

POLITICAL CONSPIRACY IN FLORENCE, 1340-1382

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This dissertation examines the role of secret practices of opposition in the urban politics of Florence between 1340 and 1382. It is based on a wide variety of printed and archival sources, including chronicles, judicial records, government enactments, the records of consultative assemblies, statutes, chancery letters, tax records, private diaries and account books, and the *ad hoc* opinions (*consilia*) of jurists. Over the course of four chapters, it presents three major arguments: (1) Conspiracy, a central mechanism of political change and the predominant expression of political dissent in the city, remained primarily a function of the factionalism that had shattered the medieval commune, although it was now practiced not as open warfare but secret resistance. (2) Conspiracies were especially common when the city was ruled by popular governments, which faced almost constant conspiratorial resistance from elite factions that been expelled from the city or had had their political power restricted, while also inspiring increased worker unrest and secret labor organization. (3) Although historians have often located the origins of the “state” in the late medieval and early Renaissance cities of northern and central Italy, the prevalence of secret political opposition, the strength of conspirators and their allies, and the ability of conspiratorial networks, large worker congregations, and even powerful families to vie with weak regimes for power and legitimacy seriously calls this into question.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Robert Fredona graduated from Fenwick, a Dominican Catholic High School in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1996. He earned a B.A. with honors in history in 2000 from the College of the University of Chicago, where he concentrated in medieval history and was advised by Julius Kirshner. At Cornell University, he studied medieval and Renaissance history and worked with John Najemy (major field adviser), as well as Paul Hyams, and Susanne Pohl before her departure from the University. Duane Corpis joined his committee after he began the dissertation. Before the completion of his thesis, Robert Fredona published (or had in press) several articles. He has also received a post-doctoral fellowship at the Robbins Collection, an institute for legal history, in the University of California at Berkeley's law school.

Dedicated to my parents, Robert and Mary Fredona

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Archival source abbreviations

ASF	Archivio di Stato, Florence
Capitano	Atti del Capitano del Popolo
CP	Consulte e pratiche
CR	Capitoli, registri
Esecutore	Atti dell'Esecutore degli Ordinamenti di Giustizia
Missive	Signori, missive (prima cancelleria)
Podestà	Atti del Podestà
PR	Provvisioni, registri
Statuti	Statuti del commune di Firenze
BCFL	Biblioteca Capitolare Feliniana, Lucca
BNCF	Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence
BAV	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City

N.B.: The names of most *fondi* at the ASF are not abbreviated (e.g., Estimo, Prestanze, etc.) and full references are given for all manuscript sources not at the ASF.

Printed source abbreviations

ACCIAIUOLI = *Cronaca di Alamanno Acciaiuoli*, in SCARAMELLA, pp. 13-34.

AGGIUNTE = *Aggiunte anonime alla cronaca precedente* (i.e., ACCIAIUOLI), pp. 35-41, in SCARAMELLA.

ANONIMO = *Diario d'anonimo fiorentino dall' anno 1358 al 1389*, ed. Alessandro Gherardi, in *Cronache dei secoli XIII e XIV*, ed. Marco Tabarrini (Florence: Cellini, 1876), pp. 207-588.

GIOVANNI VILLANI = Giovanni Villani, *Nuova cronica*, 3 volumes, ed. Giuseppe Porta (Parma: Fondazione Bembo, 1990-1).

MATTEO VILLANI = Matteo Villani, *Cronica*, ed. Francesco Gherardi Dragomanni (Florence: Sansoni, 1846).

MONALDI = *Diario del Monaldi*, printed together with and in *Istorie pistolesi ovvero delle cose avvenute in Toscana...* (Prato: Guasti, 1835), pp. 495-528.

NADDO = *Croniche fiorentine di ser Naddo da Montecatini...*, ed. Ildefonso di San Luigi, *Delizie degli eruditi fiorentini*, vol. 18 (Florence: Cambiagi, 1784).

SER NOFRI = *Cronaca di ser Nofri di ser Piero delle Riformagioni*, in SCARAMELLA, pp. 55-66.

PAGOLO = "Transcription de la chronique de Pagolo di Ser Guido, cimateore (ASF, Carte Stroziane, 2a serie, 59, ff. 98r-101r)," in Alessandro Stella, *La révolte des ciompi: Les hommes, les lieux, le travail* (Paris: EHESS, 1993), pp. 271-5.

SCARAMELLA = *Il tumulto dei Ciompi: Cronache e memorie*, ed. Gino Scaramella (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1934).

SQUITTINATORE = *Cronaca prima di Anonimo*, in SCARAMELLA [known as the “Cronaca dello Squittinatore], pp. 73-102.

STEFANI = *Cronaca fiorentina di Marchionne di Coppo Stefani*, ed. Niccolò Rodolico (Città di Castello: Lapi, 1903).

Roman and canon law abbreviations

I use Theodor H. Mommsen, ed., *Corpus iuris civilis*, 3 volumes, 11th edition (Berlin, 1963-6) for the text of the Roman law; and I have employed the following abbreviations: D. = *Digest* or *Pandects*, I. = *Institutes*, and C. = *Code*; I always supply modern citations in parentheses in addition to the medieval citations, in which ff. = *Digest*. According to the medieval ordering, the *Digest* was divided into three parts: *Digestum vetus* (D. 1.1.1 to D.24.2), *Infortiatum* (D.24.3 to 38.17), and *Digestum novum* (D. 39.1 to 50.17).

Authenticum is the medieval term for the *Novellae constitutiones post Codicem*. For the canon law, I have used Emil Freidberg, ed., *Corpus iuris canonici*, 2 volumes (Leipzig, 1879-81) and employed these abbreviations: D. = Gratian’s *Decretum*, X. = *Liber Extra*, or the decretals of Gregory IX, VI. = *Liber Sextus*, or the decretals of Boniface IX, and Clem. = *Clementinae*, or the decretals of Clement V.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Dates

The Florentine year began on 25 March (Feast of the Annunciation). Modern dates will be given in the text, but, when needed for clarity in the notes, dates will be given in the Florentine style with the modern year in square brackets; for example, 20 January 1355 [1356].

The staio

Commonly used to measure grain, the *staio* (pl. *staia*), in Latin *sextarium* (pl. *sextaria*) and sometimes *starium* (pl. *staria*), is equal to roughly 0.73 bushels or 26.5 liters, or about 6 dry gallons.

