

APPENDIX: FRANCESCO DA FIRENZE'S NAME

I have chosen the name “Francesco da Firenze” to refer to the composer commonly called “Francesco Landini” or simply “Landini” in most other literature. The surname “Landini” or “Landino” is not to be found in any sources of the trecento nor in secondary references in the quattrocento. “Francesco degli orghani” or “Franciscus cecus” would also serve as historically accurate ways of referring to this composer. F. Alberto Gallo took a step toward the removal of the name “Landini” but did not continue in this line.¹

The evidence linking Francesco to the Landini family via his father, identified as a painter by Villani (“Nacque in Firenze di Iacopo dipintore uomo di semplicissima vita”) is no longer to be accepted.² Vasari’s connection of Jacopo del Casentino to the Landini family is no longer considered correct by art historians.³ However, doubts by some that Jacopo del

¹ “Lorenzo Masini e Francesco degli Organi in S. Lorenzo,” *Studi Musicali* 4 (1975), p. 59

² *De origine civitatis Florentie et de eiusdem famosis civibus*, edited by Giuliano Tanturli (Padua: Antenoreis, 1997), p. 46. Note that the earliest commentaries on the life of Jacopo del Casentino, though they connect him to Cristoforo Landino, do not go so far as to attribute the name “Landino” or “Landini” to him. The Codex Petrei (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale. Magliabechiano, Cl. XIII, Cod. 89), f. 46ter, from ca. 1540, describes “Jacopo di Casentino, el quel fu della linea di Messer Cristofano Landini da Prato uecchio,” (quoted in Herbert P. Horner, “A Commentary upon Vasari’s Life of Jacopo dal Casentino,” *Rivista d’Arte* 6 (1909), pp. 95–96).

Vasari’s first edition is knowingly reporting hearsay when it states that Jacopo was “da molti scritto et creduto essere stato de la famiglia di M. Christofano Landino da Prato Vecchio,” and also does not ascribe the name Landini to him (Horner, “Commentary,” p. 96). Miklós Boskovits accepts the majority of the criticism of Vasari’s account while being inclined to believe a relationship between Jacopo and Taddeo, otherwise no longer accepted (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, revised edition, section 3, vol. 9 “*The Fourteenth Century: The Painters of the Miniaturist Tendency*” (Florence: Giunti Barbèra, 1984), p. 57).

³ Andrew Ladis, “Jacopo del Casentino,” s.v. in *Grove Dictionary of Art*, edited by Jane Turner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). In another survey, Richard Offner makes the point directly:

Vasari’s life of him is insofar assailable as the name has no provable connection with the majority [of] any of the paintings mentioned in his bibliography. How

(note continues)

Casentino is in fact the painter Jacopo mentioned by Villani are alleviated by the identification of the stained glass and the murals of the Velluti Chapel of Santa Croce, Florence as works of Jacopo del Casentino.⁴

Helene Nolthenius seems to be the first to ask bluntly, “Maar heette hij ook Landini?” — “But was he [Franciscus] also called Landini?”⁵ She points out that the name cannot

the name and these works came to be associated is a matter for speculation, as is indeed the question why Vasari devotes more space to him than to many a worthier artist. The only reason I can think of is the abundance of misinformation he had collected.

Although he tries to substantiate some of his claims, the few paintings he attributes to Jacopo which are extant or decipherable to-day (as those in Or S. Michele, for instance) are almost all by various other hands. The most disturbing obstacle, however, to a reconciliation of all that is reported about him is the fact that, following Jacopo’s epitaph, Vasari considers him to have painted, with one or two exceptions, frescoes alone, whereas Jacopo has left nothing but panels. (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, section 3, vol. 7 (New York: Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 1957), pp. v–vi)

On one important note, I must disagree with Offner’s assessment of Jacopo’s talent. Though I cannot judge whether or not in large panels “his figures ... are either grossly complacent or brutishly solemn ... [going] through a spare stock of motions mindlessly like cattle,” (*Ibid.*, p. vi) his *St. Bartholomew enthroned and eight Angels* in the Uffizi shows he certainly cared about detailed depiction of *vieles* (Offner, *Corpus*, section 3, vol. 2, pt. 2, p. 114–15 and plates 46, 46², and 46³; revised edition, Richard Offner with Klara Steinweg (continued under the direction of Miklós Boskovits and Mina Gregori), section III, vol. 2 (Florence: Giunti Barbèra, 1987), pp. 422–27). The panel was brought to the attention of music historians in Mary Remnant, “The diversity of medieval fiddles,” *Early Music* 3 (1975), p. 49, without noticing that the painter was probably the father of one of the great fourteenth-century composers and may have had closer connections with music and musicians than the average artist.

