Florentine church with minimal financial outlay, simultaneously enhancing both his social position and visibility, and preparing for his death.³¹²

A painting of *St. Sigismund*, now lost, embellished the altar. The anonymous author of the *Codice Magliabechiano* attributed it to the hand of Bicci di Lorenzo (1373–1452) “nella Chiesa della Nunziata dretto [dietro] al coro la tavola di Santo Gismondo.”³¹³ Bicci unquestionably executed works for the church,³¹⁴ but he was long dead when Gonzaga conceded Piero del Tovaglia the rights to the tribune chapels. While Bicci could have painted the panel for another location and it was subsequently transferred to del Tovaglia's chapel, it is also possible that it was painted by an artist whose hand could be mistaken for Bicci's, such as his son Neri di Bicci (1419–1491), or Bicci's collaborator, Stefano di Antonio Vanni (1405–1483).³¹⁵

The del Tovaglia possessed the chapel for about half a century. In September 1541 Giovanni Battista di Francesco di Piero del Tovaglia advised the friars that he intended to concede his rights over the chapel to Ulivieri Guadagni (1452–1541).³¹⁶ Ulivieri died on 11 October 1541. A series of documents traces the formal transfer of the chapel from del Tovaglia to the Servites and then to Ulivieri's sons Jacopo (1497–1569) and Filippo, beginning 25 November 1541,³¹⁷ and concluded by 8 February 1542.³¹⁸ Giovanni Battista del Tovaglia also returned all the rights that he and his family had over the tribune and area around the

306 Rubin 2007, pp. 7–8, 274, n. 13. The candles were to weigh 6 ounces each. The obligations were noted in the *Libro di Ricordanze B* on 13 January 1486/1487. At the foot of the page they refer to an act of 18 February 1485 (sic, Mod. Style) (ASF, CRSGF, 119:49, fol. 145). Various payments of rent from those using the shop appear in the books. For instance, by Antonio and Pagolo Parigi in ASF, CRSGF, 119:699, fol. 2, 16 September 1486; fol. 4, 21 November 1486; fol. 21, 24 May 1488.

307 Rubin 2007, p. 6.

308 Rubin 2007, p. 8.

309 On the significance of this location: Gaston 1987, p. 122.

310 ASF, *Manoscritti*, 625, p. 1294.

311 Rubin 2007, p. 8.

312 Rubin 2007, pp. 6–9.

313 *Anonimo Magliabechiano* ed. 1968, p. 99.

314 Casarotto 1985, pp. 114–116.

315 Frosinini 1987, p. 7; De Marchi 2013 pp. 154, 157; Casalini 1959, pp. 109–120.

316 ASF, CRSGF, 119:34, fol. 60, 17 September 1541.

317 Ser Raffaello Baldesi: ASF, Not. Ant., 1258, fol. 284, 25 Nov. 1541; fol. 297r–298v, 18 Dec. 1541.

318 ASF, CRSGF, 119:34, fol. 66, 8 Feb 1541/1542, “Ricordo come questo dì octo di febraio 1541 come si fece contratto della cappella di Sancto Sigismondo la quale insino al tempo presente è stata delli heredi di Piero di Lapo del Tovaglia hora detti heredi la donano alli heredi di Ulivieri di Thomaso Guadagni et al convento tenersi con tutto le oblighi che haveva con questi

high altar (excepting the family sepulchre) to recompense the friars for monies owed by his late father (notarised 10 November 1541).³¹⁹

The Guadagni family, long-standing rivals of the Medici, had an enduring connection with the Santissima Annunziata. Migliore di Guadagno Guadagni had established a chapel dedicated to St. Martin in the church before 1327.³²⁰ His son Gherardo left an annual bequest of 50 lire to the convent in 1327 to maintain a *cappellano* (chaplain) to say the divine office daily in their chapel, and 100 florins to provide the chapel with the necessary liturgical paraphernalia, such as the chalice, missal and paraments.³²¹ Gherardo di Migliore Guadagni ordered a new sepulchre for the chapel in 1329.³²² A crucifix placed in their chapel at an unknown date conferred on it the co-dedication *al Crocifisso*.³²³ Raffaello Taucci situated the chapel to the high altar's right, while Eugenio Casalini published a document suggesting that it was located along the left side of the nave.³²⁴ As occurred at other important religious sites, the Medici may have sought to edge out some less desirable members of the church's community during the fifteenth century.³²⁵ Bernardo Guadagni, in his role as Gonfalonier, had been instrumental in the expulsion of Cosimo de' Medici from Florence in 1433. Since that time, the Guadagni's political fortunes had fallen and risen in contrast to those of the Medici. Despite the family's close relationship with the Servites and the significant financial support that they had previously given them, the *graticule* – the grill or gate enclosing their chapel – was removed in 1439, and according to Casalini, the family disappeared from among the chapel patrons.³²⁶

Although 'exiled', they maintained a subtle association with the church where their ancestors were buried.³²⁷ The crucifix and the celebration of St. Martin's feast were transferred to Jacopo Villani's chapel (left arm of the transept) by 1445.³²⁸ Olivieri Guadagni, born in Lyon, France, while his family was there in exile, was among the Florentines who could re-enter Florence's political life following the exile of the Medici in 1494. In 1499 he was a prior in the Florentine government.³²⁹ Olivieri paid the Servites for the funeral and office for his mother on 30 December 1508,³³⁰ notably when the Medici were still in exile. Olivieri Guadagni *e compagni lanaiuoli* were also supplying wax to the church in 1522.³³¹ He acted as a character witness for his nephew, the *fanciullo* of Thommaso Guadagni, whom he presented to enter the convent as a friar in November of 1529.³³²

del Tovaglia di mantenerli A Guadagni come difusamente si vede per detto contratto e a libro nostro della Ricordanza Rogato Ser Scipione Bracciesi notaio al veschovado questo di detto.” ASF, Not. Ant., 3360, fols. 79r–80r, 8 February 1541/1542.

319 ASF, CRSGF, 119:34, fol. 61v; ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 160r, 26 August 1545.

320 Taucci 1942, pp. 107–108; ASF, CRSGF, 119:1270, p. 65, no. 191.

321 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 6, fol. 12r, 2 July 1327; ASF, CRSGF, 119:1270, pp. 65–66, nn. 191.

322 ASF, CRSGF, 119:1270, p. 68, no. 199.

323 Casalini 1978a, p. 19.

324 Taucci 1942 pp. 107–108; Casalini 1978a, p. 17, n. 9.

325 Kent 2000, p. 207.

326 Casalini 1978a, pp. 16–19; Ircani Menichini 2004, pp. 14, 20, 24, 34, 53, 123–124; Kent 2000, p. 357.

327 For instance: ASF, CRSGF, 119:690, fol. 14v, 1 May 1464, “Dal limosine lire otto havemo da Simone Guadagni insino di Novembre 1463 per fare la festa di sancto Martino alla capella loro.” This reference to ‘their chapel’, would seemingly suggest they still have rights over a chapel in the church. Although Casalini identified some of the Guadagni obligations being assumed by the Villani, for example, payments for the feast and *piatanze* for St. Martin (Casalini 1978a, p. 19, n. 14), the above reference reveals that the Guadagni continued to contribute to the feast.

328 Casalini 1978a, p. 19.

329 Passerini 1873, pp. 76–77.

330 ASF, CRSGF, 119:702, fol. 17, 30 December 1508.

331 ASF, CRSGF, 119:706, fols. 60v, 61r, 65v, 76v.

The family again suffered hostility in 1525, during the Medici's return, and Jacopo di Ulivieri Guadagni was exiled, to return after the expulsion of the Medici in 1527. That same year Jacopo Guadagni married Lucrezia di Gino Capponi (d. 1537), and they lived in a house on via dei Servi. Jacopo acted as a war *commissario* in the Pisan province and was one of the *dodici buonomini* (12 good men) in 1529. He was not, however, a staunch Republican, and following the fall of the Republic, he reconciled with the Medici. Under Cosimo I, he attained roles in the *Magistratura degli Otto* (1539, 1552, 1563) and was made a Senator in 1561.³³³ By contrast, his brother Filippo (1504–1556) was a more committed defender of the Republic. He was elected captain of the civilian-military attached to the Gonfalone del Drago of the quarter of S. Giovanni in 1529. After the Republic's fall, he eventually resigned himself to the new order but only joined the *Magistratura degli otto* in 1550.³³⁴

In 1539 the Guadagni began to make inquiries regarding the possibility of acquiring a chapel in the church, and were offered one of three chapels along the left of the nave (those dedicated to St. Julian, St. Jerome and the Archangel Raphael), before being offered, and accepting, in 1541, the chapel in the tribune.³³⁵ It may be significant that the year in which they were first offered a choice of chapels coincides with the year that Jacopo Guadagni obtained his first role in the *Magistrature degli Otto*.

Jacopo and Filippo Guadagni commissioned Agnolo Bronzino to paint “la storia della risurrezione del nostro Signore Jesu Christo con tutta l’apartenenza che in detto misterio si ricerca” for the altar of the chapel in 1549. Bronzino was offered one hundred scudi for his work, plus expenses for “azzurro ultramarino” of not more than twelve scudi.³³⁶ Bronzino was a Medici court favourite, and his selection to produce this work was undoubtedly politic. Although required to be completed in eighteen months, the *Resurrection of Christ* (fig. 15) was finished in 1552, the date inscribed on the panel.³³⁷ The same date appears on the commemorative plaque for their father on the chapel's sepulchre. Graham Smith suggests that the choice of the mystery of the *Resurrection* could have been due to the similarity of Christ's triumphal banner with the Guadagni coat of arms and that the family motto “exaltabitur” potentially offers a substitute title for the painting.³³⁸ One also wonders if the *Resurrection of Christ* was not, moreover, a play on the idea of the resurrection of the family's fortunes, to which this chapel also testifies.³³⁹

Bronzino's *Resurrection*, fortunately, remains in situ. The artist depicted the moment that Christ bursts out of the still-sealed tomb that had been guarded by soldiers (Matthew 27:62–66) – though it is perhaps more accurate to describe



15 Agnolo Bronzino, *Resurrection*, 1552, oil on panel, 445 × 280 cm. Florence, Santissima Annunziata, Chapel of the Guadagni Family (photo Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut)

332 ASF, CRS GF, 119:33, fol. 15.

333 Passerini 1873, pp. 99–101; *Inventario famiglia Guadagni* 2007, pp. 117, 122.

334 Passerini 1873, p. 131.

335 ASF, CRS GF, 119:34, fol. 8, 19 January 1538/1539. Various records regarding the acquisition of the del Tovaglia Chapel of St. Sigismund in the tribune are located in the same volume between fols. 60–66, 17 September 1541 to 8 February 1541/1542.

336 Chiappelli 1930, p. 295.

337 Chiappelli 1930, pp. 291–296; Smith 1986, p. 350.

338 Smith 1986, p. 350.

339 On the later history of the chapel: Spinelli 2014, pp. 119–130.

him as floating toward the viewer – demonstrating that he has truly risen on the third day. A mandorla is created around Christ by the carefully arranged figures of angels and soldiers. Two youthful, sensual angels flank Christ. That to the right, supports the rock that he has rolled away from the cave in which the still sealed tomb can be seen.³⁴⁰ Terrified soldiers with raised arms try to escape, while several have fallen petrified to the ground. One was so frightened that he fell backwards and lies naked, splayed across the foreground with his head angled back to confront the viewer, demonstrating Bronzino’s virtuosity in foreshortening.³⁴¹ Though his eyes are closed, this centrally placed figure would have confronted the priest performing mass in the chapel. A chorus of putti and juvenile angels fly around and above Christ. Two of the older angels carry wreaths, and two hold martyrs’ palms, referring to Christ’s triumph over death. An angel on the left curls his fingers around a pomegranate, an illusion to “the hope of resurrection and eternal life.”³⁴² Bronzino received the commission for this work soon after he had visited Rome. The painting’s dramatic impact – the intense emotive responses of the soldiers, and Bronzino’s delight in the virtuoso display of the human form in a variety of poses – reflects the influence of Michelangelo’s *Last Judgement*.³⁴³

One painting that does not appear to have been considered as a visual source for Bronzino’s Christ was then located within the Santissima Annunziata itself: Fra Bartolomeo’s Christ in the *Salvator Mundi with Saints and Prophets* painted in 1516 for the nave altar of Salvatore Billi.³⁴⁴ The two Christs share the same raised right arm and hand gesture, the angles of their heads, and position of their shoulders. The left arms holding the standards and the positions of their legs are also similar, but with slight variations – Bronzino moves Christ’s left leg forward, as though he is still in movement out of the tomb. Under Bronzino’s brush, the somewhat stubby Christ of Fra Bartolomeo is elongated, luminously and proudly naked, and elegant.

The incrustation of marble on the walls that today darken the interior of Santissima Annunziata is an eighteenth-century addition to the church. Originally, the walls were relatively plain, punctuated only by the framing of the chapels with pilasters and arches.³⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the tribune’s high windows did not (and still do not) provide optimal lighting for observing the paintings in the space. On sunny mornings, harsh squares of light hit sections of the paintings on the western side of the tribune, disturbing attempts to read the images in the shallow chapels. On dark days, light in the tribune is dim, remedied only by modern lighting. During the sixteenth century, candles or lamps hanging at the chapel entrances offered illumination. The “gloomy” ambience created by the high windows, contrasted by the light of candles or lamps, appears to have been a deliberate aspect of Battista Alberti’s reworking of Michelozzo’s tribune. In his view, “the awe that is naturally generated by darkness encourages a sense of veneration in the mind...”³⁴⁶ Under such illumination, the exposed flesh tones of Christ, angels and soldiers would have projected out from the dark scene even more forcefully.

The *Resurrection* and the two paintings of the adjacent chapels remain in their respective chapels. Viewing these works together allows one to understand how truly impressive the *Resurrection* is in scale. The *Resurrection* measures

340 On this seal: Smith 1986, pp. 350–354.

341 Brock 2002, p. 281. Bronzino drew the figure from the sculpture depicting one of the Niobe (at the time believed to be the sleeping Endymion), then in the Maffei family’s collection in Rome.

342 Balas 1995, p. 85.

343 McCorquodale 1981, p. 115; Brock 2002, pp. 278–281.

344 On this altarpiece: Fischer 1990, pp. 320–359.

345 Heydenreich 1996, p. 27.

346 Gaston 2006, p. 347.

445 × 280 cm. At nearly four and a half metres tall, it is substantially larger than the *Madonna del Soccorso* (85 × 50.5 cm; main tribune chapel), and more than a metre taller than Pietro Perugino's *Madonna and Child enthroned with Sts. Onuphrius, Andrew the Apostle, Romulus Bishop of Fiesole and Francis of Assisi*, (295 × 175 cm; chapel of St. Andrew). The figures in Perugino's *Sacra conversazione* are also much reduced in their space by comparison with those in Bronzino's *Resurrection*. Christ fills more than half the panel's height, indicating that he must stand over two metres tall.

The *Resurrection* was completed in the same year as Bronzino's *Christ in Limbo* painted for the Zanchini chapel in Santa Croce.³⁴⁷ The stance of the angel on the left of the *Resurrection* alludes to the pose of the *Venus Pudica*, also used by Bronzino with only slight variations in his *Christ in Limbo*, for the figure of Eve. More importantly, though, the Christ figures are the same, despite the different poses. The same blue cloth loosely winds around his long, elegant body, barely covering his groin. He holds the same standard of a white flag with a red cross above which rises a cross (an extension of the flag-pole). Iconographically speaking, the *Resurrection* is the resolution to the *Christ in Limbo*. Robert Gaston has discussed Benedetto Varchi's spiritual and devotional influence on Bronzino in his 1983 article on the *Christ in Limbo*. He cites, in particular, Varchi's *Sermone fatta allo Croce* (performed in 1548) in which he discussed the Creed: "La terza [certain belief is], che egli risuscitò il terzo giorno et distrutto il peccato, occisa la morte, soggiogato il Demonio et vinto l'inferno, se ne ritornò trionfando in Cielo gloriosamente."³⁴⁸ The passage may also have played on Bronzino's mind as he painted the Guadagni panel, where the triumphant Christ floats before the viewer, demonstrating his having risen on the third day.