The florin and the lira

The Florentines had two parallel monetary systems, the relative value of which were in nearly constant flux, namely the florin (*fiorino, -i*) and the *lira* (pl. *lire*), in Latin *florenum* and *libra*, both of which were divided into twenty *soldi* and subdivided into 240 *denari*, in Latin *solidi* and *denarii*. Florentines referred to the *soldi* and *denari* of the *lira* as “di piccioli”.

INTRODUCTION

Without a congregation, there is no city. There are both congregations of men and of affections in the heart. A congregation of evil men is called by two names in scripture: sedition or conspiracy. Sedition is an agreement of many men for evil. A city with evil affections in its heart has two peoples, iniquity and contradiction, as the psalm [54:10] says, “I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the city.” Conspirators and members of factions never have peace among themselves, because they do not exist without pride, since, as Solomon says in *Proverbs* 11[:2], “where pride is, there shall also be reproach.”¹

—Thomas of Chobham

Faction, Opposition, and Conspiracy

Just as modern states in the West are judged by how efficiently they provide services, such as health and education, governments in medieval Italy were judged by how well they provided for the public peace. If the emerging early modern state, with all its anxieties and terrible contradictions, can be

¹ *Sermones*, Sermo XVII, ll. 23-32: “Non est autem civitas sine congregatione. Est autem congregatio hominum et est congregatio affectionum in corde. Congregatio autem malorum hominum in canonica scriptura duplex legitur, scilicet sedicio vel conspiratio. Sedicio est plurium consensus in malum. Civitas autem malarum affectionum in corde duos habet populos, scilicet iniquitatem et contradictionem, sicut legitur in psalmo: vidi iniquitatem et contradictionem in civitate. Conspiratores autem et factiosi numquam habent pacem inter se, quia sine superbia non sunt. Nam, sicut dicit Salomon in Proverbiis XI^o: ubi fuerit superbia ibi erit et contumelia.” All translations, unless noted, are my own.

signaled by invoking the title of a single book, the *Leviathan* of Hobbes, the free *stato* of late medieval and early renaissance Italy, with all its pretensions to symmetry and order, can be signaled by invoking another—the *Defensor pacis* (*Defender of Peace*) of Marsilius of Padua. Poets and chroniclers alike regularly meditated upon the causes of violence and discord, discovering always that the lack of peace resulted from a politics of faction or party. The chronicler Dino Compagni (d. 1324), who recorded the disastrous conflict of the White and Black Guelph factions in Florence, described factionalism as resulting from the *gara di uffici*: “enmity is born among you,” he says, “because of the competition for political offices and honors.”² Looking even deeper, his contemporary Dante (d. 1321) seized upon the universal defects in man’s fallen nature: “pride, envy, and greed are / the three sparks that have set hearts on fire.”³ But the most read and discussed political thinkers of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, usually theologians, failed to say much if anything about the nature and practice of the *gara di uffici*, about factions or parties, or about political opposition at all. As such, it is not surprising that the image of medieval Italian politics often presented by historians of political thought and of the law has tended to be schematic and anachronistic, pre-occupied with the “important” questions (papal and imperial power, the political rights of free cities, the nature and limits of kingship, etc.) and trapped in the teleological narrative of the transformation of the late medieval commune into the early modern state. Over the last thirty years, political historians have

² *Dino Compagni e la sua cronica*, ed. Isidoro del Lungo (Florence: Le Monnier, 1887), II.8, 161: “tra voi è nato alcuno sdegno per gara di uffici.”

³ *Inferno*, VI, 74-5: “Superbia, invidia, e avarizia sono / le tre faville c’hanno i cuori accesi.”

challenged former assumptions about pre-modern political communities, positing a radical disconnect between these normative discourses of politics and the actual practice of politics, revealing inchoate regimes founded upon networks of patronage and secured through pervasive practices of factional violence and exclusion. Only with the so-called commentators or post-glossators of the fourteenth century, jurists like Bartolo da Sassoferrato (d. 1357) and his student Baldo degli Ubaldi of Perugia (d. 1400), did political thinkers come to express the nature and practice of politics in the Italian cities as it was and not as it was hoped or imagined to be.

Indeed, the politics of opposition in late medieval Italy are nowhere more clearly and brilliantly described than in the treatise *On Guelphs and Ghibellines* by Bartolo, which, together with three other tracts tied together metaphorically by the Tiber river, was probably intended as part of the pre-eminent jurist's ultimate statement on the practice of politics in central Italy.⁴ Contrary to the usual fashion of medieval political thinkers, Bartolo in the treatise revels in the ambiguity and fluidity of the terms Guelph and Ghibelline, describing them as simple placeholders devoid of ideological meaning: "today... we see many called Guelphs who are actually rebels against the Church, while many others called Ghibellines are rebels against the empire," and explaining that the terms can now even signify the opposite of their traditional meaning; but, he continues, "in cities where there are divisions and

⁴ *De Guelphis et Gebellinis* has been edited by Diego Quaglioni in *Politica e diritto nel Trecento italiano: Il "De tyranno" di Bartolo da Sassoferrato (1314–1357); con l'edizione critica dei trattati "De Guelphis et Gebellinis," "De regimine civitatis" e "De tyranno"* (Florence: Olschki, 1983), 131–46 [cited as *De Guelphis* below]. For the structure of the multi-part work, see Osvaldo Cavallar's important essay, "River of Law: Bartolo's *Tiberiadis* (*De alluvione*)," in *A Renaissance of Conflicts: Visions and Revisions of Law and Society in Italy and Spain*, ed. John A. Marino and Thomas Kuehn (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 31–82.

factions, it is necessary that these parties be given some kind of name, so those names are applied because they are familiar.”⁵ The situation is such, Bartolo argues, “that one man can *be* [esse] a Guelph in one place and a Ghibelline in another.”⁶ A Guelph, then, is simply one “*qui adheret et affectat statum illius partis que vocatur pars Guelpha*,” who is a member and supporter of the regime of the party called the Guelf party, an expression that contains within it the root of one of Bartolo’s most exquisite terms for faction, *affectio*.⁷ In many cities “there are two parties, and one of them is governing the city, while the other party is now driven out, but governed at one time.”⁸ It is in this context that one can understand Bartolo’s expression *exititii ratione partialitatis*, exiles resulting from factionalism, that is, the men of the faction driven out (*deiecta*); for the politics of opposition in the Italian cities was often a politics of *intrinseci et extrinseci*, of insiders and outsiders, of the party in power (and in the city) and the party out of power (and out of the city). The question that lies at the center of the treatise is, of course, whether membership in such a faction or party is lawful. If the faction in power pursues the public good, Bartolo argues, it is lawful to be a member, “for just as it is licit to bring friends together for the defense of one’s goods, all the more to do so

⁵ *De Guelphis*, 134: “Hodie... videmus enim quamplures qui Guelphi vocantur esse rebelles Ecclesiae, et alios quamplures qui Gebellini vocantur esse rebelles imperii... sicut contingit in... civitatibus in quibus sunt divisiones et partialitates, necesse est ut dicte partes aliquo nomine vocentur: ideo dicta nomina imponuntur tanquam magis communia.”

