

The Tedaldi Tomb, S. Croce nave  
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Around the base of the fourth pier that separates the left aisle from the nave of Santa Croce, members of the Tedaldi family installed tombs between ca. 1357 and 1474.<sup>1</sup> While kinsmen installed tombs across the city and beyond in the churches of the Badia Fiorentina,<sup>2</sup> S. Caterina, San Giovannino dei Cavalieri, Santa Maria del Carmine, Santa Maria Novella,<sup>3</sup> S. Niccolò a Calenzano, and Santissima Annunziata,<sup>4</sup> it was the Franciscan friary church of Santa Croce that held the largest number of Tedaldi monuments, at least six in all, though two that were installed in the piazza of Santa Croce were replaced by those at the foot of the Tedaldi pier prior to the end of the sixteenth century, sometime between 1439 and 1596. It seems that in the later fifteenth century, the cloth merchant Leonardo di Papi di Tedaldo di Bartolo di Tedaldo Tedaldi decided that he did not want to join ancestors in any of the extant Tedaldi tombs but instead hired sculptor Antonio Rossellino to create an extraordinary cover for a new tomb. Leonardo certainly had rights to burial in the tomb installed to honor his great-great grandfather Tedaldo di Bartolo di M. Maffeo Tedaldi, who died in 1379, but he chose not only to build a new tomb but also to create one of the most intriguing and unusual tombs in Florence. Using white Carrara marble, Antonio carved a relief sculpture showing Leonardo and his wife, Lisa di Francesco degli Alberti, reclining on their marriage bed, suggesting that their wedding vows will extend for eternity. Effigies on Florentine tombs are rare, and they were typically reserved for important clerics, government officials, and others honored for their service to the state, shown as if on their funeral biers. Leonardo's double-effigy tomb using a bed rather than a bier may be unique in Florence. It is certainly the only example to survive in the city. Couple tombs are known, but rare, in Italy. They are more common in Northern Europe, and typically reserved for royalty and other members of the nobility, not merchant families like the Tedaldi. Another notable feature of Leonardo Tedaldi's tomb is that both figures do not wear shoes—a rather rare motif found on tombs belonging to monks, friars, or members of tertiary orders.<sup>5</sup> The Tedaldi may have requested bare feet as a sign of their humility and religious devotion. There is no inscription or coat of arms on the carved slab, another departure from convention. That it belonged to the

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<sup>1</sup> For Giovanna Tornaquinci Tedaldi (d. 1357) [TOM1459](#) and another for her husband Bartolo di M. Maffeo Tedaldi [TOM1497](#). Possibly installed prior to these named monuments were graves in the piazza for the Tedaldi men [TOM37](#), and also for the Tedaldi women [TOM38](#), installed in piazza before 1439, moved to the church before 1596. For M. Teghia Tedaldi installed by 1439 in the "old cemetery" [TOM1616](#), and the couple tomb discussed here, [TOM2754](#).

<sup>2</sup> One dated 1295 for the lawyer M. Maffeo di Tedaldo di Totto di Taldo Tedaldi <http://sepoltuario.iath.virginia.edu/tombs/tombs/TOM00001153/public>, and another for unnamed Tedaldi descendants that also carried the arms of the Romoli Bellevanti, <http://sepoltuario.iath.virginia.edu/tombs/tombs/TOM00001152/public>.

<sup>3</sup> An exterior *arca* tomb honored members of the Tedaldi and Tosighi families through inclusion of both families' coats of arms. As the Tedaldi arms are on the right, we can deduce that this was the bride's family, likely the marriage of M. Lagia Tedaldi and Feo di M. Tedaldo Tosighi <http://sepoltuario.iath.virginia.edu/tombs/tombs/TOM00002298/public>.

<sup>4</sup> The tomb of Pierozzo di Talento Tedaldi and his son Tedaldo (b. 1433) was placed at the foot of the chapel just to the left of the entrance to the rotunda. <http://sepoltuario.iath.virginia.edu/tombs/tombs/TOM00002766/public>

<sup>5</sup> James Beck, "An Effigy Tomb Slab by Antonio Rossellino," *Gazette Des Beaux-Arts* 95 (1980): 213–17; Doralynn Schlossman Pines, "The Tomb Slabs of Santa Croce: A New Sepoltuario" (Ph.D., Columbia, 1985), 523–29; Antonella Chiti, *Le lapidi terragne di Santa Croce: Dalla metà del Trecento al 1417*, vol. 1, Testi e studi 28 (Firenze: Polistampa, 2012), 232–35.

Tedaldi is made clear by the painted, if faded, coat of arms on the pier above and the proximity to the tombs of Leonardo's great-great grandparents on the south and west faces of the pier. According to a Santa Croce inventory of tombs, known as a *sepoltuario*, the pier also held a funeral banner and three shields, certainly decorated with Tedaldi heraldry and carried in Tedaldi funeral processions.