The *Resurrection* was painted during the years when the Council of Trent was held (begun in 1545, the sittings continued through to 1563). Bronzino's use of sensuous beauty to arouse admiration and devotion in the viewer could have left the painting exposed to criticism due to the new prescriptions on what was appropriate for sacred art. Borghini's *Il Riposo* has been cited as evidence of the post-Tridentine condemnation of the painting.³⁴⁹

"L'haver parlato della Resurrectione, soggiunse il Michelozzo, mi ha fatto ricordare d'una tavola del Bronzino nella Nuntiata dimostrante tal misterio. Digratia non ne parliamo, replicò il Vecchietto, perché vi è un Agnelo tanto lascivo, che è cosa disconvenevole. S'io havessi cotesta bella figura in casa, disse il Michelozzo, io la estimerei molto, e ne terrei gran conto per una delle più dilicate e morbide figure, che veder si possano [...]"³⁵⁰

The "lascivious" quality of the angel was particularly discerned, but its beauty was also recognised, and it is implied that such a work might be more appropriate for a private space. Stuart Lingo, however, has recently noted that the comments are made within the context of a dialogue debating the virtues – or lack thereof – of paintings from a variety of perspectives.³⁵¹ Indeed, no request for the removal of the painting appears to exist, or to have been acted upon. Francesco Bocchi celebrated the beauty and dignity of the figure of Christ, the terror expressed by the soldiers, and Bronzino's demonstrated technical ability in this painting in his *Bellezze della Città*. He explained that the angels' extreme beauty conformed to their "natura di vero Angelica."³⁵²

347 Gaston 1983, pp. 41–72.

348 Gaston 1983, p. 68, n. 41.

349 For instance: McCorquodale 1981, pp. 115–122.

350 Borghini 1584, p. 116.

351 See: Lingo 2013, pp. 113–135.

352 Bocchi 1591, pp. 226–227.

Prospero Bernardi described the chapel in his *Applausi di Firenze per la Canonizzazione di San Filippo Benizi*, (published 1672). After mentioning Bronzino's altarpiece, Bernardi noted that this is: "dove i popoli hanno un gran Fiduccia nell'immagine di S. Sigismondo situate nel mezzo dell'altare per la cui intercessione s'estingue a ciascheduno ogni febrile ardore."³⁵³ The Burgundian King-Saint was considered particularly effective in the healing of fevers.³⁵⁴ Giamboni, in his *Diario Sacro* of 1700, documented St. Sigismund's feast still being celebrated in the chapel.³⁵⁵ The Guadagni may have decided to keep the painting of *St. Sigismund* in the chapel; alternatively, the Servites may have required it to remain on the altar as the indicator of the chapel's dedication. In either case, this suggests that it must have been a very modestly sized painting. Although some have presumed that the *Resurrection* illustrated the chapel's dedication,³⁵⁶ the church documents continued to refer to the chapel under the title St. Sigismund.³⁵⁷ This title was still current during Tonini's day, according to his book on the church.³⁵⁸

The Guadagni established a chapel endowment in 1571 when Jacopo and Filippo Guadagni's sons donated 100 *scudi*. They obliged the Servites to celebrate mass every Saturday at the altar of "San Gismondo dietro al coro e loro cappella" for their dead and an annual Office in May for Uliviero Guadagni and the descendants of the House of the Guadagni.³⁵⁹ The *Libro degli Obblighi*, drawn up in 1569, recorded a double obligation in the chapel for sung mass on the first of May, "first for the obligation that we have to Gherardo di Migliore Guadagni of 1336, and secondly for the feast of *St. Sigismund* for Pietro del Tovaglia."³⁶⁰ Thus, despite the del Tovaglia having given up their rights for the chapel, it would appear that the Servites still had obligations in relation to Piero del Tovaglia's will. More significantly, however, the Guadagni, through the acquisition of this chapel, had securely reestablished the family's ancient ties with the church.

The Benivieni Chapel of St. Michael the Archangel

The first owners of the second chapel on the left, dedicated to the Archangel Michael, were the Benivieni. Both Tonini and Andreucci claimed that the Benivieni acquired the chapel in 1470 (with Tonini identifying Michele Benivieni as the first patron). Their source was the *Libro degli Obblighi di Chiesa* drawn up in the late seventeenth-early eighteenth centuries by padre Costantino Chellini.³⁶¹ The *Libri degli obblighi* of 1569 and 1603 also identified Michele Benivieni as the chapel's earliest patron, associating this information with his testament of 1546.³⁶² Del Migliore, by contrast, had identified the chapel as belonging to Michele's father Antonio Benivieni (1443–1502).³⁶³ This appears to be confirmed by a notarial document relocated by Patricia Lee Rubin, in which Piero del Tovaglia 'gifted' a tribune chapel to Antonio Benivieni on 2 December 1484. In

353 Bernardi 1672, p. 16.

354 Paxton 1994, pp. 23–43.

355 Giamboni 1700, p. 84.

356 Brock 2002, pp. 268–272.

357 See for example: ASSAF *Libro degli Obblighi (1569)*, fol. 7r; *Libro degli Obblighi (1603)*, fols. 16v–17r.

358 Tonini 1876, pp. 165–167.

359 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 72v, 18 July 1571.

360 ASSAF *Libro degli Obblighi (1569)*, fol. 7.

361 Andreucci 1857, p. 63; Tonini 1876, pp. 158.

362 ASSAF, *Libro degli Obblighi (1569)*, fol. 6; *Libro degli Obblighi (1603)*, fol. 14v.

363 Del Migliore 1684, p. 279. Del Migliore also mentions a certain "Vido Benivieni." The family tree created by Gabriella Cibeï indicates no brother or extended family member with this name (Cibeï 1995, family tree insert).

return, Antonio was to provide an annual dowry of 10 florins (through revenue from a property) to the Ospedale degli Innocenti (Foundling Hospital in the piazza della Santissima Annunziata) for an orphan girl, that was to be donated in Piero del Tovaglia's name.³⁶⁴

The Benivieni *consorteria* enjoyed a long connection with the Santissima Annunziata, having donated a lectern cover in 1422 and often having acted as *operai* between 1445 and 1455 (signifying that they must have already owned a tomb there).³⁶⁵ Various members of the family resided in the via dei Servi and the nearby streets. Pagolo (Paolo), Antonio's father, grew up in the via dei Servi; however, by 1446 (when Antonio was 3 years old), the catasto recorded that Pagolo was living with his family in a palazzo in Piazza San Benedetto (just beyond the Cathedral). The palazzo became Antonio's property following his father's death in 1487.³⁶⁶

Antonio Benivieni was both a humanist and a noteworthy physician. He studied letters at the University of Pisa under the protection of Cosimo and Piero de' Medici, before transferring to medicine, which he began to practice about 1470. His patients included members of prominent patrician families, such as the Medici, Strozzi, Pazzi, and Adimari. He also acted as the physician for several friar's convents, including the Dominicans of San Marco and the Servites of the Santissima Annunziata. He had a close friendship with Lorenzo il Magnifico, to whom he dedicated three of his books, but he would also become the "medic, friend and follower" of Fra Girolamo Savonarola.³⁶⁷ Some of Antonio's brothers became significant followers of Savonarola: Domenico il Scotino (c.1460–1507), a humanist, who had been a reader in logic at Pisa and a canon of San Lorenzo in Florence (1491, under the patronage of Lorenzo il Magnifico and Pier Francesco de' Medici), and Girolamo (1453–1542), a poet.³⁶⁸ Indeed, Girolamo, a particularly fervent follower, was buried in the church of San Marco.³⁶⁹ Antonio had another brother, Lorenzo (1447–1491),³⁷⁰ who may have had a working relationship with the Servites as a *speziale*.³⁷¹ Antonio Benivieni is recalled today for his pioneering contributions to autopsy protocols and the science of pathology. He recorded his autopsies in a manuscript called *De abditis nonnullis ac mirandis morborum et sanationum causis* (*On some Occult and Extraordinary Causes of Disease and their Cures*). Girolamo Benivieni arranged for the manuscript's publication in 1507, edited with doctor Giovanni Rosati's assistance.³⁷²

The *Libri dei debitori e creditor* of 1480–1493 indicate that the Servites paid Antonio Benivieni a salary during those same years.³⁷³ He probably acted as their doctor until his death. The following *Libro dei debitori e creditor* in the series is missing, but he was paid a salary in August 1499,³⁷⁴ and was again confirmed as the convent's doctor on 1 September 1502;³⁷⁵ two months later he died and was buried in the chapel's sepulchre.³⁷⁶ In the same year that Antonio died, Girolamo

364 Rubin 2007, pp. 7, 274, n. 10.

365 Finiello Zervas 1988, pp. 469, 472, n. 34. Three tombs belonging to the Benivieni are mentioned in a late sixteenth-century list of sepulchres in the Santissima Annunziata: one in the Chiostro dei Voti, near the 'pila di S.o Bastiano' and two inside the church (ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 9, cnn).

366 Cibeï 1995, pp. 206–213.

367 Stefanutti 1966, pp. 543–545.

368 Vasoli 1966, pp. 546–550; Weinstein 1970, pp. 205–220.

369 Cibeï 1995, p. 211.

370 Cibeï 1995, p. 208.

371 A record of 11 November 1499 indicates that the Servites still needed to settle a payment with his heirs (ASF, CRSGF, 119:50, fol. 69v–70).

372 Siraisi 1996, 33–62, p. 34, 37, n. 8; Cibeï 1995, p. 211.

373 ASF, CRSGF, 119:197, fol. 218 sin/des; ASF, CRSGF, 119:198, 201 sin/des.

374 ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 55v.

375 ASF, CRSGF, 119:50, fol. 107r.

Benivieni loaned the Servites 20 large gold florins (amounting to 140 lire) for the needs of the convent³⁷⁷ and later acted as an *operaio* at the church (1509).³⁷⁸

While the document discovered by Rubin indicates that Antonio Benivieni was conceded the chapel's patronage in 1484, the first known reference to the chapel's ornamentation appears in 1500 when Antonio Benivieni's coat of arms were attached.³⁷⁹ The story of Antonio's acquisition of the chapel may be slightly more complicated than it first seemed. Antonio himself noted the transaction with Piero del Tovaglia in a booklet bound at the end of a notarial volume belonging to his father, Paolo di Lorenzo Benivieni. Antonio repeats the information found in the contract, but at an unknown date, the reference was crossed out and below was written: "Non ne fu nulla perché era contracto simoniacho. Torno in drieto."³⁸⁰ This would suggest that the exchange did not immediately go through due to its simoniac nature. Nevertheless, Antonio did eventually become the second chapel's owner, as the attachment of his coat of arms indicates. His booklet mentions various other family matters, including the baptism of 'Piero,' son of Francesco del Tovaglia, on 25 August 1485, possibly indicating that Antonio was the child's godfather and implying a significant relationship between the families.³⁸¹

Antonio's son Michele is thought to have commissioned the altarpiece depicting *St. Michael the Archangel flanked by an Angel and a Devil* (Museo San Salvi, Florence) (fig. 16) from Antonio del Ceraiolo around 1520.³⁸² The three figures occupy the foreground plane. The background shows a country landscape of gently rolling hills, with a town off in the distance. The Archangel dominates the painting – he is more than a third taller than either the angel who walks in from the left or the demon, who begins to flee to the right, looking back at Michael with arms raised and a terrified grimace. With wings open across the whole width of the panel, the Archangel gazes toward the demon, raising his right hand with the sword over his head and with the other balancing the scales containing two small souls. The soul to our left kneels in prayer facing the archangel, while that on our right leans in the same direction as the demon and looks back in terror at Michael. Through the familiar motifs of the sword and scales, the image alludes to two of Michael's functions, both tied to the Last Judgement. The sword references the battle he and his angels fought against the dragon on the Last Day of the Last Judgement, as described in the Book of Revelations (12: 7–8); while the scales refer to the idea – developed through tradition and liturgical texts – that Michael would wake the dead, and give judgement by weighing their actions, thoughts and deeds.³⁸³

For the Archangel, Antonio del Ceraiolo has borrowed from two key figures in Fra Bartolomeo della Porta's fresco of the *Last Judgement*, painted for a tomb in the cemetery of Santa Maria Nuova (today in Museo San Marco). Bartolomeo

376 Stefanutti 1966, p. 544.

377 ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 26v, 23 December 1502. As with the Bardi, this may have been a contribution toward the paving of the church (see note 450).

378 ASF, CRSGF, 119:199, fol. 1.

379 ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 90v: 21 October 1500.

380 ASF, Not. Ant., 2338, fol. 192v. "Ricordo chome oggi questo dì dua di dicembre 1484 Piero del Tovaglia mi dono a me e mia heredi e precessori el padronaggio d'una Capella nuova posta ne Servi nella tribuna a manmancha che è la ^seconda^ [cancelled: quarta] al entrata e io per questo m'obligai fare una entrata di fiorini 10 larghi l'anno la quale s'avessi a consegniare all'arte di Porta Santa Maria per maritare fanciulle a gl'innocenti. Rogato Ser Riccardo di ... [sic]. Non ne fu nulla perche era contracto simoniacho. Torno in drieto." I extend my gratitude to Louis Alexander Waldman with whom I enjoyed a fruitful discussion about this document (that he also found independently).

381 ASF, Not. Ant., 2338, fol. 193.

382 Cecchi/Natale/Sisi 1996, pp. 9, 66, n. 31.

383 Raggio 1961, pp. 142–143.



16 Antonio del Ceraiolo, *Saint Michael the Archangel flanked by an Angel and a Devil*, ca. 1520, panel, 175 × 165 cm. Florence, Museo San Salvi (photo Gabinetto Fotografico degli Uffizi)

painted the upper part of the fresco before becoming a friar. His collaborator Mariotto Albertinelli completed the lower section after Bartolomeo became a Dominican novice in July 1500.³⁸⁴ At first glance, Antonio del Ceraiolo's Archangel would seem to copy Fra Bartolomeo/Albertinelli's St. Michael with his sword raised in his right hand and the contrapposto stance, though with the legs reversed (in the fresco, the archangel's left leg bears the weight, while in the panel painting the right is the weight-bearing leg). There are, however, significant variations in the upper part of the figure. The heads turn in opposite directions in relation to the raised arm, and in the panel painting the curve of Michael's arm is more pronounced. In the fresco, Michael looks under his raised right arm toward one of the freshly risen righteous, while in the panel painting, he turns to look coolly at the terrified demon who with raised hands begins to walk 'off set'. Comparison of the upper part of Antonio del Ceraiolo's St. Michael with Fra Bartolomeo's Christ reveals the true source of this part of the figure; Michael's raised arm and turned head are a precise match. Antonio del Ceraiolo was the disciple and collaborator of Lorenzo di Credi, an artist known to have *piagnoni* sympathies.³⁸⁵ This connection could have inspired Michele Benivieni to select

384 *L'Età di Savonarola* 1996, p. 163. Cat. 44 (pp. 163–172) shows what remains of Fra Bartolomeo's fresco. Catalogue entries 45 and 46 (pp. 175–179) show two copies of Fra Bartolomeo's fresco, one an anonymous fresco that originally came from the convent of Sant'Apollonia, and the other a nineteenth-century drawing by Raffaello Bonajuti. Serena Padovani seems to associate Antonio del Ceraiolo's painting with the Santa Maria Nuova fresco, although she describes it as a lost fresco by Ghirlandaio: Padovani/Meloni Trkulja 1982, pp. 24–25.

385 Vasari Bettarini/Barocchi 1976, vol. 5, p. 442; Dalli Regoli 1966, pp. 52–54.

Antonio del Ceraiolo. While the painting's main subject alludes both to the chapel dedication and to Michele's name saint, the painting can also be associated with themes and concerns evident in Savonarola's sermons and writings. During the early 1490s the Dominican ascetic began to preach on Apocalyptic subject matter with ever growing intensity. In 1492, he gave the sermon in which he proclaimed "Lo, the sword of the Lord, soon and swiftly," warning of the imminent arrival of "God's scourge."³⁸⁶ Michael's raised sword reminds the viewer of the central role this archangel would have in the events of the Last Judgement. Simultaneously, however, Michael the Archangel could lead to the contemplation of death, reminding viewers they should work toward the salvation of their soul, that the actions performed in life had critical implications for what would happen to their souls after death. These reflections would associate the painting with Savonarola's *Predica dell'Arte del Ben'morire*, a sermon given in 1496 and published immediately.³⁸⁷ The painting could have thus functioned as a stimulus for contemplation of key Savonarolian themes.

Michele Benivieni recalled his father on the sepulchre stone with the inscription: *D.O.M. Antonio Benivenio patri philosopho ac medico sibi posterisque Michael Benivenius posuit. Obiit die II. novemb. an. sal. MDII.*³⁸⁸ The Servite friars attended the funeral in 1536 of Antonio's wife, Caterina (though she is identified in the *Libro dei Morti* by her relationship with Michele). The Servites recorded receiving 23 pounds of wax between candles and torches for the funeral, but do not specify that she was buried in the chapel sepulchre; presumably, she was.³⁸⁹ Other family members who were probably entombed in the chapel were Antonio's daughter Margherita (3 pounds of *cera minuta* 5 pounds of *torchi*), for whom a *mortorio* was held in December 1530,³⁹⁰ and his grandson, Antonio di Michele (6 pounds of *cera minuta* and 16 pounds of torches), for whom a *mortorio* was held 21 September 1531.³⁹¹ In his testament of 1546, Michele Benivieni required his heirs to provide a barrel of oil per year to keep the chapel's lamp lit, though for 53 years they only gave a half barrel until the mistake was identified.³⁹²

The *Libri degli Obblighi* did not record any specific obligations or endowment for the chapel. While annual donations for the feast of St. Michael can be traced in the administrative books in the first decades of the sixteenth century, they are usually associated with 'Mona Alessandra' or 'Lessandra, nostra suora'.³⁹³ There is no evidence that she was a member of the Benivieni family, and while the references do not mention where the masses were celebrated, it seems more likely that they were said in the chapel used by the *Ammantellate*. Considering

386 Weinstein 2011, pp. 75–93, and especially, pp. 89–90.

387 Burke 2004, pp 155–187, especially pp. 183–186.

388 Stefanutti 1966, p. 544.

389 ASF, CRSGF, 119:814, fols. 23v, 69, 6 November 1536. Cibeï (1995, p. 209) identified her name.

390 ASF, CRSGF, 119:814, fol. 6v, December 1530. According to the family tree published by Cibeï (1995, insert), Margherita was born in 1485.

391 ASF, CRSGF, 119:814, fol. 9r. Another unnamed "donna de Benivieni" was buried on 8 May 1532. On this occasion, even more wax was consumed: 7 pounds of *cera minuta* and 13 pounds of torches (ASF, CRSGF, 119:814, fol. 10). The details given are, however, insufficient to determine whether she was member of the chapel-owning Benivieni family or of those who only owned sepulchres.