⁶ *Ibid.*, 137: “...potest quis in uno loco esse Guelphus et in alio Gebellinus.”

⁷ For the quotation, *ibid.*, 134; for the definition of *affectio*, 131.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 140, “sunt due partes, quarum una regit civitatem, altera stat deiecta, sed alio tempore rexit.”

for the public defense.”⁹ In such a case, membership in the opposing faction is “absolutely illicit [*simpliciter illicitum*],” but if the faction in power is wicked or tyrannical, membership in the opposing faction is lawful. Even if riots and unrest (*rumor vel tumultus*) occur in the city as a result of opposing a tyrannical faction, legal penalties ought not apply.¹⁰ While parties could fight wars outside of cities, *rumor* and *tumultus* were the results of political opposition *within* a city and, in this sentence, Bartolo has gone farther even than the radical political thinker Tolomeo of Lucca (d. 1327) or John of Salisbury, the famous defender of tyrannicide (d. 1180). On the one hand, he has exposed the emptiness of the vocabulary of party politics and laid bare the stark nature of opposition in the Italian cities, in which everything can be reduced essentially to the party in power and the expelled party that seeks to return to power. But, on the other hand, he has established the crucial, ethical core of politics itself: political resistance, even violent resistance that causes *rumor* and *tumultus* in the city, can be lawful as long as the resisting party seeks the public good and the opposed party does not.

Whatever Bartolo may have thought about licit resistance, even in cities like Florence where somewhat broad political participation and debate were allowed, urban regimes in late medieval Italy viewed all political opposition as criminal or, at best, illicit and unacceptable. The idea of a “loyal opposition,” most obvious in Britain where the party out of power is actually called “His (or Her) Majesty’s Loyal Opposition,” and which developed alongside and is associated with the practice of politics in modern democracies, would have

⁹ Ibid., 137: “Sicut enim ad tuitionem rerum licet congregare amicos, ita multo magis ad tuitionem publicam.”

¹⁰ Ibid., 139.

been entirely alien to a fourteenth-century Italian. In this context it is not at all surprising that, for example, almost everything we know about labor organization in Florence at the time comes from the city's criminal archives. And for this reason, most political opposition was, in some way or another, practiced in secret. Secret political opposition, or conspiracy, the subject of this thesis, was therefore a pervasive phenomenon. The *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* defines political conspiracy as "a secret combination of persons for the purpose of changing the form or personnel of government by violence or other unconstitutional means."¹¹ This definition certainly applies to the fourteenth century, but, within the medieval Italian cities an even broader definition may be used: in this thesis, the expression "conspiracy" or "political conspiracy" may thus refer to the entire wide range of practices of political opposition, viewed by the regime in power as illegal or illicit, in which a group or groups of persons coordinate or attempt to coordinate in secret. As the *Encyclopedia* notes, "[p]opular judgment upon conspiracies is essentially indicated by the unpleasant connotation of the term" and, as a result, "the plotting which precedes most successful revolutions is rather quickly forgotten; at least it is seldom referred to as a conspiracy." A similar point was made by Thomas R. Conrad in a 1974 review essay, where he argued that political conspiracy is "an utterly subjective concept ... that elude[s] operationalization

¹¹ Article by Joseph J. Senturia (New York: Macmillan, 1937), vol. 3, p. 238. He adds that it is the "agency by which most assassinations, coups d'état, and revolutions are brought into being" and that it "shades off indistinguishably into various related activities: semi-secret revolutionary political action, such as Fascist or Communist, where ultimate ends are open but immediate activities more or less secret; joint economic action on a large scale, like the general strike; and murder with political aspects, like that of Rathenau."

as a part of a value-free vocabulary for political science.”¹² Because we rightly value the public as opposed to the private practice of politics, the rule of law, openness, and non-violence, it is nearly impossible to always describe “conspiracy” in value free terms. Nonetheless, in this thesis, in deciding what counts as conspiracy and what does not, I adopt the point-of-view of the regime in power and never that of the conspirator, however sympathetic. It ought not, after all, be the role of the historian to treat those plots he sympathizes with as revolutions and those he does not as conspiracies. In a powerful and wide-ranging 1968 essay on “Political Conflict in the Italian City States,” Lauro Martines provided the justification for my approach to the problem of secret political opposition, noting that (1) the line between legitimate and illegitimate political opposition in medieval and Renaissance Italy was blurry because “the legal identity of the state itself was in doubt,” that (2) looking at the least ambiguous form of illegitimate political opposition—conspiracy, “which was frankly illegal and which the jurists had no trouble in condemning”—is the best way of approaching this issue, and that (3) the methods regimes chose to punish conspirators are also meaningful in this regard, especially in the more extreme case of execution, which was justified when “lawyers, arguing from Roman law, gradually gave currency to the concept of the crime of *laesa majestas*—a concept that developed *pari passu* with the emergence of the sovereign city state.”¹³ My method therefore is to ask, as far as possible given the surviving documentation: Who conspired and

¹² “Coercion, Assassination, Conspiracy: Pejorative Political Language,” *Polity* 6 (1974): 418-23, quote at p. 422.

¹³ Lauro Martines, “Political Conflict in the Italian City States,” *Government and Opposition* 3 (1968): 69- 91.

why? How did conspirators plan, keep secret, and carry out their plots? And how were such plots uncovered, repressed, and punished? In order to answer these questions, the vocabulary of conspiracy in fourteenth-century Italy must be understood.

