

Paolo da Gualdo Cattaneo

Italian sculptor
c.1380-c.1420

Born before 1380, this sculptor, active in Rome and southern Lazio in the first two decades of the fifteenth century, was originally from Gualdo Cattaneo in Umbria.

From the epigraph engraved on the front of the sarcophagus of Bartolomeo Carafa della Spina (died April 25, 1405) in S. Maria in Aventino in Rome we can deduce that Paul was born before 1380 because his name, affixed to the work, is accompanied by the qualification of "magister", for which it was necessary to have completed 25 years.

Bartolomeo Carafa, "locumtenens magisterii" of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, was initially buried in the Basilica of St. Peter's in the Vatican, in the Chapel of the True Cross, landed at the time of Pope Nicholas V. Mentioned for the first time in cemetery of S. Maria in Aventino in 1584, his funeral monument was carried in 1611 inside the church, where he underwent further alterations at the time of the Piranesian restorations; today it is reduced to only the sarcophagus with the *gisant* in military dress. On the front of the ark, on the sides of the epigraph, within two mirrors delimited by tortile half-columns, the deceased's crests are constituted by the inclined shield surmounted by the helmet with small hoops, lambrecchini and crest formed by the bust of an angel with wings spread. The articulation of the front of the Carafa sarcophagus denounces a substantial extraneousness with respect to the Umbrian-Roman tradition of the funerary arcs: the tripartition with semi-columns and the heraldic reliefs in the side mirrors refer to the 14th century fashion of the sepulchral urns of the Venetian area, to which also refers the decoration with leaves in the lower and upper frames of the front of the later sarcophagi of Anguillara and Stefaneschi. Lombard references also emerge in the robust realism of the Carafa *gisant* - almost physically present -, in the firm and turned plasticism of his figure and in the elastic turgidity of his face, as well as in the care reserved for military costume and heraldry, although free from overflow ornamental hesitations.

It is plausible that Paul had arrived in Rome after having gained northern experiences, for example, in the construction site of the Milan Cathedral, abandoned by many sculptors after the death of Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1402) just to look for new opportunities for engagement southwards - in Orvieto, in L'Aquila, in Sulmona, in Naples.

The Carafa monument was perhaps preceded, albeit only a few months, by the funeral monument for the Viterbo Antonio de 'Vecchi, bishop of Fermo (died June 21, 1405), equally buried in the Basilica of St. Peter in the Vatican. Only the mutilated signed tombstone "[pavlvs d] e gualdo fecit" survives of the work: the indication of the birthplace - absent in other Roman monuments autographs - suggests that the sculptor was not yet known in Rome. The epigraph was found in 1776 during the demolition of the Old Sacristy of the Vatican Basilica and placed in the Sacred Caves, where it is still preserved in the corridor of the Hungarian Chapel. It is probable that two of the angels

regia-cortina were part of the monument of the Vecchi - today in the lower hall of the Synod in the Vatican Apostolic Palace - once assembled with sculptural elements of different origins in the Pietà chapel in the Vatican Basilica. Although constituting a model for the angels of the subsequent funerary monument of the Anguillara to Capranica di Sutri, «at the same time they are distinguished by a greater refinement, especially in the more articulate and softer drapery»; their faces "strongly geometrized and less sensibly shaped compared to those of the Carafa emblems" make one suspect the intervention of a collaborator of the early Roman times of Paolo, who perhaps could not yet count on direct students to face the commissions.

In Rome Paolo was able to satisfy the tastes of a client who wanted to pursue the chivalric fashion of the northern sepulchres, especially meeting the favor of the Neapolitan colony gathered around Bonifacio IX Tomacelli, portrayed by Paul in the honorary image today in the cloister of the Roman basilica of S. Paul outside the Walls.

Assembled on a throne bearing on its flanks the papal coat of arms reproduced in relief, the effigy of Boniface IX is remembered from the sixteenth-century sources on the counter-façade of the ostiense basilica, to the right of the main portal, next to the altar dedicated to St. Paul; the work underwent various shifts before finding the current arrangement. On the high base, not relevant to the effigy, is a plaque that commemorates the restoration promoted by Lucrezia Tomacelli Colonna (therefore between 1597, the year of her marriage to Filippo Colonna, prince of Paliano, and 1622, the year of her death), leads the work back to the commission of the Cassinese Congregation. Despite the evident anachronism - the Congregation assumed this name only in 1504 when the abbey of Montecassino joined it -, the epigraph attests in its own way the involvement of the cenobio - retto from 1396 to 1415 by Enrico Tomacelli, nephew of the pope - in commission of the monument, a sign of gratitude for the measures taken by Bonifacio in the year 1400 for the restoration of the ostiense basilica.