392 ASSAF *Libro degli Obblighi* (1569), fol. 6; *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 14v.

393 The person requesting the sung mass in 1500 was unnamed, however, in 1502 the request was made by "una delle nostre suore", identified in later references as "Mona Lexandra nostra suora" and (in 1525) as "Mona Alesandra di Monaldo". On most occasions she offered a large gold florin, or seven lire. In 1507 she also requested the celebration of the feast of St. Jerome (ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 11v: 26 September 1500; fol. 25r: September 1502; fol. 31r: 28 September 1503; fol. 38r: 29 September 1504; ASF, CRSGF, 119:703, fol. 9v: 28 September 1507; ASF, CRSGF, 119:707, fol. 3v, 1 October 1525).

the Benivieni chapel's apparent lack of an established liturgical program, it must have functioned primarily as a family burial chapel, with the main liturgical functions being tied to the funerals and memorials of the immediate family.

The Romoli-Bellavante Chapel of St. Andrew the Apostle

The next patron to acquire a tribune chapel that we will consider is Francesco di Andrea di Nofri Romoli (1426–1500).³⁹⁴ Francesco's family had a long connection with the church. A sepulchre in the forecourt of the Santissima Annunziata bore the name of Francesco's grandfather, Nofri di Romolo a stoneworker from Settignano, who established a successful *scarpellino* workshop in Florence, the "bottega dei Romoli" at the end of the fourteenth century. Nofri's birth and death dates are unknown, but he must have been born by 1367 and died by July 1427.³⁹⁵ His death thus preceded by some decades the chiostrò's construction (ca. 1445–1448).³⁹⁶ Either Nofri, or his sons, could have established the sepulchre as a family tomb. The sons also may have identified their father as the *pater familias* through the tomb inscription (potentially also transferring the body from elsewhere). Andrea (1388–1459), a sculptor and supplier of ornately decorated stonework, produced worked stone for the tribune.³⁹⁷ He kept the workshop with his brothers Giuliano and Antonio.³⁹⁸ From these humble beginnings, the family made a dramatic rise into the ranks of Florence's political and social elite during the fifteenth century. In 1420, Andrea di Nofri was gonfalonier of the San Giovanni quarter,³⁹⁹ and Francesco di Andrea di Nofri Romoli took on various government roles between 1465–1498, including treasurer of the *Monte* in 1486–1487, "one of the highest-paid positions in the government."⁴⁰⁰ At the Santissima Annunziata, Francesco acted as *operaio* in 1483 (an activity he was already able to do due to the family sepulchre in the chiostrò).⁴⁰¹ He appeared again in this role in 1496 when he was present for the writing up of an inventory of silver *ex-votos* left to the miracle-working fresco of the *Madonna della Nunziata*.⁴⁰²

Both Andreucci and Tonini dated the chapel's foundation to 1456.⁴⁰³ The date would appear to be an error that originates with Andreucci, who, associating the chapel foundation with a contract of "17 July 1456," cited Fra Eliseo Biffoli's manuscript as his source. Biffoli, however, wrote 1486,⁴⁰⁴ and details of the

394 For Francesco's birth date: Rivière 2005, p. 647.

395 Rensi 1987, p. 93. For the sepulchre: ASF, CRSGF, 119:51, fol. 198v, "Una sepultura di marmo allato a questa in verso il muro col chiusino in mezzo con fregio nero intorno con uno scudo in testa drentovi una lista azzurra in canpo bianco con dua stelle et dua lune d'oro et lectere intorno che dicano di Nofri di Romolo [space] et de sua descendentì."

396 Teubner 1978, p. 49, doc. III; Ferrara/Quinterio 1984, pp. 227–228. This raises a question regarding what existed in front of the church before the atrium's construction. Eugenio Casalini argued that a similar structure already existed in this location, claiming that the Codice Rustici provides the evidence (Casalini 1995, pp. 92–93). His conclusion is questionable, and further research should be undertaken on this question.

397 Sframeli 1989, pp. 310–311; Bulman 1971, sect. 2, p. 38, sect. 3, p. 4; Ferrara/Quinterio 1984, pp. 216, 220, 221; Goldthwaite 1980, p. 277. References to memorial offices for Andrea and his wife, and the ancestors can be found in ASF, CRSGF, 119:690, fol. 21, 18 May 1465, "Dal erede d'Andrea di Nofri lastraiolo lire otto avemo per fare uno officio per l'anima della loro madre e di tutti loro morti"; fol. 35v, March 1466/1467, "Dal limosine adì primo lire otto avemo dalli eredi d'Andrea lastraiuolo per fare e rinovale per l'anima del padre e della lor madre [h]a recho frate Biagio d'Alberto di Firenze."

398 Rensi 1987, p. 93.

399 Sframeli 1989, p. 310.

400 Goldthwaite 2009, p. 556. On the rise of the family: Goldthwaite 1980, pp. 277–278.

401 ASF, CRSGF, 119:247, fol. 8v.

402 ASF, CRSGF, 119:50, fol. 18r.

403 Andreucci 1857, p. 64; Tonini 1876, pp. 162. This dating has been followed by various authors.



17 Pietro Perugino, *Madonna and Child enthroned with Saints Onuphrius, Andrew the Apostle, Romulus Bishop of Fiesole and Francis of Assisi*, ca. 1497. Florence, Santissima Annunziata, Chapel of Sant'Andrea/Romoli-Bellevanti (photo Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut)

contract survive in the Santissima Annunziata administrative documents. According to the contract, however, Francesco was initially interested in an altar chapel in the nave. The description places it next to the chapels of the Compagnia di Sta Barbara (transept) and Orlando de' Medici (nave);⁴⁰⁵ this was the altar later acquired by Salvatore Billi and decorated with paintings by Fra Bartolomeo della Porta. There is no evidence that Francesco completed, or even began, any work on the nave chapel, and he probably relocated his patronage rights to this tribune chapel almost immediately. The moment of the transfer is not yet clear, but (as mentioned above) Piero del Tovaglia's will stipulated that the patronage rights of four tribune chapels be returned to the Servites in his will of 1485 as an endowment for his chapel. The Servites recorded the donation in their *Ricordanza* under the date February 1486/1487, following del Tovaglia's death, when the will came into action. It was presumably after this latter date that Francesco negotiated the acquisition of the chapel, and he probably reassigned the liturgical obligations that appeared in the 1486 contract. This contract requested the celebration of annual offices for the soul of Giovanni di Bonino Bellevanti and his deceased family members and the feast of St. Michael, and one for the soul of Francesco's father on 1 December, the day after the feast of St. Andrew (30 November). The earnings of an apothecary shop in San Pier Maggiore provided an endowment for the chapel until the shop was sold in 1527.⁴⁰⁶ Notably, in 1487, Francesco was also conceded the patronage of the Chapel of San Romolo in the Cathedral of Fiesole.⁴⁰⁷ Nevertheless, Francesco chose to have his tomb in the Santissima Annunziata, where he was buried in 1500.⁴⁰⁸

The chapel's original altarpiece, the *Madonna and Child enthroned with Sts. Onuphrius, Andrew the Apostle, Romulus Bishop of Fiesole and Francis of Assisi* (fig. 17), by Pietro Perugino, still embellishes the chapel today. The painting is conceived as a *sacra conversazione* set under an open-arched loggia. The four saints stand on a paved floor, gathered around the Virgin and Child. The Virgin is seated on a simple but elegantly decorated throne raised on an altar-like plinth. A ceremonial baldachin is suspended above. Two wood-coloured steps allow access to the plinth. The Virgin gazes downward to share a glance with St. Onuphrius. The Christ Child stands on his mother's left leg. He is naked, but for a diaphanous veil that encircles his hips, and Mary supports him with her left hand curved around his hip. She covers the Child's genitals protectively with her right hand, thus drawing attention to them. This was the site of Christ's first blood sacrifice, but his genitals were also a medium through which artists testified Christ's humanity.⁴⁰⁹ The standing Child rests his hand just above the breast of

404 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 4, fol. 2r.

405 ASF, CRSGF, 119:49, fols. 140r–141r.

406 ASF, CRSGF, 119:49, fols. 140r–141r; ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 6, fol. 37v. Evidence of a *speziale*—those who prepared medicine and other elements—using the shop appears in the convent's administrative books (ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 4r, November 1499, “Da Piero di Luca spetiale fiorini sei di sugello adì 27, recho frate Stephano da Milano per parte della pigione di Francesco d'Andrea di Nofri”).

407 Goldthwaite 2009, p. 556.

408 ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 9, 31 May 1500, payment of 2 large gold florins for funeral and mass.

409 Steinberg (1983) 1996, pp. 73–74.

the Virgin as he gazes toward St. Francis (the chapel owner's name-saint), who head down, is engrossed in reading from a book. The child's pudgy left hand is clenched but for the index finger and thumb, which stick out; the index finger may also gesture toward his covered genitals. Various details testify to the Christ Child's humanity and the actuality of the incarnation, including his umbilicus, displayed just above the veil circling his hips and his hand on the Virgin's breast, revealing that he was born of woman and took nourishment from her.⁴¹⁰ Furthermore, it was through the breast milk with which Mary nourished the Child that she earned her status as the ultimate intercessor with the right to petition him on behalf of those who prayed to her.⁴¹¹ Francis and Onuphrius' bent legs (which are actually mirror images of each other) create the base of a triangle that peaks in the face of the Virgin. The diagonal that begins at St Francis' leg, skims across the genital area of the Christ Child, providing added emphasis. As the priest raised the host for the transubstantiation while celebrating mass at this altar, his line of vision would have been directed past the host, to the God-Child who was clothed in the garments of humanity through the Virgin Mary. Sts Andrew and Romulus, holding closed books, stand respectively behind Onuphrius and Francis, both looking at the saint closest to them. Two steps lead down from the floor on which the throne and the saints stand, and into the space of the viewer.

The bishop saint has previously been identified as Ludovico di Toloso,⁴¹² however, the figure clearly represents Romulus, the bishop of Fiesole (an identification further supported by Francesco's ownership of the chapel dedicated to this saint in the Cathedral of Fiesole). The presence of saints in altarpieces can have one or more *raisons d'être*; they may, for instance, be the name saints of the patron or their family members, the patron saints of the city in which the altarpiece's patron lived or from where he or she came, and/or be patron saints of the owner's guild or occupation. Perugino's altarpiece represents both the chapel's dedication and the family name saints of the chapel's patron (Francesco), his father (Andrea), grandfather (Nofri/Onuphrius) and great grandfather (Romolo). In this panel, we thereby find a merging of the cult of saints with the cult of remembrance. The gathered saints allude to what Peter Brown has described as heavenly patrons and special "*amici*"; they would defend the cause of their earthly client (in this case, the patron of the chapel and his family) in the Holy Court, in a pattern that was similar to an earthly legal system.⁴¹³

No contract is known for the *Sacra conversazione*, nonetheless, there is no reason to doubt that Francesco was the patron.⁴¹⁴ Rudolf Hiller von Gærtringen has suggested a date of ca.1497 for the panel and demonstrates its close relationship with Perugino's *Pala dei Decemviri* (1483-ca.1495; Vatican City, Pinacoteca Vaticana).⁴¹⁵ Perugino was highly sought after in these years; the prices of his works, however, were tiered depending on how much original designing was invested in a composition or its figures. Since this work was not an original invention but loosely based on a cartoon that Perugino produced for an earlier painting, it would evidently have fallen into a second-tier pricing.⁴¹⁶

410 Williamson 2004, p. 385.

411 Williamson 2004, p. 402. This image is obviously not a *Virgo Lactans*, but the theme was common enough for the Christ Child's gesture to be read as alluding to the Virgin's intercessory role.

412 Petrucci 1992, p. 55; Venturini 2004, pp. 31, 38, n. 29.

413 Brown (P.) 1981, pp. 50–63. See also comments by Kent 2000, p. 135; Weissman 1982, pp. 47–48

414 A record of November 1568 claims that he commissioned it (ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 51).

415 Hiller von Gærtringen 2004, pp. 337–338, 348.

416 O'Malley 2007, pp. 682–687.

Giuliano di Romolo d'Andrea di Noferi di Romolo Bellevanti, a nephew of Francesco, donated to the chapel a relic of the "Wood of the Most Holy Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ," placed in a silver reliquary. Giuliano or his brother Giovanni had apparently brought it back from the Levant. After being kept in their house for a certain period, it was placed on the altar of St. Andrew the Apostle. The relic's authenticity was 'certified' by the Servite friar padre Martino, who was staying in the church of San Jacopo in Campo Corbolino.⁴¹⁷ Finally, Alamanno di Girolamo di Romolo di Andrea di Noferi di Romolo Bellevanti (great-nephew of Francesco) donated 150 *scudi* with obligations for daily morning mass at the altar and prayers for the benefactor and the family (6 November 1568).⁴¹⁸ Many relics were initially associated with specific altars or chapels within the Santissima Annunziata. During the sixteenth century, the relics were gathered in a *ricetto* near the sacristy. Francesco Bocchi, who saw them there, listed a selection in his *Bellezze di Firenze* (1591), including a piece of the Wood of the Cross of Our Lord.⁴¹⁹ The *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603) reveals that the relic was returned to the chapel of St. Andrew on the feast of the Holy Cross, and was held in "great veneration."⁴²⁰

Desire for a Chapel – Heirs of Gino di Neri Capponi

A record of 10 November 1487 reveals that the heirs of Gino di Neri di Gino Capponi were interested in acquiring a chapel in the tribune of the Santissima Annunziata. A contract notarised by Piero d'Antonio da Vinci indicates that they were prepared to arrange for an endowment for the chapel.⁴²¹ This was the same year in which del Tovaglia's donation of the four tribune chapels as part of a dowry for his chapel of St. Sigismund came into act.⁴²² In his testament, Gino di Neri di Gino had only obliged his heirs (i.e., his six sons: Piero, Tommaso, Neri, Lessandro, Cappone and Girolamo) to establish an annual memorial mass at the church.⁴²³ While the deal for the chapel did not go through, the heirs nonetheless honoured their father's request for the memorial office in his honour.⁴²⁴

The Capponi was a powerful patrician family, primarily based in the city quarter of Santo Spirito on the other side of the river Arno. Gino di Neri di Gino Capponi was a successful businessman in his own right. Although he held various offices of the Commune (he sat twice as a member of the Signoria, he was once the Gonfalonier, and participated with various *balie*) he was not politically inclined.⁴²⁵ Francis William Kent describes him as having been an "accommodating Medicean," as was his son Piero.⁴²⁶ Gino di Neri Capponi had founded and spent ample funds on the family funerary chapel in Santo Spirito, which had been obliged in his father's will.⁴²⁷ Gino Capponi's heirs' request for a tribune chapel in the Santissima Annunziata was for a site of memorial, not burial. The spiritual benefits of the memorial masses would have been one aspect of their

417 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 51.

418 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 51; ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 6, fol. 37v.

419 Bocchi 1591, p. 228.

420 ASSAF *Libro degli Obblighi* (1603), fol. 15v.

421 ASF, CRSGF, 119:49, fol. 151v: 10 November 1487 three friars were nominated to "potere contrattare chon figliuoli e heredi di Gino di ...[sic] Chapponi cittadino fiorentina una delle chappelle del nostra chupola e da loro pigliare danari o terreni e potergli loro affittare a livello o fitto o mezo chome fussino d'achordo con detti eredi e ubrighare detta chapella furne roghato Ser Piero d'Antonio da Vinci nostro notaio sotto detto di."

422 ASF, CRSGF, 119:49, fol. 145, 13 January 1486/1487.

423 ASF, CRSGF, 119:1270, p. 178, no. 444.

424 For example ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 14v, 11 March 1500/1501 (fiorini 5 di grossi = lire 29 soldi 2 denari 8), fol. 23, May 1502 (4 fiorini larghi d'oro in oro = lire 29 soldi 7 denari 8).

425 Goldthwaite 1968, pp. 194–206.

426 Kent 1977, pp. 85–86.

427 Kent 1977, p. 104; Fondaras 2020, p. 165.

interest in the tribune chapel, but it is also equally possible that this was a political gesture to curry favour with Lorenzo il Magnifico.

The Bardi Chapel of St. Ives (today Chapel of St. Catherine of Alexandria)

The next tribune chapel to be conceded (the second upon entering the tribune from the right) was to Agnolo di Bernardo de' Bardi, his wife and their descendants, according to an entry of September or October 1499 in the convent *Ricordanza*.⁴²⁸ The Bardi was an ancient and noble Florentine merchant-banking family with strong links to the Medici. Agnolo de' Bardi's uncle, Giovanni di Agnolo di Zanobi de' Bardi, was working in London by 1454. By 1465, Giovanni entered into a partnership with Gherardo Canigiani, established by Piero de' Medici, though by 1471 he had his own business again. By the end of the 1470s, Giovanni was spending more time in Florence.⁴²⁹ By 1483, Giovanni appears to have settled back in Florence when he bought his house in the quarter of Santa Croce and established a burial chapel in the church of Santo Spirito.⁴³⁰ When Giovanni died in early 1488, Agnolo as Giovanni's heir, took over the London firm, then known as "Heirs of Giovanni de' Bardi and Partners." Agnolo continued the business until he closed it in 1502.⁴³¹ Agnolo de' Bardi was associated with the Medici bank in London, where he also earned the esteem of Henry VIII, who allowed Agnolo's branch of the Bardi family to include the Tudor rose in their arms.⁴³² The Bardi family was traditionally connected with the church of Santa Croce (where they owned three chapels, one frescoed by Giotto with the *Life of St. Francis of Assisi*).⁴³³ Nevertheless, Agnolo's uncle Giovanni de' Bardi beyond establishing a burial chapel in the Church of Santo Spirito, provided funds for a new chapel in the Cistercian church of Cestello (Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi) in Borgo Pinti. Agnolo inherited responsibility for Giovanni's chapel at Cestello and left money to the Cistercians for a daily mass at the altar for a year following his death, and then an Office.⁴³⁴ The chapel was constructed after Giovanni's death, and he did not indicate a choice of dedication. Located next to the high altar, the Cistercians probably chose the chapel's dedication to St. Benedict of Nursia, whose rule they followed.⁴³⁵

Agnolo de' Bardi died in December 1511. His testament of 1501 mentioned two sums for the Servites. He offered an initial amount of 50 florins, obliging the Servites to pray for his soul before the *Maestà della Nunziata* every feast day for a year, and within that year to celebrate an Office in the Bardi Chapel and a mass for his soul. He then donated 160 florins, with which the Servites were to acquire property to provide for the chapel's endowment, obliging them to celebrate daily mass in the chapel and an annual mass for the dead during Lent. The day preceding the mass of the dead, they were to send a candle to the house of his oldest heir.⁴³⁶ Giovanni d'Agnolo de' Bardi chose burial in his chapel in Santo Spirito, as apparently also did Agnolo,⁴³⁷ indicating that as at Cestello, the tri-

428 ASF, CRS GF, 119:50, fol. 69v. The month is difficult to interpret; Biffoli read 5 September 1499 (ASF, CRS GF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 16v).