Machiavelli notes that conspiracies are especially dangerous because they hurt princes even when they fail; for even “if [the plot] is discovered and the conspirators are killed, people will always believe that it was an invention of the prince to vent his avarice and cruelty against the families and property of those he killed.”¹⁴ A similar problem attends the use of criminal processes against conspirators, one of the primary sources of this thesis. There will always be doubt about whether the governments in power invented the charges and the details of the plot to maintain power, punish their enemies, and profit from the attendant property confiscations. Knowing that there is risk of appearing naïve in saying so, I have usually erred on the side of believing the criminal records, even quoting the confessions of conspirators as *if* they were accurate records of what was said and done. Of course, as I say in chapter 3, I am well aware of the fact such criminal confessions were “extracted through torture, crafted by the confessors, influenced by the questions asked by the judges..., and modulated by the conventions of the legal process,” not to mention possibly molded by political pressures. All historians of crime must be cautious, as Renato Rosaldo warns (with regards to Ladurie’s problematic method in *Montaillou*), to not separate the “data from

¹⁴ *Discorsi*, III.6, “se la si scuopre, e loro ammazzino i congiurati, si crede sempre che la sia stata invenzione di quel principe, per isfogare l’avarizia e la crudeltà sua contro al sangue e la roba di quegli che egli ha morti.”

the instrument through which they were collected.”¹⁵ That said, in order to combat the more glaring problem of possible invention and falsification, I attempt in every case to corroborate the details of these confessions with a variety of other sources. In chapter 3, for example, I describe a large plot against the guild government of Florence in the winter of 1379 for which we have extensive, surviving criminal records. From the fifteenth through the twentieth century, as readers of Machiavelli on conspiracy might have suspected, there have been claims that this plot was invented in some respects by the government. Nonetheless I am comfortable with using these condemnations for two reasons. First, in this particular case, we possess writings by conspirators and their allies that largely corroborate the nature of the plot and many of its details, not to mention other government records. But, more importantly and even in the absence of such corroboration, judicial records are often the best and sometimes the only way for historians of pre-modern conspiracy to approach their subject. And, at the very least, they allow us to understand how regimes in power suspected that conspirators spoke to and interacted with one another. The use of judicial archives for any purpose is fraught with difficulties, such as those elegantly and thoughtfully described by Arlette Farge in her account of working in French judicial archives,¹⁶ but to investigate secret crimes, to investigate conspiracies, in a judicial archive is to confront the limits of historical knowledge in a unique way. Since conspiracies

¹⁵ “From the Door of His Tent: The Fieldworker and the Inquisitor,” in James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 77-97, quotation at p. 79.

¹⁶ *Le goût de l'archive* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1989).

are by their nature secret, we tend to know of them *qua* conspiracies only when and to the extent that they are repressed.

The Vocabulary of Conspiracy

To conspire (*con-spirare*) is, etymologically speaking, to breathe together; thus, though the word was used only rarely in a musical context, the first-century writer Columella could properly speak of the harmony produced by a chorus as a *conspiratio*.¹⁷ The more common sense of the word in antiquity—a union or consensus of men working in concert for some end, whether good or evil—is seen clearly in Cicero, who could speak of a “*conspiratio* of every rank to defend liberty” as well as of a “very wicked *conspiratio* of enemies.”¹⁸ What we call a conspiracy was, in the Roman political vocabulary, generally called not *conspiratio* but *coniuratio*,¹⁹ literally “a swearing together,” although that word too was ambivalent, or, in the expression of the grammarian Servius, had “a neutral sense.”²⁰ *Coniuratio*’s ambivalence is striking; understood historically, it becomes almost an auto-antonym. In moments of great or sudden emergency (*tumultus*), Servius

¹⁷ *De re rustica*, 12.2.4.

¹⁸ *Epistulae ad familiares*, 12:15 (“conspirationem omnium ordinum ad defendendam libertatem”) and 11:11 (“sceleratissimam conspirationem hostium”).

¹⁹ Victoria Emma Pagán, *Conspiracy Narratives in Roman History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 11.

²⁰ *Ad Aeneidem* 8.5, “nam coniuratio *tōn mesōn* est”; on the ambivalence of the term in practice, see Thomas Habinek, *The Politics of Latin Literature: Writing, Identity, and Empire in Ancient Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 76-8. I have transliterated the Greek in the quotation.

explains, when there was no time for individual oaths of allegiance, the leader of the army “would say, ‘whoever wishes the republic to be safe, let him follow me,’ and those who were present would all swear allegiance together at the same time, and this kind of military campaign was called a *coniuratio*.”²¹ Just as *coniuratio* could signify this oath-bound body of men dedicated to saving the republic, so, of course, could it (and more often did) signify the oath-bound body of men dedicated to destroying it, as in Sallust’s statement that he will accurately describe the “*coniuratio* of Catiline,” most notorious of the conspirators against the Roman Republic.²²

As in antiquity, late medieval Florentines employed a complex and often ambivalent vocabulary of conspiracy and political crime. These terms may be divided into three groups, terms for political crimes (and their perpetrators), terms for the elements of these crimes, and terms for the effects or results of these crimes. The penchant of medieval legal and legalistic writing to provide lists of words, often synonymous or with overlapping meaning, is especially clear in this area. For clarity, I underline vernacular terms and italicize *Latin* ones in this discussion; and note that the terms sometimes overlap. In both the vernacular chronicles and legal texts, trattato (*tractatus*) and congiura (*coniuratio*) are the most common terms for political conspiracy, with conspirazione (*conspiratio*) being used much less often. A number of crimes could be committed by conspiring, among them especially *seditio* (sedition), *rebellio* (rebellion), and *proditio* (treason), all of which, under certain

²¹ *Ad Aeneidem* 8.5, “...dicebat qui rem publicam salvam esse vult me sequatur, et qui convenissent simul iurabant: et dicebatur ista militia coniuratio.”

²² *Bellum Catilinae* 4.3, “igitur de Catilinae coniuratione quam verissime potero,” etc.

conditions, could be or become the *crimen laesae maiestatis* (lèse majesté or high treason). Those who committed such crimes became *homines seditiosi* (seditious men), *rebelles* (rebels), and *proditores* (traitors), and sometimes though rarely *traditores* (traitors), or *inimici*, *emuli*, and *hostes* (enemies). Many conspiracies were launched, as noted above, by members of the party out of power, most of whom were “exiles” of some type, colloquially called usciti, fuorusciti, cacciati and sometimes esuli in the chronicles, and who were mostly people that had been placed under the commune’s criminal ban, sbanditi, banniti, exbanniti; or confined or relegated to a territory outside of the city, confinati or relegati. A number of deprecatory terms were regularly applied to conspirators— for instance, they were often called *perfidi* (treacherous)—as were a number of deprecatory expressions, like *iniquitatis filii* (sons of iniquity) and *perditionis filii* (sons of perdition).