⁴ On the doubts, see Helene Nolthenius, “Een autobiografisch Madrigaal van Francesco Landini,” *Tijdschrift der Vereeniging voor Noord-Nederlands Muziekgeschiedenis* 17.4 (1955), pp. 237–38. For the identifications, see Andrew Ladis, “The Velluti Chapel in Santa Croce, Florence,” *Apollo* 120 (1984), p. 238 and Giuseppe Marchini, *Il Primo Rinascimento in Santa Croce* (Florence: Città di vita, 1968), p. 55.

⁵ Nolthenius, “Een autobiografisch Madrigaal,” pp. 237–38.

be a direct patronymic from Orlandino (or Orlando) given his father's name, and that we should not put too much trust in what Cristoforo Landino writes so many years later.

In fact, we can put our trust in Cristoforo's writings. The "Comento di Cristoforo Landino Fiorentino Sopra La Comedia di Dante Alighieri Poeta Fiorentino," in which nearly all his information is borrowed from Villani, does not attribute the name "Landini" to the composer.⁶ And, though he does bring in some new information about his ancestors in "Xandrae libri tres: Liber primus," section 24, there he also does not directly connect his name, "Landini," with the composer or the painter.⁷

The only remaining evidence for the name "Landini" comes from the coat of arms which appears above the head of the figure of the composer on his tomb (where he is also called Francesco).⁸ The stemma over his head, a pyramid of six mounds with three branches protruding from the top,⁹ matches a shield of the Landini family of Florence, one of four attributed to the family.¹⁰ This evidence would be much stronger if we knew the source of

⁶ Cristoforo Landino, *Scritti critici e teorici*, edited by Roberto Cardini, 2 vols. (Rome: Bulzoni, 1974), pp. 122–23.

⁷ Idem, "Ad Bartholomeum Opiscum Scalum de Suis Maioribus," in *Carmina Omnia*, edited by Alessandro Perosa (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1939), pp. 25–27.

⁸ Although the usual citation for the story of the tomb of the composer is Riccardo Gandolfi, "Una Riparazione a proposito di Francesco Landino," *Atti dell'accademia Regio istituto musicale "Luigi Cherubini," Florence 27* (1889), pp. 58–71, a earlier, full account appears in Simone Luigi Peruzzi, *Storia del commercio e dei banchieri di Firenze in tutto il mondo conosciuto dal 1200 al 1345*, . Book V, Chapter 10: "Musica," (Florence: M. Celini, 1868), pp. 423–30.

⁹ As described by Leonard Ellinwood, editor, *The Works of Francesco Landini* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1939), p. xv.

¹⁰ Description in J[ohannes] B[aptist] Rietstap, *Armorial général, précédé d'un dictionnaire des termes du blason*, 2nd edition (Gouda: G.B. van Goor zonen, 1884–87), vol. 2, p. 16. Illustration in Victor Rolland, *Armoiries des familles contenues dans l'Armorial général de J.B. Rietstap* [sic], also called, *Planches de l'Armorial général de J.–B. Rietstap* (Paris: Institut héraldique universel, 1903–26), 6 volumes, reprinted as *Illustrations to the Armorial général by J.B. Rietstap* (London: Heraldry

Rietstap's identifications—one hopes that Francesco's tomb was not used as Rietstap's only piece of evidence! Even if other evidence for the connection of the coat of arms to a fourteenth-century family of this name emerges, we need not necessarily conclude that either he was part of the family, or that he used their name at any point in his life.

Ultimately, scholarly reference to a composer by a name not appearing in any manuscript of his works, nor the document of his death, nor in the testimony of his contemporaries, must be abandoned.¹¹

Today, 1967), vol. 4, plate 15. Note that one of the Landini families (called “dei tre pesci”) is moved from Florence (in Rietstap's volume) to Bologna (in Rolland's).

¹¹ A similar but far less troubling problem concerns the spelling of the name of the composer Zachara. The form “Zacara,” now adopted in New Grove, appears with none of his works save in the index of **Bologna Q15**. (David Fallows, “Zacara da Teramo, Antonio,” s.v. in *2ndNG*). The credo thus noted in Q15 is ascribed in **Munich Emmeram** to Bosquet and in **Bologna 2216** to Nicolaus de Capoa. The form “Zacar” is found throughout the rest of Q15 (and not elsewhere). The ascription “Zachara” is not found in **Mancini** (contra the New Grove article); instead Çachara and Çacharias are used (see my “Zacara's *D'amor languire* and strategies for borrowing in the early fifteenth-century Italian Mass,” in *Antonio Zacara da Teramo e il suo tempo*, edited by Francesco Zimei (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2005), plate 13. Obviously I now regret using the spelling “Zacara” in the title). The spelling “Zachara” seems a reasonable compromise among the various choices; it appears uniquely in the manuscript Vercelli, Biblioteca Agnesiana, MS 11 arm. I rip. I, where *Deduto Sey* is attributed to Zachara. (The spelling “Zachara” is not used in **Oxford 213**, contra *2ndNG* again).