429 Payne 2019, p. 169.

430 Luchs 1975, p. 166, n. 31; Blume 1995, p. 172.

431 Payne 2019, pp. 169–170.

432 Burke 2004, p. 142; Lotz 1942, p. 56.

433 Goffen 1988, p. 51.

434 Luchs 1975, p. 346, doc. 13. On the foundation of multiple non-burial chapels: Cohn 1992, pp. 211–214.

435 Luchs 1975, pp. 49, 131, n. 18, 176, n. 1.

436 ASF, CRS GF, 119:65, fol. 61; ASF, CRS GF, 119:52, fol. 82v; ASF, CRS GF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 16v.

437 Luchs 1975, p. 47; Blume 1995, p. 173.



18 Anonymous (English or Northern European), *Eagle Lectern*, before 1469, bronze. Florence, Santissima Annunziata, choir (photo Gabinetto Fotografico degli Uffizi)

bune chapel was not a burial site. Rather, at Cestello and the Santissima Annunziata, the chapels were places for commemorative masses and were part of the spiritual treasure that they were investing in preparation for their death.

Fra Biffoli also reported that Agnolo's "fratello" Giovanni donated 200 florins for an annual office of the dead in the chapel during Lent and full daily mass at the chapel of the *Nunziata*, as well as a special remembrance "pro anima Joannis de Bardis" on Saturdays, such that memory of him not be cancelled. Biffoli claimed, moreover, that "Questo Giovanni fece venire della Magna 2 Aquile d'ottone, una ne dette alle monache delle murate, e l'altra a noi che è quella più piccola dov'è scritto el suo nome nella base."⁴³⁸ These were lecterns to support the books in the choir (fig. 18).⁴³⁹ The iconographical motif of the eagle can be associated with St. John the Evangelist,⁴⁴⁰ Giovanni's name saint, who together with St. John the Baptist formed the dedication of the Bardi chapel in Santo Spirito.⁴⁴¹ In 1540, Fra Andrea da Villamagna paid 10 scudi to the nuns of the Murate to acquire the second lectern.⁴⁴²

Biffoli does not offer dates for the donations of the endowment or the lectern. The record conceding Agnolo and his wife ownership of the tribune chapel mentions no part-ownership by a brother. Both donations were made, almost certainly, by Agnolo's above-mentioned uncle, Giovanni d'Agnolo, not a brother. Indeed, the reference to the lectern offers the first proof. Padre Filippo Tozzi, an eighteenth-century Servite who also gathered information from the church's administrative books, noted in one of his *spoglie* under the date 1469: "Leggio d'ottone mandotoci da Gio. Bardi V[edi] a 256." A record in Fra Cosimo Favilla's 1511 list of miracles of the *Nunziata*, even explains the reason for

this donation. While Giovanni was working as a very successful merchant in Britain, he suffered an illness so terrible that, being so far away from home and family, he thought he would not survive. Nonetheless he did, through the intercession of the Florentine *Nunziata* and in gratitude he had the fine brass eagle made.⁴⁴³ Furthermore, in his testament Giovanni d'Agnolo de' Bardi bequeathed 200 florins for masses to be celebrated at the chapel and altar of the *Nunziata*. He also promised a *paliotto* and a *pianeta* for the altar, and the Santissima Annunziata was named as part beneficiary (together with Santo Spirito, Santa Maria Novella, Santa Croce, and le Murate) of a sum of 500 florins (items not noted by Biffoli).⁴⁴⁴ Moreover, various records between 1483 and 1485 show Giovanni

438 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 16v. This text is published both in Tonini 1876, p. 77; and in Lotz 1942, p. 56, n. 1, who both repeat the error of considering Giovanni the brother of Agnolo. None of these authors provide an actual document referring to a "Giovanni di Bernardo de' Bardi."

439 While Biffoli described the lecterns as being "dalla Magna," which could imply Germany, there is debate over whether they came from Northern Europe or England: Lotz 1942 pp. 49–59; Squilbeck 1941, pp. 359–361; Bisaccioni 1987, pp. 327–328. New research on the lecterns is currently being undertaken by Douglas Brine, who has also independently concluded that Giovanni de' Bardi was the uncle, not the brother of Agnolo de' Bardi.

440 Bisaccioni 1987, p. 328.

441 Blume 1995, p. 175.

442 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 16v; Lotz 1942, p. 56, n. 1.

443 BNCF *Conventi Soppressi*, C. I. 1458, fols. 79r–80r. The manuscript also contains Favilla's *De Origine Ordinis Servorum et Vita Beati Philippi*, which has been published (see Favilla ed. 1913). The miracles, however, remain unpublished.

444 ASF, *Notarile Anticosimiano 1740* Antonio di Battista Bartolomei 1455–1495, Testimenti (old no. B726), fols. 382 and following (also numbered fols. 294–299), fol. 382v.

d'Agnolo de' Bardi lending money to the friars for the "needs of the convent."⁴⁴⁵ Giovanni de' Bardi may have introduced Agnolo de' Bardi to the Servites. The latter was sometimes named as collecting repayments on behalf of his uncle.⁴⁴⁶ In recognition of Giovanni's generosity, the Servites gave him various gifts.⁴⁴⁷ Finally, the Servites recorded an *entrata* of lire 4 on 18 January 1487/1488, as *limosine* received for celebrating an office for Giovanni de' Bardi.⁴⁴⁸

Agnolo was also a generous benefactor of the church, similarly offering interest-free loans to the Servites.⁴⁴⁹ He lent 25 florins toward the paving of the church in 1502.⁴⁵⁰ Agnolo's testament did not indicate the chapel's dedication; Biffoli and other later sources indicated that the titular saint was St. Ives.⁴⁵¹ The dedication may link back to a traditional devotion of the family. The Servites recorded in May 1438 the receipt of a *cerotto* from Francesco de' Bardi for the feast day of St. Ives.⁴⁵² Beyond the necessary paraphernalia for the liturgy, the only embellishment that the Bardi may have provided for the chapel was a simple altarpiece celebrating the chapel's dedication, which Tonini described as a "bellissimo quadro."⁴⁵³ It is telling, though, that neither Giorgio Vasari nor Francesco Bocchi mention the painting in their respective works. Nothing further is known of the altarpiece, including which St. Ives was intended. The *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* indicates three possibilities: Ives of Chartres (23 December), Ives of Ramsey or Huntingdonshire, an English bishop and patron saint of notaries (24 April and 10 June); or the Frenchman "Yves Helory de Kermartin," a priest of Brittany (19 May). Francesco de' Bardi's donation of May 1438 favours St. Ives of Kermartin, patron saint of lawyers and judges and defender of orphaned children and the poor.⁴⁵⁴

In his testament, Giovanni de' Bardi specified that his arms should be displayed on his chapel at Cestello as "an example to other benefactors."⁴⁵⁵ Although Agnolo did not provide a major decorative program for the chapel, he did mark the chapel with the family coat of arms. Tonini noted two coats of arms on the pilasters of this chapel; these are still in situ. That on the left belongs to Agnolo de' Bardi and is emblazoned with a band of lozenges. On the right appears a shield charged with an upright, three-step ladder. Tonini noted that they could not be those of the Scala family, which had a "scala posta in banda," suggesting,

445 ASF, CRSGF, 119:247, fol. 3v, 1 January 1482/1483, 20 florins; fol. 27v, February 1484/1485 two sums one of 4 large florins and three quarters, and 63 florins and 15 soldi. The latter were to pay Lorenzo de' Medici e compagni on behalf of the friars, who had paid an "imposta" for them placed by Pope Sixtus. Various payments in the same volume record their repayments to Giovanni de' Bardi (for example: fols. 60v, 61, 81v, 84, 85v, 97v, 190).

446 ASF, CRSGF, 119:247, fol. 81v, 28 May 1483, fol. 84, 11 June 1483; fol. 97v, 3 February 1483/1484.

447 In 1486, the Servites bought fish to donate to Giovanni de' Bardi and others for the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin, and on the feast of Ognissanti, geese to present to the *operai* and Giovanni de' Bardi (ASF, CRSGF, 119:699, fol. 36v, September 1486; fol. 43v, 31 October 1486).

448 ASF, CRSGF, 119:699, fol. 17v.

449 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 16v.

450 ASF, CRSGF, 119:700, fol. 21, 28 February 1501/1502, "Da Agnolo di Bernardo dei Bardi adiecto, fiorini venticinque larghi d'oro in oro equali ci presta pel pavimento della Chiesa lire 175."

451 ASF, *Notarile Anticosimiano*, 13195, Jacopo Martini, 1482–1518, Testamenti (Old no. M239), fols. 82–87v, 108–109v. ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 16v.

452 Ircani Menichini 2004, p. 153. Without a patronymic for Francesco de' Bardi it is impossible to establish what relationship he had with Giovanni and Agnolo. A certain Antonio di Agnolo de' Bardi provided the church with a bequest of 10 florins on 15 November 1442 (ASF, CRSGF, 119:48, fol. 48v).

453 Tonini 1876, pp. 181–182. This suggests it may still have been found somewhere in the church or convent in the late nineteenth century.

454 *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 1966, vol. 7, coll. 994–1002.

455 Luchs 1975, p. 377.

instead, that the second coat of arms belonged to the Falconieri.⁴⁵⁶ I propose, however, that they are a perfect match for those of the family of Agnolo's wife, Isabella di Antonfrancesco Scali.⁴⁵⁷ Isabella was mentioned in Agnolo's testament regarding the chapel, by only her first name.⁴⁵⁸ She is identified with her full name as the "moglie" and "vedova" of Agnolo di Bernardo de' Bardi in several documents relating to the testaments of Agnolo di Bernardo de' Bardi and Giovanni di Agnolo de' Bardi.⁴⁵⁹

In 1610, the Servites determined that the Bardi no longer had jurisdiction over the Chapel of St. Ives, and conceded it as a burial chapel to Marcello Accolti, secretary of the Medici Grand Duke. Accolti requested the chapel:

"per zelo, e desiderio, che ha di far cose a Gloria del Signore Dio, come per continuare il devoto affetto delli Antenati suoi alla Venerandissima Chiesa della Nunziata conservatrice non meno delle loro ossa, che esecutrice della pia volonta di M Benedetto suo Proavo, Guireconsulto, e Secretario della Eccelsa Repubblica Fiorentina nell'annua celebrazione di officio in suffragio dell'anima sua."

Permission was given with the provision that he show the Servites his plans for the chapel's ornamentation for approval, and that work on the chapel begin within two years and be finished – it was firmly requested – within four years.⁴⁶⁰ They viewed the plans in July of 1611 in the "Cappella dei scultori" (the chapel of the Accademia del Disegno).⁴⁶¹ Accolti wished to change the chapel's dedication, and it was eventually embellished with marble ornamentation designed by Gherardo Silvani, and a *Mystical Marriage of St. Catherine of Alexandria* by Giovanni Bilivert.⁴⁶² However, a devotional cult had developed toward the St. Ives panel that adorned the Bardi chapel altar. When Marco Accolti's heirs indicated they would move forward with the chapel's renovation in 1618, the Servites transferred the panel to the nave chapel of the Pietà (the ancient dedication of the Cortigiani chapel of San Gherardo). The *Libro dei Partiti* explained that it had been moved due to the numerous alms they received to say mass before this image of St. Ives.⁴⁶³

456 Tonini 1876, p. 182. For the Falconieri coat of arms: <https://www.archiviodistato.firenze.it/ceramellipapiani/index.php?page=Famiglia&id=3000>

457 For the Scali coat of arms: <https://www.archiviodistato.firenze.it/ceramellipapiani/index.php?page=Famiglia&id=6814>

458 ASF, CRSGF, 119:65, fol. 61.

459 <https://www.archivistorici.com/it/fascicoli/dettagli/142339?redir=1>; <https://www.archivistorici.com/it/fascicoli/dettagli/142344?redir=1>; <https://www.archivistorici.com/it/fascicoli/dettagli/142345?redir=1>

460 ASF, CRSGF, 119:36, fol. 83: 4 September 1610; fol. 84: 18 September 1610. Published in Tonini 1876, pp. 305–307, docs. LXXI–LXXII.

461 ASF, CRSGF, 119:36, fol. 103, 21 July 1611. Published by Tonini 1876, p. 307, doc. LXXIII.

462 Contini 1985, pp. 128–130, cat. XXIV; Grassi 2014, p. 85. The dedication was changed following its concession to Marcello Accolti in September 1610, though it continued to carry the title "Sant'Ivo" for some time, following its concession to Accolti, and in various dealings with his heirs while they were organising its decoration: ASF, CRSGF, 119:36, fols. 83, 84, 103, 128v, 141–142v, 148v, 198.

463 ASF, CRSGF, 119:36, fol. 234, 27 July 1618 [margin: Tavola di S. Ivo all'altare della Pietà]. "XXII.o Lesse una petizione di fra Angelico sagrestano maggiore che li padri assegnassino in quale altare si dovesse collocare la tavola di Santo Ivo, che era nella Cappella de' Signori Accolti intorno al choro, atteso che venivono molte elemosine per dir messe del detto Santo Ivo. Fu discorso, e terminato, che detta tavola si ponesse sopra l'altare nella Cappella della Pietà a mezza la chiesa, e che dette cappella tutta si imbianchessi, fu vinto il partito per tutti i voti favorevoli."

The Chapel of St. Simon – The Scala Chapel of Sts. Cosmas and Damian (today Chapel of the *Nato Cieco*)

Nothing is known of the ownership, dedication or original furnishings of the third tribune chapel (entering from the right) until September 1529, when Domenico de Cresci applied to the Servites for the patronage of the chapel of St. Simon. In return, he was obliged to provide the chapel with an endowment (*dota*) and the necessities required for celebrating mass.⁴⁶⁴ The Cresci family enjoyed an ancient connection to the church, having owned a chapel (the third nave chapel on the right, upon entering the church) since about 1364.⁴⁶⁵ It is not clear what relation the applicant had with this family, as he is alluded to in the request as “un certo Domenico de Cresci.” Cresci did not follow through with his application, since only a few years later, in 1534, the patronage was granted to Giuliano Scala (1480–1554). The Servites allowed Scala to change the chapel’s dedication to Sts. Cosmas and Damian, accepting an obligation to celebrate their feast.⁴⁶⁶ The title was altered to honour Scala’s recently dead son Cosimo.⁴⁶⁷ It also, however, reflects the family’s allegiance to the Medici. Giuliano’s father, the humanist Bartolomeo Scala (1430–1497) had been a close friend of both Cosimo and Piero de’ Medici and had acted as chancellor of the Republic.⁴⁶⁸

Giuliano Scala already owned a sepulchre near the foot of the high altar and located between tombs of the da Terrarossa and dell’Antella families; he had acquired it as recently as 1513.⁴⁶⁹ It may have contained the remains of his sister (d.1525), and a son (d.1531).⁴⁷⁰ In February 1532, Giuliano appeared as one of the church *operai*.⁴⁷¹ Upon acquiring the tribune chapel, he had his father’s remains transferred from Cestello to the chapel’s sepulchre.⁴⁷² Giuliano provided an endowment of a hundred florins for the chapel. He obliged the Servites to celebrate the feast of Cosmas and Damian, followed by an Office of the Dead for his son Cosimo. The Servites also had to celebrate three further annual Offices of the Dead after the feasts days of St. Bartholomew (for his parents), St. Julian (for all his children, whom he had lost, and for himself when he passed away), and St. Francis of Assisi (for his wife when she died).⁴⁷³ Scala promised to decorate the

464 ASF, CRSGF, 119:33, fol. 15: 28 September 1529. “Adi 28 di Settembre 1529 venne al padre priore un certo Domenico de Cresci el quale adimandava una nostra cappella posta in cupola, intitolata al presente in Sancto + Symeone cioe la tertia andando in cupola a man dextra in corpera nel modo che si costuma dare dette chappelle cioè farli la docta [dota] et adornarla di tutti le sue necessità di modo che vi si possa dire messa e ch’il convento tenendo un frate per detta chappella il convento le possa mantenere cioè che detto Domenico facci tal docta a detta cappella conveniente. Dicendo lui volerlo fare e questo et paramenta et dell’altre cose, proposto il partito fu vinto segi desse faccendo dota conveniente et l’altre cose, + forno fave nere 9 bianche dua.”

465 Tuccci 1942, pp. 112–113.

466 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 131v, 20 July 1534; ASF, CRSGF, 119:33, fol. 55: 7 July 1534.