Conspiracies had a number of well-defined elements. As the terms congiura and *coniuratio* suggest, there was usually an oath (giuramento and sometimes giura), sometimes sealed with kisses and written pacts. In this way, as in antiquity, the *coniuratio* could be quite ambivalent—men who giurarono insieme e si baciaron in bocca, swore an oath and kissed each other on the mouth, could easily have been defending the city or themselves, forming a guild, or taking part in a nefarious plot. There was also usually a detailed plan that needed to be kept secret. The criminal sentences often note that the condemned conspirator *omnia in secreto tenuit et nemini revelavit*, kept everything secret and revealed it to no one. Most conspiracies required groups of men to join together; some of the terms for such groups—like *congregationes*, *confederationes*, and *coadunationes*—could refer to both small and large groups, while others, like *conventicula*, usually implied that the

groups were not particularly large. Men who could bring many people together were especially dangerous. In order to do so, less-organized political criminals would simply yell slogans (like “Viva la Parte Guelfa!,” that is, “Long live the Guelf party!”), while more committed and better-organized plotters would ring bells, raise banners, and shout such slogans.

The goal of the conspirator was, most often, to take or retake the stato and then to re-organize the city’s political constitution. Stato or *status* had many shades of meaning, but suggested nothing like the modern “state.”²³ It was something possessed, taken, retaken, held, and lost. It was the government, the regime, power, authority, and the condition of the city. Families, factions, parties, and even individuals could seek to have it or have it again. Since so many conspirators were exiles it is not uncommon for them to speak of their objective as reentering or returning and retaking the *stato*. Another common expression was mutare lo stato, to change the regime or overthrow the government. Additionally, regimes in power often accused

²³ Among the best semantico-historical analyses of the polyvalent meanings of “status” and “stato” are Nicolai Rubinstein, “Notes on the Word *stato* in Florence before Machiavelli,” in *Florilegium Historiale*, ed. John Gordon Rowe and W.H. Stockdale (Toronto: University of Western Ontario Press, 1971), 314–26, and Alberto Tenenti, “Archeologia medievale della parola *stato*,” in Tenenti, *Stato: Un’idea, una logica: dal comune italiano all’assolutissimo* (Bologna, 1987), 15–52, as well as the important discussion in Lauro Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft in Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), for example, at p. 390. Even though these words eventually became our “state,” other words (or combinations of words) also employed by pre-modern Italians might actually have been *closer* in meaning to it, for example “commune” or “civitas” or “res publica” and their vernacular equivalents. That said, it would be anachronistic to think that any pre-modern terms actually approximate our own term “state,” which is laden with meaning derived from the German state doctrine or *Staatslehre*, formulated in a very specific, legal context in the nineteenth-century, on which see Michael Stolleis, *Public Law in Germany: 1800-1914* (New York: Berghahn, 2001).

plotters of trying to *subvertere* or *pervertere*, ruin or overthrow, their *status*. As in the classical usage, subversive Florentines wished to bring about *res novae* or *novitas* (pl. *novitates*), that is, new things. The chroniclers often speak of novità or novitadi occurring in the city when they wish to speak of successful conspiracies or revolutions, but sometimes also of attempted ones. The terminology for what conspirators planned to do was not always explicitly political; nearly every group of conspirators hoped or was said to hope to correre la terra or correre la città, to run through the land or city, which was sometimes a way of taking power (that is, running around and causing a riot) and sometimes the result of success (that is, running through the city gloating and possibly taking revenge and settling scores). Plots in their early stages could cause or be manifested through *murmurationes* (whispering), but their outbreak would bring about louder noises, especially romore (*rumor*) and tumulto (*tumultus*). The word rumor or *romore*, which literally signifies a loud noise, nearly always announced and implied political unrest, and that dangerous unrest was called *tumultus* or tumulto. In times of political agitation, the chronicles are replete with expressions like si levò un romore, a riot erupted. Almost every *tractatus*, *coniuratio*, and *conspiratio* resulted in *rumor* and *tumultus*, which formed a nearly inseparable linguistic pair. Romore was also used in verbal phrases, like levare il romore (to cause a riot), and could itself become a verb, like romoreggiare (to riot or cause a riot). Seditious men could be said, for example, to levare la terra a romore or romoreggiare la terra, to riot or cause a riot in the whole city. The regimes governing the cities in which *rumor* and *tumultus* broke out called themselves and/or the condition of their cities peaceful and quiet (the so-called *status pacificus et tranquillus* of the criminal records). All of the above terms (for conspiracies and their

elements and results) could be and readily were combined in court records and chronicles, sometimes precisely and sometimes haphazardly. But there was an established set of terms, based in large part on Roman legal and political usage, which was employed in fourteenth-century Italy to talk about conspiracy.

Organization and Argument

Although nearly every political historian of fourteenth-century Florence has discussed conspiracy in passing—indeed, it would be impossible not to—none has treated the subject in detail as I do here nor uncovered the patterns of conspiracy in the era. The first chapter of my thesis, “Political Conspiracy in Florence, 1340-1368” discusses four major elite plots hatched in Florence and examines the problem of worker conspiracies and revolts, treating especially secret labor organization in the 1340s and a major grain riot in 1368. The second chapter, “Conspiracy and the Tumult of the Ciompi,” completely recasts the famous Ciompi tumult of 1378 as part of the history of Florentine conspiracy, showing how the Ciompi participated in a series of plots hatched by the city’s popular faction and then conspired against the government they helped to create. Chapter three, “Conspiracies against the Guild Government, 1379,” discusses a year that saw more conspiracies than any other in Florentine history, showing in detail how plotters formed conspiratorial networks outside of Florence and revealing a regime obsessed with repressing conspiracy. The fourth and final chapter, “Baldo degli Ubaldi on Conspiracy and Treason in late Trecento Florence,” focuses on several opinions written by the prominent jurist Baldo on conspiracy and its repression in Florence in

1380-81, illuminating the way that political conspiracy and treason were understood in Italian jurisprudence from the 1350s until Baldo's influential opinions.

Three essential points emerge from this study: (1) Political conspiracy between 1340 and 1382 was chiefly a practice of factionalism or party politics. The infamous factional strife that had pervaded the late medieval city survived and flourished in the new, conspiratorial politics of the urban parties. Still grounded in the old dichotomies (friend/enemy, party-in-power/purged party), conspiracy subordinated public power to private power and worked (often intentionally) to undermine communal institutions. In this respect, conspiracy in Florence was a central mechanism of political change and was the city's predominant expression of political dissent. (2) Conspiracies were especially common in periods of popular government. These governments faced almost constant conspiratorial resistance from elite factions that been expelled from the city or had had their political power restricted, and who often sought assistance from foreign rulers and powerful families in the countryside. And these governments also commonly inspired increased worker unrest and secret labor organization. Since guild membership was a requisite of political participation in Florence and central to the ideology of popular regimes, the ambiguity already present in the Roman term *coniuratio* was magnified in the response to labor organization, in which political communities that had founded their legitimacy upon oath-bound associations especially feared and violently repressed other oath-bound associations. And (3) Although historians have often located the origins of the "state" in the early Renaissance cities of northern and central Italy, the prevalence of secret political opposition, the strength of conspirators and their allies, and the ability of conspiratorial

networks, large worker congregations, and even powerful families to vie with weak regimes for power and legitimacy seriously calls this into question. Indeed, conspiracy, in this way, delineates the very limits of the “state.” Even though most conspiracies failed, the following chapters often reveal precarious governments in fear of collapse, unable to defend their territorial possessions, and unable to monitor dangerous exiles plotting their destruction.