Although not signed, the work presents all the characteristics of the effigies sculpted by Paolo: from the unmistakable somatic form to the robust modeled to produce effects of synthetic portraiture realism. The rich movement of the garments under the knees does not authorize suspicions of reworking, indeed the treatment of the flaps is easily compared with that reserved to the lower part of the gown of Stefaneschi *gisant* , moreover partially resected. Due to a subsequent intervention - perhaps dating back to the pontificate of Innocent VIII Cibo - is the inscription on the book that the Pope holds firmly with his hand on his left knee.

By the end of the first decade of the 15th century the funeral monument of the Anguillara brothers - Francesco (died 1406) and Niccolò (died 1408) - erected in the church of S. Francesco in Capranica di Sutri, already dedicated to S. Lorenzo.

The funeral complex, not signed but attributed on a stylistic basis, was realized with the wide contest of the workshop. Referring to the Neapolitan tradition of double burials, the monument consists of a tall canopy wall and a sarcophagus on columns with the bodies of the two brothers in military dress lying in a pavilion with curtains drawn away from the angels. On the roof of the burial chamber are the effigies of the deceased kneeling on the sides of the *Madonna and Child group*, to which they are recommended by the *Saints Francis* and *Lorenzo* today placed on the ground next to the monument.

At the end of the second decade of the fifteenth century, the funeral monument of Cardinal Pietro Stefaneschi (died October 31, 1417) in the basilica of S. Maria in Trastevere.

Signed "magister pavlvs" at the foot of the epigraph on the front of the sarcophagus, the funeral complex was originally in the right aisle, leaning against the wall near the altar of St. Peter. Concurrent with the construction of the current chapel of the same name, begun in 1583, the monument was moved to the left arm of the transept and reduced to only the sarcophagus on shelves with the image of the deceased, which is among the best achievements of the Umbrian sculptor. The striking floral motifs on the cushions and the dalmatic of the cardinal's effigy can also be found in the headgear worn by the *gisant* of the later funeral monument of Briobris in Vetralla.

In the same year in which Stefaneschi died, Riccardo Gattola di S. Giacomo (died after 1420), a noble of Gaeta documented at the service of Ladislao of Durazzo as commander of Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome, requested "magistrv pavlv de gavlv catanii »the realization of one's own sepulcher, as can be seen from the epigraph in the vernacular.

The origin of the monument from the church of S. Francesco a Gaeta is handed down by Girolamo Gattola (1788) who left a detailed description. What remains of the complex, dismembered after the Napoleonic suppressions, is divided between the Bardini Museum in Florence (cover plate of the sarcophagus with a lying figure and epigraph, statues of the *announcing Angel* and the *announced Virgin*) and the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore of the sarcophagus bearing the coats of arms and the scene of the *commendatio animae* of Gattola in relief). Recently many other fragments have been identified, among which the *Angels reggicortina* of the Ivan Bruschi Museum of Arezzo. The monument, which especially in the front of the sarcophagus and in the statues characterized by poorly guarded conduct denounces the massive intervention of the workshop, had to be sent by sea and assembled *on site*.

Signed "m [agister] pavlvs de gvaldo cattanie" is the funeral monument of Briobris, natural son of Giovanni Sciarra di Vico, lord of Vetralla, premised to his father at the age of thirty-three and documented only by the inscription engraved on the front of the sepulchral urn.

Of the funerary complex, located in the church of S. Francesco a Vetralla and dated between the end of the second and the beginning of the third decade of the fifteenth century, only the sarcophagus with *gisant* is preserved, walled in the arcosolium niche on the wall of the right aisle following the renovation of the building occurred in 1612; the original monument had to be of the *freestanding* type and to be in the first two columns on the left entering the church.

The recumbent figure of Briobris reveals important analogies - from the physical type to the accurate rendering of military clothing and ornaments - with the caryatids of the funerary monument of Ludovico Aldomorisco (died 1421) in S. Lorenzo Maggiore in Naples, signed by Antonio Baboccio from Piperno, the main actor of the local art scene in the durazzesca age that, according to tradition, would have stayed in Milan before 1407.

Among the works ascribed to Paolo are two male statuettes from the Museo Civico di Spoleto, probably coming from a funeral monument.

In relationship with the documented effigies of the master they show affinities of physiognomic order and of a decidedly more precise sculptural conduct of the heads-shelf of S. Maria delle Grazie in Giano dell'Umbria which has been recently attributed to him.

The statue of *St. James* is a problematic paternity, kept in a niche of the homonymous Roman Hospital, to which some critical proposals refer to identify the roots of Paul's artistic culture, now in the Roman-Arnolfian context (Negri Arnoldi, 2003), now in the Umbrian-Roman context, but in contact with the Florentine late-Gothic world.

The somatic form and the drapery modalities of the statue, however, do not seem traceable to the Umbrian sculptor: among other things, the treatment of the hair that frames the face of the apostle from the temples through a deep shadow line is completely foreign. Closer to the manner of Paul is the statue of *St. Margaret* in the cathedral of Montefiascone (pp. 59-66), structured and modeled in a completely different way from the Roman *St. James* to which it was nevertheless approached.

Unknown are the place and date of death of Paul, of which there are no more news after 1417.

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