467 Brown 1990, p. 165. Cosimo was buried 16 February 1534 (st. mod.) ASF, CRSGF, 119:814, fol. 14.

468 Brown 1990, pp. 22–25.

469 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 86v, 2 April 1513, [in margin: sepoltura data a Giuliano Schala] “Richordo chome adì 2 d’aprile 1513 [date crossed over] col nostro padre priore Maestro Amadio vende una sepultura posta in chiesa apie delle schale c’ vanno all’altare maggiore posta in mezo della sepoltura di quelli da Terrarossa et di quelli dell’Antella a Giuliano di Maestro Bartolomeo Schala per pregio di fiorini sei largi d’oro in oro cioè e quali denari ora a paghare in tre anni cioè fiorini due larghi d’oro l’anno cominciando la prima pagha per tutto questo anno 1513 et poi l’altro anno per anno chome seghue.” [Below: posto debitore detto Giuliano al libro rosso B a 346]. Regarding the date: the month and year has been crossed over, the reference is the last on the page, but it both follows one dated 14 January 1512/1513, and precedes one on the following page dating 16 January 1512/1513. All this suggests that it may actually date to mid January.

470 ASF, CRSGF, 119:706, fol. 159v, 30 May 1525; ASF, CRSGF, 119:814, fol. 8, 24 June 1531.

471 ASF, CRSGF, 119:711, fol. 113v, 20 February 1531/1532.

472 Brown 1990, p. 87.



19 Andrea del Sarto, *Annunciation to the Virgin*, ca. 1528, oil on panel, 96 × 198 cm. Florence, Galleria Palatina (photo Gabinetto Fotografico degli Uffizi)

chapel and provide it with the necessary accessories for the liturgy. Fra Biffoli noted a bronze gilded candelabrum and a *tela da morti* (cloth of the dead) for the celebrations of the offices of the dead, among the liturgical paraphernalia that Giuliano Scala provided for the chapel.⁴⁷⁴

Giuliano embellished the chapel with Andrea del Sarto's *Annunciation* (Galleria Palatina, Florence) (fig. 19). He had commissioned the *Annunciation* in 1528 on behalf of Benedetto Celso, to crown an altarpiece that Andrea had painted for Celso for the Church of San Domenico, Sarzana, but the deal fell through and Giuliano kept the *Annunciation*.⁴⁷⁵ The *Annunciation* surmounted an altarpiece depicting *Sts. Cosmas and Damian* (now lost) on the Scala altar.⁴⁷⁶ In 1580 Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici requested and received Andrea del Sarto's *Annunciation*, replacing it on the altar with a copy by Alessandro Allori.⁴⁷⁷ The Scala family was extinct by June of 1595, and the Servites conceded the chapel to Pellegrino and Alessandro Brunaccini, property investors.⁴⁷⁸ The Brunaccini received permission to remove the Scala arms, and in 1599 the Servites paid 50 *scudi* to the prioress of the convent of San Clemente. In this convent Giuliano's granddaughters, the last members of the family, had been nuns. Allori's copy of Andrea del Sarto's *Annunciation* and the anonymous altarpiece of *Sts. Cosmas and Damian* were also removed in 1599 and consigned to the convent of San Clemente.⁴⁷⁹ Little is known of this altarpiece. Tonini also mentioned its removal and that the new owners embellished the altar with the painting *Christ gives Sight to the Boy Born Blind* (in situ) by Domenico Passignano.⁴⁸⁰

473 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 131v; Brown 1990, pp. 165–166.

474 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 17r.

475 Shearman 1965, vol. 2, pp. 275–276.

476 ASF, CRSGF, 125:72 (n. 68) 20 August 1599; Brown 1990, pp. 167, 177, n. 113.

477 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 20, fol. 17r. Allori's copy may be that in the Louvre collection (Shearman 1965, vol. 2, p. 276).

478 Grassi 2014, pp. 62, 110, n. 37; Ceccanti 2014, pp. 82–83.

479 ASF, CRSGF, 125:72 (n. 68) 20 August 1599; Brown 1990, pp. 167, 177, n. 113.

480 Tonini 1876, pp. 179–180.

The Chapel of the Madonna dietro al Coro (of the Madonna del Soccorso)

While the miraculous *Nunziata* was by far the most important cult image in the church, it was not the only one available from which people could request help. Indeed, it seems that a rich devotional and cultic life developed in the relatively intimate space of the tribune during the sixteenth century, as is evident from the devotions to Sts. Ignatius (together with Blaise and Erasmus), Sigismund, and Ives, as discussed above. The most significant cult to develop under the cupola, however, was another Marian devotion, the *Vergine dietro al Coro*, or the *Madonna del Soccorso* (fig. 20). A simple painting of the Virgin Mary in half-figure holding the Child and set against a gold background, it has been variously attributed to Bernardo Daddi, Maestro di Barberino, Maestro della Cappella Rinuccini and more recently to Matteo di Pacino.⁴⁸¹ The Virgin supports the Christ Child on her left arm curved under and around his legs. Her right-hand rests on his stomach, to help sustain his position. They gaze absorbedly at each other. Mary wears a red dress embroidered with golden 'M's (for Mary). She is enveloped by a blue cloak with gold trim that covers her head, exposing one ear – perhaps alluding to 'the Word' that she now holds in her arms – the cloak flows over her right shoulder, encircles her waist and finally is looped around her left arm. Stylised 'S's appear in the trim, possibly in reference to the Servi (though not necessarily considering it originally was made for the Falconieri chapel).

The *Madonna del Soccorso* probably originated as the central image of a triptych altarpiece for the Falconieri's chapel. A record of 1516 reported that Forese di Dedi Falconieri commissioned it in 1362 and that panels representing Sts. Nicholas and Francis of Assisi had once accompanied it.⁴⁸² While the iconography of the *Madonna del Soccorso* is often associated with a scene of the Madonna defending a child from a devil, as appears in the Veluti Chapel altarpiece in Santo Spirito, this was not always the case, and a variety of images bear this title.⁴⁸³ The *Madonna* in the tribune may have received the name due to 'actions' of succour that she was perceived to have performed.

Although the Falconieri may have had rights over the high altar before the tribune's construction, they did not receive any over the main tribune chapel. The first patron connected with the chapel was Puccio di Antonio Pucci, but his family chose to relinquish their rights in favour of the new Oratory of St. Sebastian. The Pucci were already involved in the oratory's construction by 1452 but they formally relinquished their rights to the tribune chapel in 1465.⁴⁸⁴ Nevertheless, they appear to have maintained some interest in the tribune chapel, as in a contract of 1475 regarding obligations relating to the Oratory of St. Sebastian, the Pucci also requested certain feasts to be celebrated in the tribune chapel.⁴⁸⁵ Antonio's sons Roberto and Lorenzo cancelled these feasts in the tribune, however, when they revised the contract with the Servites in 1493.⁴⁸⁶ As noted above, Giovanni dei Borromei also expressed interest in the patronage of the main tribune chapel (together with the flanking chapels) in a will of 1455 (thus before the Pucci's formal relinquishment of the space), but this submission was taken no further; his will regarding this chapel was cancelled in 1472.⁴⁸⁷

481 Sources 2000, p. 406; Scalella 2004, pp. 95, 102, n. 23, fig. 11.

482 Casalini 1998, p. 167.

483 Arthur 2012, pp. 151–152; Fondaras 2020, pp. 89–91.

484 Brown 1981, pp. 60, 62, 85–85.

485 ASF, CRSGF, 119:1270, pp. 169–172, no. 431; ASF, Not. Ant. 4827, fols. 27–35. For those of Sts. Francis of Assisi and Zenobius it was specified that vespers should be removed.

486 ASF, CRSGF, 119:49, fol. 213v.

487 Brown 1981, p. 86.



20 *Madonna del Soccorso*, 1362, oil on panel, 85 × 50.5 cm. Florence, Santissima Annunziata, Chapel of the Madonna del Soccorso (photo Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut)

While the *Madonna* panel appears to have initially belonged to the Falconieri, how it came to inhabit the main tribune chapel is unknown. The Falconieri chapel, located in the eastern arm of the church transept, and dating back to 1350, was newly decorated with a terracotta sculpture of the *Resurrection of Christ* by Agostino di Duccio in 1470.⁴⁸⁸ This possibly liberated the *Madonna* from their chapel and allowed for its accommodation in the main chapel once the tribune chapels were ready to be furnished. It is not clear, however, that the *Resurrection* of 1470 replaced the altarpiece of 1362; prior to 1470 the Falconieri Chapel had been dedicated to St. Dominus, and an altarpiece honouring this saint could have adorned the altar.⁴⁸⁹ The *Madonna* may have already passed from the Falconieri chapel before 1439. That year the friars paid 5 soldi for “due lampade che era a quella Vergine Maria dietro al choro.” The friars’ choir was still located in the nave before the high altar in 1439, and the phrase ‘dietro il coro’ indicates behind the friars— toward the lay congregation.⁴⁹⁰ The *Virgin* could have been moved with the friars’ choir, first into the western arm of the transept where a temporary choir was installed during the tribune’s construction, and then under the tribune where it was accommodated in the main tribune chapel (the new ‘dietro il coro’).⁴⁹¹ Regardless of how or when the *Madonna* arrived in the main tribune chapel, the Falconieri had not yet relinquished their claim over the painting. A seventeenth-century inscription on the panel’s reverse reveals that Paolo Falconieri donated the painting to Giambologna in 1599.⁴⁹²

The venerated image of the *Madonna* was in situ by at least 1504, when a linen worker called Lorenzo, donated half a barrel of oil, *per suo amore*, to the *Vergine Maria di chupola*.⁴⁹³ A frame with a small door or grill was made to contain the paint-

ing, as in June 1517 the Servites paid for a “chiavicina e topa al telaio della Vergine Maria dietro al coro.”⁴⁹⁴ In 1533 the Servites issued payments for various elements relating to curtains for three chapels behind the *coro*, one of which may have been for the *Madonna*. The tinkling of small bells, also acquired at this time, would have accompanied the opening of the curtains.⁴⁹⁵ The Servites paid 67 lire in 1537 to Vincenzo di Zanobi *legnaiolo* for a gate (*ca[n]celo*) that could close off the chapel in which the *Madonna* was kept, to

488 Teubner 1978, p. 51, doc. XI, 2.

489 ASF, CRSGF, 119:692, fol. 62: 5 January 1469/1470, “A Maestro Agostino d’Antonio intagliatore fiorini otto larghi e quali danari ebbe per parte di fiorini 100 debba avere per fare el lavorio di Pagolo Falconieri alla capella di San Donnino cioè la Resurrectione di Christo intagliata di terra cotta come di pacto con decto Pag[o]lo e maestro Augustino d’acordo come apare per una scripta di mano di decto Augustino porto decti di lui decto al questo (6 in due partite a libro Segnato b a 239 lire 45 soldi 11.”

490 Casalini 1995, pp. 62–63, n. 29.

491 See discussion above.

492 Tonini 1876, p. 170.

493 Casalini 1998, p. 168.

494 Casalini 1998, p. 167.

495 ASF, CRSGF, 119:813, cnn., 7 February 1533, “Adi 7 detto in una peza di nastro tane per far chappietti a tre cortine alle cappelle dietro al coro et in cupola soldi undici / Et in detto di in 50 campanelle per più cortine soldi 6 et in tre luminegli soldi 2 denari 4 in tutto.”

protect the image.⁴⁹⁶ In 1543, various silver items – undoubtedly votive objects – were taken from the chapel *dietro il coro* and melted down (together with a figure in silver that had been donated to St. Sebastian) for the needs of the convent.⁴⁹⁷ Then, in early 1544, Zanobi di Pagno Portigiani was paid for a bell weighing four pounds for this chapel, presumably for use during the masses celebrated there.⁴⁹⁸

Another member of the Pucci family showed interest in the tribune chapel in 1521. Perhaps inspired by the expanding cult there, Alessandro di Antonio Pucci arranged for an annual barrel of oil to be provided for the lamp of the *Vergine Maria della Grazia drieto al coro*.⁴⁹⁹ Individuals, both identified and unidentified, often left alms for masses to be sung to the *Vergine Maria Nostra dietro al Coro*⁵⁰⁰ and a small box was expressly set up to collect offerings to this Madonna.⁵⁰¹ Fra (?) Nicholo *infermiere* (on 24 January 1536) and a certain Piero Lungo *pannaiuolo* (in January and December 1541 and December 1551) were among those who requested sung masses in the chapel; Nicholo *infermiere's* was specified as *della Conceptione*.⁵⁰² The Servite novices sang some of these masses.⁵⁰³ By 1575 donations to the *Vergine dietro al Coro* were becoming so frequent that they were merely recorded as monthly sums.⁵⁰⁴

In November 1541, this *Virgin* was referred to in a notarised document as the *Madonna del Soccorso*,⁵⁰⁵ although she also continued to be referred to as the *Vergine dietro al coro*.⁵⁰⁶ The requests for masses and offerings do not fall in any particular month; for instance, sung masses were paid for in December 1547, July 1548, December 1548 and May 1549, suggesting individuals were giving thanks to this Marian image for personal events, not related to a specific feast day.⁵⁰⁷ One record of March 1549 specified that a woman left 4 lire “per un voto alla Madonna drieto al coro per una corona d’argento.”⁵⁰⁸ Devotion to the *Madonna del Soccorso* could be expressed in conjunction with one to the *Nunziata*. Among other obligations mentioned in his testament of 14 March 1547/1548, Filippo Mazinghi required the Servites to say annually eight masses and one sung mass at the altar of the *Madonna drieto al Coro*, and obliged his heirs to provide half a barrel of oil annually for the lamps before the *Nunziata*.⁵⁰⁹

Monsignor Antonio Altoviti, the archbishop of Florence, underscored the importance of the devotion to the *Madonna del Soccorso* in May 1573, when he conceded an indulgence of 40 days in perpetuity to whoever visited the chapel of the *Madonna del Soccorso* on all the Saturdays and feasts of the Virgin, reciting at least one Our Father and one Ave Maria in honour of the Holy Mother Church.⁵¹⁰ The attachment of the indulgence to Saturdays may have been due to

496 ASF, CRSGF, 119:813, cnn. 27 February 1536/1537, “Io Vincenzo di Zanobi legnaiuolo [h]o riceunto [sic: ricevuto] in sino a questo dì 27 di febraio lire sesa[n]ta sete in più partite per resto d’un cha[n]celo [h]o fato ala Vergine Maria dreto al [c]horo del Anunziata e qua danari m[h]a pagati fra [C]harlo di Stefano sagrestano di deta chiesa.” ASSAF, *Entrata uscita da 1535*, fol. 178r/v, “Io frate Carlo faro qui di sotto ricordo et terro conto de danari che io ricevero da quelle persone che mi darano limosine per fare il chancello drieto al coro nostro alla cappella della Vergine Maria di mano in mano”; “Et tutti questi danari venuti in queste sopra dette partite ho pagati io frate Carlo Sagrestano a Vincentio legnaiuolo che sta nella via de Servi il quale ha fatto il sopradetto Cancellò alla Nostra Donna drieto al coro chiamata la Vergine Maria del Soccorso: hoggi questo dì 12 maggio [1537] porto lui contanti.”

497 ASSAF, *Entrata e uscita da 1535*, fol. 88v, Aprile 1543, “D’argenti di piu sorte levati dalla Nostra Dona drieto al coro e a Santo Bastiano uno huomo in piast.a [piastrina?] d’argento consegnati al nostro Reverendo padre priore [...] per bisogni del convento pesorono oncie tre dj dua in tuctto [...]”

498 ASF, CRSGF, 119:721, fol. 42v, January 1543/1544, “A spese di sagrestia lire sei sono per un campanello compero da Zanobi di Pagno [Portigiani] per la cappella della Vergine Maria dreto al coro che lire quatro et soldi 10 porto detto in danar contanti et lire una et soldi 10 porto in quatro libre di metallo come appare alla mia entrata in questo c.8.”

499 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 110r, 14 November 1521.

the special significance that this day held for the Servites' religious duties toward the Virgin. The *Reverentiis* prescribed special acts of reverence to the Virgin to be performed on Wednesdays and Saturdays.⁵¹¹ A pre-existing practice of giving a sermon in Mary's honour on Saturday evenings was codified at the Servite General Chapter of 1392. In 1458, Pope Calixtus III conceded the Servite convents of Florence and Bologna permission to celebrate a mass in her honour on the evening of Holy Saturday; this was subsequently extended to the whole Order in 1491.⁵¹² The trumpeters of Palazzo della Signoria (Florence) were to play at Santissima Annunziata on Saturdays.⁵¹³ A weekly Saturday market was held in front of the church by 1368 (though commencing perhaps even a century earlier).⁵¹⁴ There could be a connection between Calixtus III's concession, Altoviti's indulgence and the market. The canons at San Lorenzo arranged for special indulgences at their church on Wednesdays, the same day that a market was held in their piazza.⁵¹⁵ I have not, however, been able to ascertain if the market continued to be held on Saturdays in the piazza della Santissima Annunziata through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The patronage of the chapel of the *Madonna del Soccorso* was first granted to Domenico di Marco Dolci in July 1556.⁵¹⁶ The Servites had identified Dolci as a generous benefactor of the church in 1555. On that occasion they decided that he would enjoy the usual privileges of Servite benefactors, but as an extra, they would celebrate daily a mass of the Holy Spirit for his soul, as well as an oration

500 ASF, CRSGF, 119:706, fol. 27r, 14 January 1524/1525, 6 lire 16 soldi; ASF, CRSGF, 119:707, fol. 14: 4 July 1526, 3 lire 10 soldi.

501 ASSAF, *Entrata di Sagrestia e olio, 1563–1590*, A I.23, fol. 49, "Da offerta della casetta della Madonna dietro al coro per tutto questo mese lire dodici in tutto lire 12."

502 ASSAF, *Entrata Uscita da 1535*, fol. 4v, 24 January 1534/1535 "Adì 24 da limosine d'una messa cantata diet[r]o al coro della Conceptione per f. Nicholo infermiere"; fol. 36, 1 January 1540/1541, "Da limosine questo di primo di genaio lire sette, sono per una messa cantata alla Vergine drieto al coro fece cantare Piero pannaio, consegnati a Maestro Xofano per mettere nella cassetta della Nuntiata"; ASF CRSGF, 119:813, cnn. 10 December 1541; ASF, CRSGF, 119:727, fol. 8, 12 December 1551.