At least since Federico Chabod’s famous 1957 lecture, which asked if there was one in the Renaissance, the question of the existence of a “state” has pre-occupied historians of pre-modern Italy.²⁴ Political historians of late medieval and early Renaissance Florence have tended to place the origins of a “state” in that city somewhere between the establishment of the government’s public debt, or *Monte comune*, in 1345 and the return of the Medici in 1434.²⁵ My own opinion, offered tentatively here, is that, for the late Trecento, “the state” is at best a red herring, diverting attention from complex and crucial issues in legal and institutional history, and at worst a false construct and nominalist illusion that causes scholars, otherwise cautious about anachronism, to read back into pre-modern contexts an idea (and method of thinking about governance) only truly formalized in the nineteenth century and perhaps never truly accurate. In this respect there are parallels with the idea of a “feudal system” in medieval Europe, an idea now largely

²⁴ “Y a-t-il un état de la Renaissance?,” in *Actes du colloque sur la Renaissance*, Société d’histoire moderne (Paris: Vrin, 1958), 57-73. The essays in Giorgio Chittolini, Anthony Molho, and Pierangelo Schiera, eds., *Origini dello stato: Processi di formazione statale in Italia fra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994) show that debate along these lines has continued.

²⁵ A list of such historians and their works is found in Samuel K. Cohn, *Creating the Florentine State: Peasants and Rebellion, 1348-1434* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1-2, notes 4-6.

demolished in Anglophone scholarship.²⁶ Even though one must speak, say, of the *stato* in Guicciardini's thought, the word "state" now brings with it a wide range of exceptionally heavy and unnecessary baggage: notions of absolute sovereignty associated with Bodin (d. 1596) and later thinkers, the conception of states in an international public law system, still inchoate at the time of Grotius (d. 1645), the self-contained and unitary jurisdiction of private law (*privatrecht*), which is conceptualized along with "conflict of laws"-theory only in the nineteenth century; and especially sociological and political-science-oriented ideas about the modern (bureaucratic, centralized) state, associated especially with the insights of Max Weber (d. 1920) and his followers. It is crucial to note that I do not dismiss the existence of a "state" along the same lines as P.J. Jones, first in his famous essay "Communes and Despots,"²⁷ where this dismissal is a relativistic and not-too-veiled expression of contempt for politics; nor do I do so along the lines of Paolo Grossi in his masterful and controversial *L'ordine giuridico medievale*,²⁸ where the dismissal is part of a Catholic polemic and historicist reconceptualization of the European "common law," or *ius commune*. I believe that the governments of late-Trecento Italy were radically unlike "states" as we in the twenty-first-century understand the

²⁶ On this see the classic article of Elizabeth A. R. Brown, "The Tyranny of a Construct: Feudalism and Historians of Medieval Europe," *American Historical Review*, 79 (1974): 1063–8, and Susan Reynolds' convincing argument, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

²⁷ "Communes and Despots: The City-State in Late-Medieval Italy," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Series, 15 (1965), especially at pages 92 and 95.

²⁸ Rome: Laterza, 1995.

term. A better case could certainly be made for the regional powers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but it is now widely agreed that, even in the sixteenth century, power in these territorial “states” was almost entirely de-centered, fluid, and negotiated. Even in the age of the grand dukes, subject communities and individual holders of “feudal” rights negotiated on an *ad hoc* basis with the Florentine government and continued to resist the tug of centralization, leaving a web of corporate as well as individualistic particularities. Marino Berengo presented a persuasive early case along these lines (along with an overview of some of the early scholarship on this topic) in 1970; his view was confirmed, though tempered, by the more nuanced works of Elena Fasano Guarini and Giorgio Chittolini; and studies continue to confirm it for other areas of Italy.²⁹ In the mid-Trecento, city governments did not control the territories around them in any meaningful sense: powerful families, as I will show in this thesis, were regularly able to challenge the power of the Florentine government in the nearby Arno valley and sometimes within the city itself. Moreover, outside their walls, these governments were at the mercy of what political scientists now might call “violent non-state actors,” be they

²⁹ Berengo, “Il Cinquecento,” in *La storiografia italiana negli ultimi vent’anni* (Milan: Marzorati, 1970), 485-518; Fasano Guarini, *Lo stato mediceo di Cosimo I* (Florence: Sansoni, 1973); Chittolini, *La formazione dello stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado* (Turin: Einaudi, 1979). That similar conditions existed outside of Tuscany is made clear in a number of recent articles, among them Sergio Zamperetti’s “Magistrature centrali, rettori e ceti locali nello stato regionale veneto in età moderna,” in *Comunità e poteri centrali negli antichi Stati italiani: alle origini dei controlli amministrativi*, ed. Luca Mannori (Naples: Cuen, 1997), 103-116, and Andrea Gamberini’s “Principi, comunità e territori nel ducato di Milano: spunti per una rilettura,” *Quaderni storici* 127 (2008): 243-266.

mercenary armies or militant bands of exiles.³⁰ Within the cities themselves, governments were not and did not understand themselves to be ultimately and indivisibly sovereign. Their *de facto* power was bolstered by networks of patronage, secured with party-centered exclusionary practices, and often shared with powerful families, corporate bodies, and ecclesiastical entities. Outside of the issue of sovereignty, these ideas have been current in Italian late-medieval historiography for at least the last thirty years; and the last decade, in particular, has seen a veritable explosion of scholarship in Italy on the role of party-centered acts of political exclusion.³¹ Most importantly, for a discussion of the period 1340-1382 in Florence, it is simply unnecessary to use the term “state,” which rather than clarifying the outlines of political and institutional practice confuses them and makes them murkier. Worse, to say that the governments in this period were “proto-states” or “early states” or in the process of “becoming states,” or to call them “medieval states” to distinguish them from the modern state, is to become trapped in a teleology in which the “state” is inevitable and pre-ordained.

Riccardo Fubini has memorably called the late fifteenth century in Italy the “age of conspiracies,”³² and the most famous political conspiracies of the

³⁰ I understand this term in the sense used by Troy S. Thomas, Stephen D. Kiser, and William D. Casebeer’s *Warlords Rising: Confronting Violent Non-state Actors* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2005).

³¹ Giuliano Milani, *L’esclusione dal comune: conflitti e bandi politici a Bologna e in altre città italiane tra XII e XIV secolo* (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 2003), is representative of the lattermost trend.

³² Riccardo Fubini, “L’età delle congiure: i rapporti tra Firenze e Milano dal tempo di Piero a quello di Lorenzo de’ Medici (1464-78),” in *Italia quattrocentesca: politica e diplomazia nell’età di Lorenzo il Magnifico* (Florence: FrancoAngeli, 1994), 220-252.

Italian Renaissance (such as the so-called “Pazzi conspiracy” against Lorenzo de’ Medici) indeed come from that period. But the era I discuss in this thesis, 1340-1382, can also (and, indeed, perhaps more properly) be called an “age of conspiracies” in Florence, especially the two extended periods of popular government (1343-48 and 1378-82), which saw myriad plots and almost constant unrest. While many aspects of Machiavelli’s (d. 1527) extraordinary discussion of conspiracy, the longest chapter (III.6) in his *Discourses on Livy* and almost certainly the first and most sophisticated excursus ever dedicated to the subject, are applicable to conspiracy in the late fourteenth century, a reader of Machiavelli and of this thesis will see how remarkably the practice and discourse of political conspiracy in Florence changed over the course of what we might call the “long” fifteenth century. Plots of and against princes, informed by classical examples and models, barely resemble the large-scale conspiracies and secretly-orchestrated rebellions of the fourteenth century, which sprang out of and expressed deep class and political tensions and which, crucially, were plotted in and around a vibrant city where the question of how and by whom the city would be governed had not yet been answered and where politics were played out by citizens of every rank, with words and when necessary with actions, in the taverns and in the public assemblies, in the piazzas and in the streets, and not in the palaces of bankers and princes.

CHAPTER 1:

POLITICAL CONSPIRACY IN FLORENCE, 1340-1368

Elite and Magnate Conspiracies

More so than any other decade in Florentine history, the tumultuous 1340s were marked by pronounced class tensions that found their expression in plots, conspiracies, and secret alliances as well as in outright insurrection, revolt, and revolution. These multi-polar and complex tensions were conceptualized and understood by contemporaries as resulting from the struggles and alliances among three groups contending for political dominance: the magnates, a giuridically-defined class of large and powerful families known for their violence and ostentatious displays of power that, beginning in 1293, were excluded from the priorate (the city's executive magistracy) and subjected to numerous restrictions and penalties; the so-called *popolo grasso*, an elite of wealthy non-magnates, who like the magnates were often involved in banking and international trade, but who were represented in the priorate through their membership in the major guilds (as lawyers, international merchants and bankers, wool and silk manufacturers, and, to a lesser extent, spice-importers and furriers) and, in that capacity, had formed for four decades the core of Florence's ruling class; and the *popolo*, a middle-class of predominantly non-elite major guildsmen whose politics were founded upon the corporate ideology of the guild community and civic principles borrowed from Roman thought and diffused

throughout Florence's notarial culture.³³ The years 1343-48 saw the creation of a popular government that further chastised the magnates and challenged the political dominance of the *popolo grasso*. But in the early years of the decade, amidst economic and political turmoil, magnates, long bristling under the handicaps imposed by the Ordinances of Justice of the 1290s, conspired to regain their share of political power in Florence.

The Bardi-Frescobaldi Plot of 1340

On 1 November 1334, the faction controlling Florence created a new office of seven captains or *bargelli* who were put in charge of 175 soldiers (*fanti armati*) and tasked with maintaining public order, but who, according to the chronicler Giovanni Villani, were actually appointed to protect the regime itself and to intimidate its enemies before January 1335's scheduled general scrutiny, the procedure that qualified citizens for possible election to the priorate.³⁴ Exactly one year later, the regime replaced the seven captains, consolidating their function in a single new office, that of the "Captain of the Watch and Guardian of Peace and of the Government of the City [*Capitano*

³³ On the definition of the Florentine elite and *popolo*, their struggles, and "dialogue of power" throughout the history of the Florentine republic, see John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence 1200-1575* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 5-62 and *passim*; and the still concise statement in Najemy, "The Dialogue of Power in Florentine Politics," in Anthony Molho, Kurt Raaflaub, and Julia Emlen, eds., *City-States in Classical Antiquity and Medieval Italy* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1991), 269-88.

³⁴ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xii, 16. These captains and Villani's criticism are discussed in John M. Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus in Florentine Electoral Politics, 1280-1400* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 120.

della guardia e conservatore di pace e di stato de la città],” who would be a foreigner like Florence’s other traditional “rectors” or judicial officials (the Podestà, Capitano del Popolo, and Esecutore), who was invested with “great authority and power over those under the criminal ban [*con grande arbitrio e balia sopra li sbanditi*],” and who had the executive capacity to perform “executions as he pleased, without following statutory procedures [*faccendo iustizia di sangue come li piaceva, senza ordine di statuti*].”³⁵ Messer Iacopo de’ Gabrielli, a knight from a noble Guelf family in Gubbio that had long provided the city with trusted foreign officials, was chosen as the first such Captain.³⁶ Bringing a force of fifty knights and one hundred foot soldiers with him, he zealously and rigidly meted out justice, beheading Rosso di Gherarduccio Buondelmonti “against the wishes of most Florentines [*contro al volere de la maggiore parte de’ Fiorentini*]” for joining the Tolomei of Siena in attacking the commune of Montalcino, executing a number of other citizens, and condemning “nearly every commune and parish in the *contado*,” Florence’s demarcated countryside, “for harboring people under the ban [*quasi tutti i Comuni e popoli di contado per cagione di ritenere sbanditi*].”³⁷ Messer Iacopo proved extremely unpopular in Florence, as did his successor, Accorrimbono da Tolentino, whose illicit intervention in the syndication of a Podestà from Gubbio led to legislation forbidding the selection of any foreign officials from

³⁵ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xii, 39. See also STEFANI, rubr. 510, 178.

³⁶ Robert Davidsohn, *Forschungen zur Geschichte von Florenz*, vol. 4 (Berlin: Mittler und Sohn, 1908), 535-57, has reconstructed a partial list of Podestà and Capitani del Popolo between 1251 and 1330 from numerous archival sources; the list includes five members of the Gabrielli of Gubbio: Rubeus (page 540), Cante (541-3), Binus (543), Philippus (547), and Binus Novellus (557). GIOVANNI VILLANI, xi, 165, notes that a Cantuccio di Messer Bino Gabrielli was also elected Capitano in 1331.