503 ASF, CRSGF, 119:813, cnn. At top of page: "dicembre" (previous page 1529), "Adì 10 di decto si canto dua messe alla Madonna di drieto al choro alla prima havemo lire sette alle seconda lire dua la quale cantarono i novizi hebano lira una soldi cinque restano in tucte lire 6 per tute in refectorio."

504 See for example ASF, CRSGF, 119:736, fols. 15, 17v, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26v, 28, 29, 30v, 32v, 34, 36.

505 ASF, Not. Ant., 1258, fol. 284, 25 November 1541. The document regards the chapel of St. Sigismund.

506 For instance, in the accounts of 1574–1575 cited at note 497.

507 ASF, CRSGF, 119:724, fols. 6, 12, 18v, 24v.

508 ASF, CRSGF, 119:724, fol. 22v, March 1548/1549.

509 ASF, CRSGF, 119:52, fol. 166v, 14 March 1547/1548 "Richordo chome per insino addì 14 di marzo 1547 Filippo di [Arringo: written in by different hand] Mazinghi fe suo testamento, e lascio dopo la sua morte al nostro chonvento che noi siano obrigati andare al suo mortorio ed abiano per la limosina di det[t]o mortorio e cera e di poi abiano avere lire 6 per limosina dile mese s'[h]a[n]no a dire di san Gregorio e di poi ogni an[n]o in perpetuo dire messe otto e una chantando al a[l]tare ala Madon[n]a drieto al choro e ad abiano avere dalla sua rede per limosina lire [space] e più ci la[s]c[i]a det[t]o testatore ogni an[n]o in perpetuo barrili ½ d'olio per tenere al[l]e lanpane della Nunziata, tutto rogato Ser Nichollo Parenti sot[t]o det[t]o di al quale ci riferiamo"; ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 6, fol. 10v. Biffoli gave the patronymic as Jacopo.

510 Tonini 1876, pp. 253.

511 Chap. I: *Constitutiones Antiquae* ed. 1897, p. 28; *Sources* 2000, pp. 112.

512 Besutti 1984, pp. 72–73; *Fonti* 2002, pp. 422–423.

513 Zornetta 1963, p. 195. On the civic musicians and their varying roles see McGee 1999, pp. 727–743.

514 Andreatta/Quinterio 1988, pp. 176–177, n. 26.

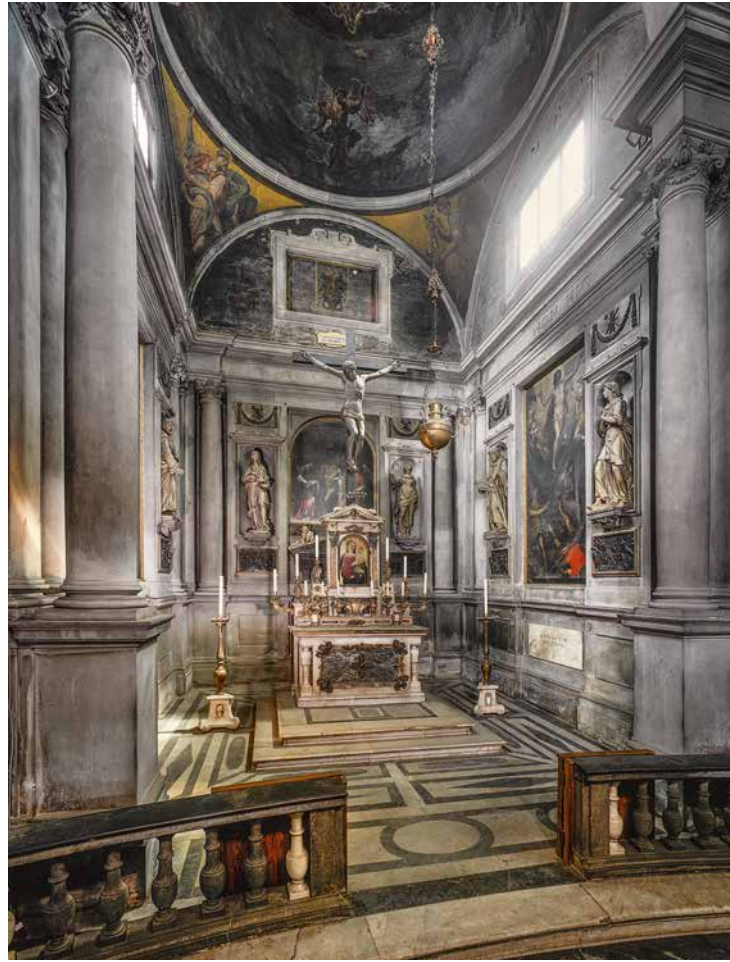
515 Gaston 1987, p. 119.

516 ASF, CRSGF, 119:35, fols. 81v–82v.

of the Madonna, while he was alive, changing to a mass of the dead after he died, praying for his soul, that of his parents, and his ancestors.⁵¹⁷ In a codicil of April 1559 he added a provision of 10 lire to pay a *converso* to keep the chapel clean.⁵¹⁸ The Servites record various feasts of obligation celebrated in the chapel in his honour following his death.⁵¹⁹ The church *operai* protested to the Grand Duke in October 1578 that Domenico Dolci di Mugello had been conceded the chapel without their being consulted. They claimed that Dolci was a “*persona di bassa condizione*” (a low-class fellow), who had done little more than attach his crest to the chapel, arrange a sepulchre there, and provide a dowry with obligations for the friars; that is, he was neither the founder nor substantial embellisher of the chapel. Furthermore, there were honourable and very noble people who would be interested in decorating the chapel appropriately to cultivate Divine worship there.⁵²⁰

Nothing immediate appears to have come of the *operai*'s appeal; however, in 1594, the Servites managed to convince Dolci's heir, Michelangelo di Martino, to liberate the chapel of Santa Maria del Soccorso when a more desirable patron, Giambologna, the Medici Grand Duke's sculptor and architect, showed interest.⁵²¹ Giambologna wished to create there a burial chapel for himself and other Flemish artists working in Florence.⁵²² The sculptor was able draw on the skills of a network of painter friends, colleagues and sculptor assistants to embellish the chapel (fig. 21). Giovan Battista Paggi painted a *Nativity of Christ* (side wall), Jacopo Ligozzi an *Angel Pietà* (centre), Domenico Passignano a *Resurrection* (side wall), and for the decoration of the chapel's cupola Bernardino Poccetti painted *Angels in Glory*, *Four Archangels* and *Virtues*. Giambologna also contributed artwork for the chapel's decoration. The *Crucified Christ* (1578) above the altar was a second fusion of a figure he had made for William V, Duke of Bavaria. On the walls, below niches made to hold statues, he placed six bronze relief scenes of the *Passion* that were slightly simplified versions of those he had made for the Grimaldi Chapel in Genoa.⁵²³ The chapel was revealed on 23 December 1598, and the first mass was celebrated there by the Prior General, Father Angiolmaria Montorsoli.⁵²⁴

The *Madonna del Soccorso* was accommodated in the chapel of Sts. Cosmas and Damian during the renovation. She was returned to the chapel with a major public procession on Epiphany (6 January) 1598/1599.⁵²⁵ The event, described in



21 Florence, Santissima Annunziata, Chapel of the Madonna del Soccorso/Giambologna (photo Antonio Quattrone)

517 ASF, CRSGF, 119:35, fol. 47v.

518 ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 10, fol. 21.

519 ASF, CRSGF, 119:815, fols. 89, 90, 92v, 93, 93v, 95v. The relevant section of the volume includes records of celebrations in 1560, in the chapel for: Christmas (though recorded in January), Purification of the Virgin, daily mass and memorials for Domenico Dolci and his ancestors a year after his death.

520 Casalini 1964, p. 263, n. 7; ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fols. 128v–129.

521 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 236v.

522 Tonini 1876, p. 169.

523 Petrucci 1992, pp. 58–60; Pizzorusso 2013, pp. 232–235.

524 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fol. 273v.

525 The following description of the procession is taken from: ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fols. 274v–277. The procession is briefly mentioned in *Fonti* 2008, vol. 1, pp. 559–560.

the records of the convent, was attended by various authorities in the religious hierarchy. Cardinal Alessandro Medici, Archbishop of Florence, Alessandro Marzi Medici, bishop of Fiesole, and others watched from the “corticina” set up before the church. Cardinal Montalto, the nephew of Pope Sixtus V, was accommodated, together with Cardinal Monti, in the palazzo opposite that of the Medici in via Larga (today via Cavour). Members of the Grand ducal family also attended. Duke Ferdinando I was absent, ill with gout, but the Duchess Cristina de Lorena together with the Duchess of Bracciano Flavia Peretti, the Princess Maria Maddalena de’ Medici, and members of their court, observed from the chapel of the *Nunziata*. The Duke of Bracciano Don Virgineo Orsino and Don Antonio de’ Medici were also present, together with “many counts and barons.” The friar describing the event noted that the church was “full of all sorts of people, that one believes there were more than 8 thousand people.” While the scribe exaggerates the numbers (the church could not contain 8,000 people simultaneously), he gives a sense of the emotional intensity of the event.

The cross of the Santissima Annunziata led the procession toward the church of San Marco, down via Larga, passing the Baptistery and then entering the Duomo. Many confraternities followed and the friar-scribe especially listed the participation of the church’s “own confraternities”: the Santissima Annunziata, lo Scalzo, San Sebastiano, the Battilani, el Nicchio and San Lorenzino in Piano. The confraternities carried their crosses and large wax torches. They were followed by the Religious Orders of San Francesco di Pagola (Order of the Minimi of the church of San Francesco di Paolo); San Francesco Zoccolanti (clog-wearing Franciscans from Ognisanti); San Francesco delle Scarpe (shoe-wearing Franciscans from Santa Croce); the Augustinians of Santo Spirito, the Carmelite friars of the Carmine and of Santa Maria Maggiore, and the Dominicans of Santa Maria Novella. Finally, the Servites, singing to the accompaniment of *cornetti* and *trombone*, began to move out with the Most Holy Image of the *Madonna del Soccorso* – they were located closest to the hierarchical centre of the event.⁵²⁶ Sixteen priests dressed as deacons took turns carrying the *Madonna*, and 18 friars dressed as acolytes supported an elaborate baldachin above her. The friar noted that when the *Madonna* was first lifted from the altar of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, a great cry of “*Misericordia*” came from the people, and as soon as the Holy Image left the church, one heard many possessed shout and shriek most terribly. Here the friar-scribe claims that there were so many people in the piazza, and along via Larga and via dei Servi that they must have numbered more than 60,000 people (again unlikely, as the population of Florence in 1589 – only a decade prior – was thought to be nearing 80,000).⁵²⁷

When the *Madonna del Soccorso* arrived at the Cathedral, she was taken into the choir where the priests sang the *Te Deum Laudamus* and other prayers, to the accompaniment of the two organs. The ritual finished, the procession, led again by the Santissima Annunziata’s cross, made its way back to the Santissima Annunziata along the via dei Servi. By the time the *Madonna del Soccorso* had returned to the church, it was evening and the Santissima Annunziata’s cupola was illuminated by ‘*infinitissimi*’ lights. Finally, the *Madonna* was placed in a marble tabernacle in her the newly renovated chapel. The event concluded with a blessing from the archbishop and the concession of an indulgence. The celebrations, however, continued for the following four days, with numerous people coming to visit.

Giambologna died in August 1608. Soon after his death, the chapel was completed by Giambologna’s assistant, Pietro Francavilla, and another unidentified artist with sculptural figures for the wall niches.⁵²⁸ In the *Libro di Ricordanza*

526 Strocchia 1992, pp. 7–9.

527 Cochrane 1973, p. 112.

528 Watson 1983, pp. 341–345.

the Servites recalled Giambologna's generosity to the church of the Santissima Annunziata, and devotion "to the Holy Virgin for whose honour he adorned, with his own invention and great expense, the Chapel of the Madonna del Soccorso behind the choir of our church." After describing with pride the ornamentation that Giambologna had executed for the chapel, they then noted that in his testament he had left 500 *scudi* for its endowment.⁵²⁹ Despite the great pomp and ceremony in the chapel's unveiling and the *Madonna del Soccorso's* return, soon after Giambologna's death, his heir, the son of his sister, left Florence, and the chapel remained once again without an active patron.⁵³⁰ Nevertheless, the *Madonna* had finally received an appropriate setting.

Concluding Considerations

As demonstrated, the early history of the patronage of the tribune chapels is more complex than has previously been recognised. Lay investment in the tribune chapels spoke to issues of social and political status, identity, commemoration, and spiritual 'savings' invested in the next life. Having discussed the history of each of the chapels, in this final section, I will reflect on the patrons and chapels collectively. Some of the specific themes that I will discuss are the pace at which chapels were allocated patrons, the political affiliations of the owners, and the geographical distribution of their residences. I will also consider how the chapel dedications and the iconography of their decorations might relate to Servite identity, promote Servite interests or be read through the lens of Servite devotions. While this study focuses primarily on the tribune chapels, some of my observations, especially those regarding political affiliations and neighbourhood connections, can be extended to the patronage of other areas of the church and convent.

Within two years of laying the first stone, the Servites had patrons for six of the seven tribune chapels, while the seventh may have been reserved for the *operai*. The situation seemed ideal – each of the patrons would have financed the section of the tribune relating to their chapel. This was similar to the situation in the church nave and transept. There, the patronage of the new and regularised chapels were all conferred before or during their construction/renovation or soon after their completion.⁵³¹ Delays in the tribune's building program may have caused some patrons to transfer their interests to chapels elsewhere. Following the Servites' allocation of the space to Ludovico III Gonzaga, the dates of the chapels' foundations can currently be established as: Giocondo, 1444, reconfirmed 1470; del Tovaglia 1470 (kept one, received five to disperse as he wished); tribune finished 1476, opening and other works completed 1481; Benivieni (between 1484–1500, initially a gift from del Tovaglia; unclear if Benivieni accepted, but Benivieni owned the same chapel by 1500); four chapels were returned to the Servites in 1487; Romoli acquired one in 1487; and the Capponi attempted to obtain one in 1487; Bardi was conceded a chapel 1499; Cresci applied in 1529 for the chapel of St. Simon (thus, a chapel with this dedication must have already existed), conceded to Scala in 1534. The last chapel for which a patron can be established was that of the Vergine dietro il Coro /Madonna del Soccorso, conceded to Domenico Dolci in 1556.

Chapel patronage is known to have provided Mendicant Orders with a vital source of income. So, did the three chapels St. Ives, St. Simon/Sts. Cosmas e Damian and of the Madonna del Soccorso, really lack patrons for anywhere between 20 and 78 years after all the works were finished, and why did this occur?

529 ASF, CRSGF, 119:54, pp. 29–30; published: Tonini 1876, pp. 172, n. 2, 173–174.

530 Tonini 1876, pp. 173–174.

531 Tonini 1876, pp. 103, 109, 114, 121, 131, 151, 189, 191, 198, 209, 216, 218, 222, 224–225. For Rabatta, see discussion above.

For a church of the reputation of the Santissima Annunziata, it is curious to think that one chapel, let alone three, might have remained without a patron for this long. As Ludovico Gonzaga had covered the costs for the tribune's construction, the Servites were under less pressure than perhaps the Cistercians at the church of Cestello (Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi), where the physical chapel (thus part of the church building) would be built directly from the funds provided by chapel patronage. Several concerns may have hampered the desirability or even accessibility of patronage in the tribune. Firstly, Gonzaga's symbols were displayed throughout the space, and a single patron (del Tovaglia) had been given authority (by Gonzaga) to determine who could own chapels or be buried there. Perhaps more importantly, the tribune chapels afforded much less visibility than the nave chapels and were much further away from the *Nunziata*, which was the church's true focus, more so than the high altar. Nevertheless, it is also true that Francesco Romoli immediately abandoned a small nave chapel/altar in favour of a tribune chapel after del Tovaglia released them to the Servites. The Capponi also requested a tribune chapel, though their application does not appear to have been successful – or perhaps they simply lost interest. After this, however, the first news that we have of a new chapel patron is Agnolo de' Bardi's acquisition in 1499.

Despite Gonzaga's covering of construction costs, the Servites would undoubtedly have desired patrons for the chapels. Indeed, they spelled out the customary and desired patronage situation when they were considering Domenico Cresci's possible patronage of the Chapel of St. Simon. Cresci was to provide a dowry and embellish the altar, provisioning it with all the necessary liturgical paraphernalia for celebrating the mass; they emphasised that the endowment should be adequate for the Servites to maintain services to the chapel.⁵³² While a document of 1327 regarding the first Guadagni chapel mentions an endowment for a "frate capellano," most of the archival material that I encountered for the tribune chapels refers to endowments, "dota" or "dote": money or property left to finance the execution of feasts and masses at a chapel's altar by the owners (whether the founders or later family members) or other interested benefactors. Most, but not all the chapels, had some form of liturgical obligation attached to them. Friars Biffoli and Lapini noted that the patrons established no obligations for the chapels of St. Michael Archangel (Benivieni), the Martyrs (del Giocondo) and St. Anne (Giacomini-Tebalducci). For these chapels the patrons appear to have only provided oil for the lamps.⁵³³ We do not know if the families planned endowments and special obligations in these chapels, but Robert Gaston noted in his article on San Lorenzo that sometimes patrons applied for rights that they could not afford, or assumed obligations which they would not fulfil.⁵³⁴

Of those chapels for which obligations were established, most included annual masses honouring the chapel dedication,⁵³⁵ the patron, and various family members. Daily mass was instituted in four chapels (del Tovaglia, 1485; Bardi, 1499; Dolci, with an Oration of Our Lady, 1555; Romoli-Bellevanti, 1568). The miraculous *Nunziata*, at the far end of the church, was also of interest to some tribune patrons such as Agnolo de' Bardi and Domenico Dolci. Notably, the Bardi family was not the only tribune chapel family for whom Fra Cosimo Favilla had recorded a miracle connected to the *Nunziata*. Favilla also provided accounts of miracles for Giuliano Scala's father Bartolomeo and for Filippo and Giovanni dell'Antella.⁵³⁶ Most of the patrons established burial sites within the Santissima

532 See note 464.

533 See discussion of the relevant chapels.

534 Gaston 1987, pp. 120–121.

535 Except perhaps the Bardi chapel.

536 BNCF, *Conventi Soppressi*, C. I. 1458, fols. 85–89, 101 r/v.

Annunziata. The Benivieni, Romoli, Guadagni, Giocondi, Scala, Altoviti, and Giambologna all had sepulchres established in their chapels. Pietro del Tovaglia chose a sepulchre near the high altar. Domenico Dolci originally had his sepulchre in the chapel of the *Madonna di Soccorso* but his rights (and body) were transferred to a sepulchre in the transept following Giambologna's acquisition of the chapel. The Giacomini-Tebalducci maintained their sepulchre in the transept, near the site of their original chapel, as did the dell'Antella. Donato dell'Antella, however, also arranged a new sepulchre in the chapel. Only the Bardi did not establish a burial site in the church.⁵³⁷

Several of the tribune chapel patrons may have wished to benefit from the liturgical and social significance that Saturdays held at the Santissima Annunziata. Giovanni de' Bardi requested a special remembrance for his soul on Saturdays; the anonymous friend of Fra Salvestro requested a mass of Our Lady on Saturdays (1522) at the altar of St. Ignatius; the Guadagni requested mass at their altar every Saturday (from 1571). The Saturday Marian Office, however, disappeared from the Servite constitutions of 1580.⁵³⁸ Thus, when Donato dell'Antella requested a mass of the dead on Saturdays at his altar in 1603, the day no longer had the same liturgical significance.⁵³⁹

Another question is whether the Servites furnished the patron-less chapels with the basic liturgical necessities for the divine cult, such as an altar (portable or immobile), a cross, candle holders, and a dedication. A tentative affirmative can be offered for the chapel of the Vergine dietro il choro/Madonna del Soccorso. Although lacking a patron, the chapel of the *Madonna del Soccorso* must have had an altar on which the *Madonna* sat, and where masses offered to her could be celebrated. We know that the Servites acquired a bell for use in the chapel and that bell-lined curtains may have covered the *Madonna*. One Servite also undertook to commission a new altarpiece for the chapel of St. Anne, but this could have been due to the special devotion the Servites had for this saint or because the novices or Servite Third Order were using the chapel.⁵⁴⁰

The 150 or so years covered by this discussion of the tribune chapels covers a broad and eventful period in Florentine politics. It commences in 1444 while the Signoria was under Medici influence, first with Cosimo, Piero, Lorenzo il Magnifico and briefly Piero di Lorenzo. It continues through the years of the Medici exile, the rise of Savonarola, the Republic, the return of the Medici, with Giovanni di Lorenzo de' Medici as Pope Leo X, the final years of the Republic, and return again of the Medici, when the Duchy and Grand Duchy was established – Alessandro, Cosimo I, Francesco I, Ferdinando I – concluding during the reign of the latter. Due to the Medici usurpation of the cult of the *Nunziata*, the church is usually considered a Medici stronghold – is this true for the tribune through the period under consideration? Was the changing political landscape reflected in the patronage of the chapels in the tribune or the artworks provided for their altars?

Diane Finiello Zervas determined that in the decade starting from 1445, there was a marked increase in Medici supporters acquiring chapels or sepulchres in the Santissima Annunziata. Zervas found that the six patrons who were linked with the original patronage of the seven-chapel-tribune –Pucci, Rinieri, Da Rabatta, Portinari, Del Giocondo, Borromei – were all Medici men.⁵⁴¹ Although funds or loans from the Medici bank appear for the tribune's financ-

537 ASF, *Manoscritti*, 625, pp. 1278, 1279, 1287-1290. See also discussion on the relevant chapels.

538 Besutti 1982, p. 118.

539 See discussion on the relevant chapels.

540 See discussion on the relevant chapels.

541 Finiello Zervas 1988, p. 478.

ing,⁵⁴² the Medici were not personally interested in having their own chapels in the tribune space. Indeed, two branches of the Medici family acquired chapels elsewhere in the Santissima Annunziata. Most prominently, Piero di Cosimo de' Medici essentially claimed the *Nunziata* on the counter-façade when he had Michelozzo design the gate and tabernacle before the Miraculous *Nunziata*. Orlando di Guccio de' Medici, by contrast, had initially funded the church sacristy (perhaps wishing to imitate Cosimo de' Medici's patronage of the sacristy of San Lorenzo as a burial site for his father Giovanni). However, when the Parte Guelfa wished to take over its patronage, Orlando received the new nave chapel of St. Mary Magdalene.⁵⁴³ Gonzaga's involvement in the tribune was actively encouraged by the Medici,⁵⁴⁴ and it was perhaps the Medici connection with the original tribune chapel owners that allowed for the easy liberation of most of the chapels for Ludovico Gonzaga in 1470.

Among the established patrons within the church, there were both supporter and non-Medici supporters. The Falconieri, not Medici partisans according to Zervas,⁵⁴⁵ lost their apparent rights to the high altar when it was moved within the tribune (they kept their transept chapel). When Alberti decided that the opening between the tribune and nave needed to be enlarged, two other old families, the dell'Antella and the Giacomini-Tebalducci, stood to lose their chapels. However, the pro-Medici dell'Antella appear to have kept their chapel due to an early contract protecting their rights (although their connection with the chapel becomes less clear during the sixteenth century). For balance, the Giacomini-Tebalducci chapel next to the high altar was also maintained, by being reversed to look into the tribune, despite the Giacomini-Tebalducci's anti-Medici sentiments.

The Servites seem to be generally pro-Medicean, though, as noted, more research could be done to determine whether and how their allegiance might have varied during the late fifteenth to early sixteenth centuries. The pro-republican, anti-tyrannical significance, and thus potentially also anti-Medicean allusions that the cult of St. Anne carried in Florence may have pleased the Giacomini-Tebalducci family. Nevertheless, it was the Servites who renovated the chapel in 1543 during the early rule of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici. The Servites had special devotions to St. Anne written into their earliest constitutions, thus pre-dating her connection with the ousting of the Duke of Athens from Florence. Moreover, by this time, the anti-Medicean implications may have been largely neutralised. As discussed by Erin Giffin, the Medici were actively supporting her cult at Orsanmichele in the early sixteenth century, and Ottaviano de' Medici acquired and displayed Fra Bartolomeo's Great Hall altarpiece (in which St. Anne plays a central role) in his chapel in San Lorenzo, which was subsequently dedicated to St. Anne.⁵⁴⁶

The Capponi undoubtedly showed interest in acquiring a memorial chapel in the tribune due to their political connections with the Medici. I am uncertain of the political leanings of Francesco Romoli, but the Benivieni provides an interesting case. Zervas identifies the Benivieni family, which already had a sepulchre in the Santissima Annunziata before the tribune's construction, as pro-Medicean.⁵⁴⁷ As noted above, Antonio (who acquired his chapel possibly as early as 1484) and his brothers were indebted to the Medici, but during the 1490s, they

542 Ferrara/Quinterio 1984, p. 294, n. 10.

543 Ferrara/Quinterio 1984, pp. 216–217; Teubner 1978, pp. 30, 34.

544 For the Medici family's strong connections with the Gonzaga, cf. Vasić Vatovec 1996, pp. 73–82.

545 Finiello Zervas 1988, p. 478.

546 Giffin 2017, pp. 141–143, 160–170.

547 Zervas 1988, p. 478.

(especially Antonio's brothers) also became followers of Fra Savonarola. The panel that Antonio's son Michele provided for the chapel may even hint at the family's *piagnoni* sympathies. As mentioned above, Antonio del Ceraiolo was the student of a staunch *piagnoni*-artist and drew on Fra Bartolomeo's *Last Judgement* for the key figure of his painting for the Benivieni. It can be further observed that St. Michael's raised arm gesture had another visual counterpart in the Santissima Annunziata – Fra Bartolomeo's *Salvatore Mundi* painted in 1516 for the altar of Salvatore Billi. The *St. Michael Archangel* is usually dated ca. 1520: although this means it was created during a period of Medici rule, elements of *piagnoni* spirituality continued to be expressed in Florence around this date.⁵⁴⁸ Nevertheless, despite his *piagnoni* sympathies, it has been noted that Girolamo Benivieni (Antonio's brother) retained productive relations with some of the Medici, including Leo X and Giovanni delle Bande Nere.⁵⁴⁹ Angolo de' Bardi was a member of a family that had long, strong ties with the Medici. Agnolo acquired the chapel while the Medici were in exile. His uncle's generosity toward the Servites was likely an essential factor in the transaction.⁵⁵⁰ As the *Nunziata* was progressively transformed into a dynastic cult site of the Grand Dukes, various courtiers came to inhabit the road leading to the church or chose to patronise chapels in the church and/or established their sepulchres there.⁵⁵¹ Within the tribune, the cases of Giambologna and Marcello Accolti provide the best examples.

As a major pilgrimage site, the church attracted visitors from all over Europe, and it may be in this light that we can best understand how the principal benefactor providing funds for the tribune's construction could be a non-Florentine who was not resident in Florence. It is also possible that the Medici encouragement of Ludovico Gonzaga's investment was one aspect of a broader political game.⁵⁵² Nevertheless, the patrons, both actual and potential, and benefactors of the tribune chapels were Florentine. The Santissima Annunziata was not a parish church. It sat within the parish of San Michele Visdomini, which was bounded to the East by that of San Piero Maggiore, and to the West, that of San Marco. The parish of San Lorenzo lay just beyond San Marco. These all fell within the Florentine quarter of San Giovanni, as did several smaller parishes that skirted the Cathedral. Several tribune chapel patrons were residents of this quarter. The Guadagni lived closest, in Via dei Servi.⁵⁵³ In the fifteenth century, the Pucci (who transferred their interests from the main tribune chapel to the oratory of St. Sebastian) moved into the street crossing the Via dei Servi known as the via Calderai (also known under the names 'dei Frenai' or 'dei Corazzai'), a street that now bears their name.⁵⁵⁴ The Da Rabatta, who early on transferred their patronage to the nave, also lived in via dei Calderai.⁵⁵⁵

Two chapel owners lived in nearby Borgo Pinti. Giuliano di Bartolomeo Scala lived in the palazzo constructed by his father in the parish of San Pier Maggiore.⁵⁵⁶ Lorenzo il Magnifico earmarked the area between Borgo Pinti and the Santissima Annunziata for an urban development project, and the zone later became popular for artists, especially those working for the Medici court. Giambologna had a house and workshop in Borgo Pinti next door to Clemente Bandi-

548 Padovani/Meloni Trkulja 1982, pp. 24–25.

549 Roosh 2002, p. 70.

550 See discussion on the Bardi chapel.

551 Fantoni 1989, pp. 777–778; Spini 1976, pp. 72–73, 75–76.

552 A greater understanding of the complexity of the Gonzaga-Medici relations is provided in Vasić Vatovec 1996.

553 *Inventario famiglia Guadagni* 2007, p. 117.

554 Orgera 2000, p. 40.

555 Ciappelli 1997, p. 794.

556 Brown 1990, pp. 158–161.

nelli, son of Baccio Bandinelli (Clemente's house had been one of Baccio Bandinelli's properties).⁵⁵⁷ The Giocondo family lived within the parish of San Lorenzo (in the Gonfalone del Leon d'Oro, via dell'Amore – today via Sant'Antonio – and via della Stufa);⁵⁵⁸ Domenico Dolci⁵⁵⁹ and Agnolo di Sandro Pieri also lived in this parish.⁵⁶⁰ Although the Benivieni originally settled in the via dei Servi, Antonio Benivieni grew up in Piazza San Benedetto (just beyond the Cathedral), in a palazzo that became his following his father's death in 1487.⁵⁶¹ The Romoli also lived in the quarter of San Giovanni.⁵⁶²

Not all the tribune chapel patrons, however, resided in the immediate neighbourhood. The Federighi and the Giacomini-Tebalducci both lived within the parish of Santa Maria Novella, in the quarter of Santa Maria Novella.⁵⁶³ Three patrons came from the Florentine quarter of Santa Croce. Piero del Tovaglia lived in the parish of San Firenze.⁵⁶⁴ The dell'Antella family initially settled near to the piazza della Signoria in a street that came to be called the via degli Antellesi (today via della Condotta). Early in the seventeenth century Niccolò di Filippo dell'Antella constructed the palazzo 'Dell'Antella' on the piazza Santa Croce (also known as Palazzo degli Sporti).⁵⁶⁵ Traditionally the Bardi came from the Oltr'arno (Santo Spirito quarter), but Giovanni di Agnolo de' Bardi established a palazzo near the piazza Santa Croce, in via de' Benci, which Agnolo di Bernardo Bardi then inherited.⁵⁶⁶ The tribune, however, even attracted interest from Santo Spirito. Gino di Neri Capponi's family were firmly established in that quarter.⁵⁶⁷ Scaccialupi, who provided funds for masses at the altar of St. Ignatius of Antioch, lived in the Oltr'arno, in the Piazza Santo Spirito.⁵⁶⁸ Finally, Marcello Accolti, the Medici secretary, resided in a palazzo near the church of Santo Spirito in via della Chiesa, near to his Medici employers.⁵⁶⁹

The Santissima Annunziata thus drew patrons from all quarters of the city of Florence. While here we consider patrons and potential patrons who acquired patronage rights in the tribune over a broad period, it is a situation that is in line with other phenomena that I have encountered at the church.⁵⁷⁰ Alison Luchs found a similarly wide geographical spread for the patrons who founded chapels in the Cistercian church of Cestello (Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi) in Borgo Pinti. In contrast to the Santissima Annunziata tribune chapels, most of those at Cestello were not burial chapels.⁵⁷¹ This broad spread of patronage from across the city contrasts with the Florentine churches of San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito, where it appears that they were primarily patronised by the great families of their quarters (at least during the major building phases).⁵⁷²

557 Zikos 2002, p. 370.

558 Kemp/Pallanti 2017, pp. 21–22.

559 The Servites paid the “quarta” to the parish church of San Lorenzo when they buried Domenico Dolci in their church (ASF, CRSGF, 119:815, fol. 6).

560 ASF, CRSGF, 119:1270, pp. 201, 498.

561 Cibeï 1995, pp. 206–213.

562 Sframeli notes that Andrea di Nofri once acted as *gonfaloniere* of the quarter (1989, p. 310).

563 Palazzo Federighi was located in Via Federighi, not far from Ponte alla Carraia (Bargellini/Guarnieri 1985, vol. 2, p. 135). The Giacomini had a Palazzo in via Tornabuoni (Ginori Lisci 1972, vol. 1, p. 237).

564 Rubin 2007, p. 6.

565 Casprini 2000, pp. 51–59.

566 Ginori Lisci 1972, vol. 2, pp. 609–614.

567 Goldthwaite 1968, pp. 187–189.

568 ASF, CRSGF, 119:53, fols. 56v–57r.

569 Bargellini/Guarnieri 1985, vol. 2, p. 33.

570 I am completing an article on burial in the church and have found a similarly broad geographical spread of people acquiring burial in the Santissima Annunziata.

571 Luchs 1975, pp. 47–48.

572 Kent 2000, pp. 180–183; Fondaras 2020, p. 45.

Alison Luchs notes that at the church of Cestello, the dedications of the two chapels nearest the high altar, though held by lay patrons, were devoted to saints particularly beloved by the Cistercians.⁵⁷³ Similarly, Antonia Fondaras has found a rich Augustinian spirituality evident in the dedications and imagery of the chapels (also owned by lay patrons) in the choir of the Augustinian church of Santo Spirito. Sometimes the connection was manifested through the altar's dedication, at other times through the inclusion in the altarpieces of saints honoured by the Augustinians.⁵⁷⁴ This might lead one to ask whether the Servites imposed their devotions on the tribune altars; is there any evidence of special Servite devotions or representations of Servite identity within the tribune?

The most obvious and important site for a statement about their identity was on the high altar. Here, the *Deposition* facing the nave projected concepts about Mary's sacrifice for human redemption and the symbolic connection of their habit with Mary's sorrows and widowhood. The *Assumption*, facing the friar's choir, both celebrated the Virgin's bodily assumption and the Servites' apostolic way of life. As noted, within forty years of their placement on the high altar, the central panels were removed, and the frame altered to hold the tabernacle containing the Host. Perugino's *Deposition*, however, was moved to a newly founded altar immediately next to the high altar, ensuring that its message – of Mary's role as co-redemptrix – could still be appreciated.⁵⁷⁵ The *Assumption* was instead moved to the sacristy, where the friars continued to be its primary viewers.

The *Madonna del Soccorso*, provided a second pivotal point of Marian devotion and Servite identity. The *Madonna del Soccorso's* placement in the main tribune chapel directly opposite the friar's choir's exit may have been deliberate. It allowed the Servites to observe a Marian image as they exited the choir after saying their prayers. The 1546 alteration of the high altar meant that the friars no longer gazed at an image of the Virgin while in the choir, thus the *Madonna's* presence in the chapel directly opposite the choir exit would have enhanced this image's significance for the friars. The chapel of St. Anne, as already noted, was an ancient dedication in the Santissima Annunziata, one that had special meaning for the Servites, their liturgy and the Servite *Ammantellate*.⁵⁷⁶

Most of the chapels, however, did not have obvious Servite dedications. The earliest known chapel titles were dedications to St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Michael the Archangel, St. Andrew, St. Sigismund, St. Jerome/the Martyrs, St. Simon/Sts. Cosmas and Damian and St. Ives. As apostles, Saints Andrew, James, and Simon were part of the liturgical cycle celebrated by the Servites, but I am not aware of the Servites focusing special attention on these saints.⁵⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the presence of the Virgin at the centre of a *Sacra conversazione* could provide a Marian accent for an altar, as occurs in Perugino's *Virgin and Child with Saints* for Francesco Romoli's altar or Mazziere's *St. Anne Metterza*. Andrea del Sarto's *Annunciation* crowned a lost panel of *Sts. Cosmas and Damian* (it is unclear if the two doctor saints also accompanied Mary in the main altar panel). Mary did not appear in the altarpieces for the chapels of St. Ignatius or St. Michael Archangel. She probably did not appear in Puligo's *Stigmatisation of St. Francis* in the Giocondo Chapel. This, however, was not a new situation for

573 Luchs 1975, pp. 18, 49.

574 Fondaras 2020, pp. 71–94.

575 Rosselli indicates that this altar was removed and the *Deposition* was sold ca. 1650 (ASF, *Manoscritti*, 625, p. 1280).

576 See discussion on the Chapel of St. Anne.

577 A vast corpus of Servite liturgical and devotional material exists, of which only a small quantity has been published. Publications have tended to focus on Marian themes or on the Order's blessed and saints.

578 De Marchi 2013, figs. 8, 9.

the Servites. For instance, during the 1450s, Andrea da Castagno painted fresco altarpieces for three nave chapels in the Santissima Annunziata – in the two surviving frescoed altarpieces, the *St. Julian* and *St. Jerome* (both still in situ), there is no reference to the Virgin.⁵⁷⁸

The Servites were selective about whom they allowed to change chapel dedications. When Giuliano Scala acquired the chapel of St. Simon, he was permitted to change the dedication to Sts. Cosmas and Damian. This change in dedication to key Medici saints may have had the added benefit of allowing the Servites to show their allegiance to the Medici. By contrast, when the Guadagni acquired the del Tovaglia chapel of St. Sigismund, for which they commissioned Bronzino's beautiful *Resurrection of Christ*, the altar's dedication was left unchanged, and furthermore, the image of *St. Sigismund* remained in the chapel. It is plausible that a connection of St. Sigismund to the Gonzaga lay behind the survival of the dedication.⁵⁷⁹ Under the Accolti, the dedication of the St. Ives chapel was transmuted to that of St. Catherine of Alexandria. In this case, the Servites had already demonstrated a devotion to the latter saint. They had included her in the monumental altarpiece on their high altar, owned one of her relics, and enjoyed an indulgence for her feast conceded by Martin V.⁵⁸⁰

The Servites would have judged the dedication and devotional changes that Donato dell'Antella made to his chapel dedication, particularly appropriate to their devotional interests. The Nativity of the Virgin, the new title of his altar, was a Marian feast of special importance for the Santissima Annunziata. Pope Leo X had provided indulgences of 1,000 years and 2,000 *quarantene* for those who visited the church for the eight Marian feasts, including that of her Nativity (8 September). The papal brief gave the Nativity special significance, as Leo X offered for the feast day a plenary indulgence for the living and the dead in the form of a Jubilee. On the four days before and after this feast day the Servite priors could absolve all the sins of pilgrims and foreigners who visited the church for devotion and the fulfilment of vows.⁵⁸¹ The day also developed a special meaning in Servite legends and chronicles. The anonymous author of the *Historia dell'origine della religione de Servi e dell'Annunziata* (ca. 1500) claimed the Seven Holy Founders first wore their newly chosen habit (recently revealed to them by Mary in visions) on the feast of her Nativity.⁵⁸² In the *Vite dei Sette Beati Fiorentini* (originally published 1575), Fra Michele Poccianti repeated the idea that the Seven Founders were invested with the new habit on this feast, specifying that:

“si come lei nacque al mondo senza macchia alcuna di peccato e visse, e morì Anchora loro essendo per la sua santa inspiratione stati rinati e regenerati spiritualmente, potessero vivere, e morire senza alcuna macchia di peccato.”⁵⁸³

Fra Archangelo Giani associates both the Seven Holy Founders dressing in the new habit and moving into the Villa Camarzia (the house, near to the cemetery of Santa Croce in which they first gathered, before going to Monte Senario), as occurring on this same feast.⁵⁸⁴ By contrast, Filippo Sgamaita, in his *Chronicon* (1521), had suggested that the Order was actually founded on the feast of Mary's Nativity.⁵⁸⁵

579 See discussion on the Chapel of St. Sigismund.

580 See discussion on the high altar.

581 Giani 1618–1622, vol. 2, fol. 83 r/v.

582 *Chronica Sacrae Religionis* ed. 1913, pp. 68–69; Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, pp. 71–72.

583 Poccianti 1589, pp. 57–58.

584 Giani 1591, pp. 39–42.

585 Sgamaita ed. 1915, pp. 180–181, paras. 1–2. He then suggested that they went up to Monte Senario on the feast of the Annunciation.

Donato not only chose a richly symbolic Marian focus for the altar, but he also had scenes from the life of Bl. Fra Manetto dell'Antella, considered (at least by 1512), to be one of the Seven Holy Servite Founders, included on either side of the altarpiece. A passage in the *Legenda de Origine Ordinis Servorum* (ca. 1317), the earliest account of the Servite Order's origins, stated that it would provide the names of the Seven Holy Servite Founders, but in the only surviving manuscript of the text, the names were omitted. Only one of the Founders' names was revealed: Fra Alessio,⁵⁸⁶ later given the surname Falconieri.⁵⁸⁷ This lack of names undoubtedly contributed to the long delay in their cult's development and also may have contributed to the development of devotions to Bl. Filippo Benizi, whom the same text celebrates. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Servite Chroniclers, hagiographers, and historians searched for and invented the Seven Founders' names and surnames. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the list was established.⁵⁸⁸ Only two of the surnames belonged to families with chapels in the church – the dell'Antella and the Falconieri. Lamenting the lack of knowledge that the laity, and even the Servite friars, had of their origins and originators, the Servite historian Fra Arcangelo Giani devised a twenty-seven-lunette program to decorate the Chiostrò dei Morti. As the title of Giani's manuscript, today held in the Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze, states, it would depict the *Origine di questo nostro Ordine con le più principali azioni de' suoi sette primi fondatori*, tracing the Order's history from its foundation in 1233, to 1310, when the last of the seven, Bl. Fra Alessio Falconieri, died.⁵⁸⁹ The cycle was painted by Bernardino Poccetti, Ventura Salimbeni, Fra Mascagni and Matteo Rosselli between 1605 and 1616.⁵⁹⁰ In the corbels appear a series of portrait heads of eminent individuals in the Order's history, painted by various artists. The Servites appealed to many nobles and members of the Medici Court to provide funds for the lunettes. In acknowledgement of their financial support, the sponsor could have their coat of arms appear at the foot of their lunette. The Servites specified, however, that this display of the coat of arms did not carry with it “*nè ius ne dominio, nè alcuna padronanza*” (neither the right of dominion, nor any patronage) for the donors, but was conceded purely as a sign of the Servites' gratitude and in recognition of the expenses that the noble family had incurred.⁵⁹¹

The Servites may have actively encouraged the Holy Founders' 'families' to contribute to the cycle. Both the Falconieri and the dell'Antella provided funds. Three other 'Holy Founder' families – the Manetti, the Sostegni and Filippo Ugucioni – also helped to subsidise the cycle. Only two 'Founder Families' are missing: the Monaldi and the Amidei. Of the contributing 'Founder Families,' the Ugucioni already had a sepulchre at the Santissima Annunziata.⁵⁹² The families naturally wished to finance scenes in which their holy ancestor was a central protagonist and named in the inscription below. That chosen by the Falconieri, for instance,

586 *Legenda de Origine Ordinis* 2013, pp. 34–35, 64–65.

587 Alessio's surname is first indicated in Attavanti's *Paulina Predicabilis* (Attavanti ed. 1910, p. 119). As noted by Dal Pino (1966, p. 108), this appears only a few years after 1456, when the Servites had had difficulty with the Falconieri regarding the destruction of the high altar for the tribune.

588 On the names of the Seven: Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, pp. 153–158; Dal Pino 1997, pp. 449–466. They were canonised in 1888.

589 BNCf, *Conventi Soppressi*, G.8.1483, fol. 2v. Giani's *Idea del Chiostrò della Nonziata di Firenze* has recently been published: Hoffmann 2013, pp. 418–436. This text and the cycle were also part of the focus of research by Fabbri 1988/1989.

590 Hoffmann 2013, pp. 341–358.

591 ASF, CRSGF, 119:54, p. 43.

592 Filippo Ugucioni's coat of arms indicates that he was a descendent of Lippo Ugucioni, called Scalandrone, of which family Ugucione di Lippo Ugucione had a sepulchre in the Chiostrò dei Morti. ASF, Ceramelli Papiani: UGUCCIONI, (fasc. 4751), show arms similar to those found in his lunette; ASF, CRSGF, 119:59, book 9, cnn.

named three of their ancestors Alessio (Founder), Chiarissimo (who had enlarged the church) and his daughter Giuliana (Servite *beata*) in the explanatory text below, although only Alessio and Chiarissimo were depicted in the scene.⁵⁹³ Francesco dell'Antella sponsored a scene of Bl. Manetto dell'Antella visiting the king of France, while Cosimo dell'Antella paid for that with Bl. Manetto dell'Antella renouncing his role as general prior in favour of Bl. Filippo Benizi, and dying at Monte Senario.⁵⁹⁴ The Manetti family funded the episode of Bl. Buonagiunta Manetti predicting his death and dying at Monte Senario.⁵⁹⁵ By the time the Sostegni family signed up to finance a lunette, those narratives in which Bl. Sostegno had a central role had already been completed. The situation was resolved by adding Sostegno's name to the explanatory text for the *Laying of the First Stone for the Church of Santa Maria in Cafaggio*.⁵⁹⁶ For Filippo Uguccioni a completely new scene – not found in Giani's manuscript – was designed: *Beato Uguccione goes to Germany and is received by Rudolph, Count of Hapsburg*. Inspiration for the scene may have had a contemporary aspect, as Giovanni di Benedetto Uguccioni had been a diplomat in the 1590s at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II in Prague.⁵⁹⁷

This enthusiasm for recreating Servite history may have inspired another endeavour. On 15 August 1614 – the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin – members of the same families founded a new confraternity: the Compagnia della Carita dei Sette Beati Fondatori dei Servi.⁵⁹⁸ The choice of day was not coincidental: Fra Michele Poccianti, in his Servite chronicle (published in 1567), had already claimed that this was the precise day on which the Order was founded.⁵⁹⁹ This was furthermore promoted in Bernardino Poccetti's lunette in the Chiostro dei Morti depicting *Seven Noble Florentines Inspired to Found the Order Dedicated to the Virgin on the Feast of the Assumption in Santa Reparata*.

When the friars, having finished their liturgical obligations, filed out of the choir and moved around the tribune toward the corridor returning to the convent, they were confronted by Bronzino's *Resurrection of Christ*, with its luminous, over-life sized figure of Christ projecting out of the dimly lit, shallow chapel. While the Servites were especially dedicated to Mary, this devotion was within the context of her roles as Christ's mother and as co-redemptrix. Christ's Resurrection was among the feast days on which the Servites were required to take Holy Communion.⁶⁰⁰ The centrality of Christ to their worship was also manifest in their replacement of Filippino Lippi and Perugino's painting with the Host on their high altar. Nevertheless, Marian elements could perhaps also be read in Bronzino's painting. Graham Smith noted that medieval commentators associated the Resurrected Christ's egress from the still-sealed tomb with Christ's birth

593 Text found under the scene painted by Salimbeni: "Chiarissimo Falconieri a preghiere della B. Givliana sva figliuola divotiss[im]a dell'abito de Servi estortato dal B. Alesso svo fratello per salvezza dell'anima sva edifica con licenza di Urbano VIII e di Giovanni Vescovo Fiorentino la chiesa della 'Nvnziata nel mese d'ottobre l'anno MCCLXII."

594 ASF, CRSGF, 119:54, p. 42; CRSGF, 119:36, fol. 152; Hoffmann 2013, pp. 346–347, 354–355.

595 Hoffmann 2013, p. 350.

596 Giani did not mention his name in the original text (BNCF, *Conventi Soppressi*, G.8.1483, fol. 25). "Ne terreni di Bvonvicino di Cece d'Orlando d'Aldobrandino e di Bencivenni di Gvernieri compratisi da Enrico Baldovini per la sedia apostolica si benedice dal Beato Bvo[n]figliuolo e sopradetto legato la prima pietra di questo Ivogo alli XXVII di Marzo MCCL." For the text under the lunette, after the word "Buonfigliuolo" was added: "Gettasi con l'intervento del Beato Sostegno di consenso del sopradetto"

597 ASF, CRSGF, 119:54, p. 42; Hoffman 2013, p. 356.

598 ASF, CRSGF, 119:54, p. 153. The founders of the new confraternity were: Donato dell'Antella, Oliviero Falconieri, PierFilippo Uguccioni, Simone degli Amidei, Pietro Monaldi, Emilio Sostegni, and Gianotto Manetti.

599 Poccianti ed. 1915, p. 18; Dal Pino 1972, vol. 1, p. 98.

600 Chap. II, *Constitutiones Antiquae* ed. 1897, p. 31; *Sources*, p. 115.

from Mary without breaking the seal of her hymen.⁶⁰¹ The Servites additionally have a prolific body of contemplative, para-liturgical and liturgical works that may elucidate potential Servite readings of the *Resurrection*. The Servite devotion to the *Sorrows of the Virgin* has already been mentioned above in relation to Perugino and Filippino Lippi's *Deposition*. The Servites also had another devotion, the *Seven Joys (Sette Gaudi)*. Fra Paolo da Faenza, one of the Servite authors to explore this theme, specifically named the Resurrection among the joys listed in *De ratione absolutissimae confessionis* (Bologna, 1500): "Gaude, quia tui nati, / quem dolebas mortem pati, / fulget resurrectio."⁶⁰²

The development of several cultic devotions in the tribune provide some hints as to how the space was used. While the chapel of St. Ignatius of Antioch was at the opening of the tribune, that of St. Ives, the second on the right, was a little deeper into the tribune's space. The chapels of St. Sigismund and the *Madonna del Soccorso*, however, were at the head of the tribune; devotees were thus required to enter deep into the tribune space to access these devotions. It is notable that within the intimate space of the nine-chapel-tribune, four altarpieces developed cultic devotions. The nave and transept contained points of special devotion, most notably the miraculous image of the *Nunziata* in the nave, but also the *Crocifisso* in the Villani chapel and the Chapel of Bl. Filippo Benizi both in the transept.⁶⁰³ By contrast, however, the chapels of the *Nunziata*, Bl. Filippo Benizi and the *Crocifisso* are three chapels among eighteen (although with further research, other minor devotional cults may be discovered elsewhere in the church). While the *Nunziata* was the preeminent cult in the church, some devotees may have felt overwhelmed by the crowds that appealed to Her and decided to visit another site boasting a special devotion within the church, thus supporting or giving rise to these other cults.⁶⁰⁴

The ceremonial life of the Santissima Annunziata was in constant evolution, often connecting the various devotional foci. In the final year of the sixteenth century, the Servites initiated the procession celebrating the "Habit of the Madonna and of Bl. Filippo Benizi," accompanied by the people (*il popolo*). They performed it after vespers, on the third Sunday of every month. First reciting the *Salve Regina* before the *Nunziata*, and singing the Litanies of the Virgin, they would then process along the church's nave to the chapel of St. Filippo Benizi (Tedaldi chapel, left transept). Carrying the Bl. Filippo Benizi's *mantellino* under a gold brocade baldachin together with other relics belonging to the church of the Santissima Annunziata, including St. Sebastian's *braccio*, they passed through a door opposite the chapel of St. Filippo Benizi, accompanied by numerous devotees, to file through the Chiostro dei Morti and exit into the Piazza of the Santissima Annunziata. The procession continued along the loggia dei Servi, passed the Compagnia di San Filippo Benizi's meetinghouse and arrived in the via dei Servi before returning to the church, via the atrium. The procession re-entered the nave by the main church doors, continued down and into the tribune to finish at the chapel of the Madonna del Soccorso, where the faithful were blessed with Bl. Filippo's *mantellino*.⁶⁰⁵ Although this paper focuses specifically on the tribune, it is obviously not separate from the church transept and nave. As this procession of the Habit of the Madonna and of Bl. Filippo Benizi demonstrates, the friars and the laity united the spaces through liturgical and para-liturgical practices, ensuring that the tribune was also embraced by the rich ceremonial and social fabric created by the community of the Santissima Annunziata.

601 Smith 1989, p. 353.

602 Besutti 1971, p. 165.

603 On St. Filippo Benizi's cult at the Santissima Annunziata: O'Brien 2001, vol. 1, chaps. 3–4.

604 O'Brien 2001, vol. 1, p. 192.

605 Giani 1604, pp. 352–353.

Abbreviations

ASF

Archivio di Stato, Firenze

ASSAF

Archivio della Santissima Annunziata, Firenze

BNCF

Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze

CRSGF

Corporazione Religiose Soppresse dal Governo Francese

DBI

Dizionario biografico degli italiani, ed. Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, Rome 1960 ff.

Not. Ant.

Notarile anticosimiano

OSM

Ordine dei Servi di Maria.

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