³⁷ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xii, 39.

Gubbio for a decade.³⁸ This legislation was overlooked four years later, when the office of Captain of the Watch was fully re-instituted and Messer Iacopo, now called by Villani “an impetuous man, cruel, and a butcher [*uomo subito e crudele e carnefice*]”, was again chosen for the position, given an enormous salary and greater power than the other rectors, and put in charge of one hundred knights and two hundred foot soldiers.³⁹ Villani’s description of Messer Iacopo highlights the perception that he wielded super-legal powers in order to do the bidding of the ruling faction (*i reggenti*):

Like a tyrant, or an administrator for tyrants [*esecutore di tiranni*], he acted as he wished in civil and criminal matters, an authority put in his hands by the ruling faction, and he did so without following the laws or statutes; as a result, he wrongly convicted many innocent men in their persons and property. And he kept the citizens, both great and small [*grandi e piccoli*], greatly afraid, except his rulers, whose vendettas, offenses, and political corruption he carried out with his rod.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid., and, for the legislation against officials from Gubbio, see ASF, PR, 28, 77v. Syndication was the process by which the acts of judicial officials were examined after their tenure; on the process, see Gino Masi, *Il sindacato delle magistrature comunali nel sec. XIV (con speciale riferimento a Firenze)* (Rome: Sampaolesi, 1930); and, for a revisionist, comparative approach, see Moritz Isenmann, *Legalità e controllo del potere (1200-1600): Uno studio comparativo sul processo di sindacato: Firenze, Castiglia e Valencia* (Doctoral Dissertation, European University Institute, 2008).

³⁹ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xii, 118 and, for the salary figures, 93. According to Villani, the salaries for the “Conservadore del popolo” (another name for Iacopo’s position) and his soldiers amounted to 26,040 lire, or 120 lire more than the combined salaries of the three traditional foreign rectors and their full staffs (*famiglie*).

⁴⁰ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xii, 118: “Il quale a guisa di tiranno, o come esecutore di tiranni, procedea di fatto in civile e cherminale a sua volontà, come gli era posto in mano per li detti reggenti, senza seguire leggi o statuti, onde molti innocenti condannò a-torto inn-avere e in persona, e tenea i cittadini grandi e piccoli in grande tremore, salvo i suoi reggenti , che col suo bastone faceano le loro vendette e talora l’offese e-lle baratterie...”

Among the victims of Messer Jacopo's reign were Pietro Bardi, who was fined 6000 *lire* for having attacked a vassal (*fedele*) of his in Vernio (sometimes Vernia), at the edge of the Florentine *contado*, and Bardo Frescobaldi, who was forced to pay 3700 *lire* for an offense he denied having committed in the *pieve* of San Vincenzo, on the outskirts of Florence. The Bardi had acquired Vernio and Mangona from the counts Alberti, a branch of the powerful counts Guidi, who still controlled much of the mountainous territory north of Prato and exerted influence throughout the valley of the river Bisenzio, a small tributary of the Arno; just as they had acquired another castle near Stia in the Casentino, a valley east of Florence, from the related counts of Porciano.⁴¹ The schematic map below shows some of the important towns and fortresses in the northwest (or, Santa Maria Novella) quarter of the Florentine *contado*, and the location of Vernio and Mangona.

The late 1330s had put a great strain on the Bardi company, a vast international economic enterprise, which found itself under increased pressure to lend to both king Edward III in order to finance England's campaigns in France and to the Florentine commune to finance its war against Lucca,

⁴¹ These towns and their histories are described in Emanuele Repetti, *Dizionario geografico, fisico, storico della Toscana*, in six volumes (Florence, Mazzoni, 1833-45): Vernio, v, 696-700; Mangona, iii, 42-7; Porciano, iv, 583-5; Stia, v, 467-472. All of these towns were located in valleys surrounded by mountains more than 600 meters tall.

recently acquired by the Veronese lord Mastino della Scala, a war which upset the Bardi financial relationship with the Neapolitan king Robert of Anjou.⁴²

The looming bankruptcy of the Bardi company has often been invoked in discussions of the Bardi-Frescobaldi conspiracy of November 1340, but, when they actually speak of causes, the chronicles report that its efficient cause was, in fact, the “tyranny” of Iacopo Gabrielli and the oligarchic faction then ruling Florence. For example, an anonymous chronicler of Pistoia says that in 1340

the *popolo grasso* was ruling Florence and the men of good families [*gentili uomini*] were completely excluded from office and from the honors of the Commune; because of the rigid laws the *popolani* had adopted, they did not dare to ask for justice from any *popolano* and frequently, at the behest of the *popolani*, they were condemned without cause. As a result, certain noble citizens decided that they wanted to bring down the haughtiness of these *popolani*, so they conspired together [*feciono insieme una giura*] to take over the city and kill certain *popolani*.⁴³

⁴² Armando Saponi, *La crisi delle compagnie mercantili dei Bardi e dei Peruzzi* (Florence: Olschki, 1926), 77, estimates that the Bardi extended credit of between 535 and 900 thousand florins to the English crown in the 1340s; on lending within Florence, see Bernardino Barbadoro, *Le finanze della Repubblica fiorentina: Imposta diretta e debito pubblico fino all'istituzione del Monte* (Florence: Olschki, 1929), 571-83; for an outline of Florence's relationship with King Robert generally, see Samantha Kelly, *The New Solomon: Robert of Naples (1309-1343) and Fourteenth-Century Kingship* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 227-35, but on the financial relationship, see David Abulafia, “Southern Italy and the Florentine Economy, 1265-1370,” *Economic History Review* 33 (1981): *passim*, but especially at p. 83.

⁴³ *Istorie pistolesi, ovvero delle cose avvenute in Toscana dall'anno 1300 al 1348*, ed. Antonio Maria Biscioni (Prato: Guasti, 1835), 345-6: “reggea Firenze lo popolo grasso e gli gentili uomini erano in tutto scrusi degli uffici e degli onori del Comune e quasi per gli stretti ordini che aveano addosso non ardiano a domandare ragione a nessuno popolare e spesso a stanza de popolani erano condannati senza cagione. Onde certi nobili cittadini si propuosono di volere abbattere la superbia de detti popolani e però feciono insieme una giura per tollere la città ed uccidere certi popolani di quelli...”

ILLUSTRATION I

Schematic of the Santa Maria Novella quarter of the Florentine contado circa 1340, showing important towns and fortresses



Villani adds that the conspirators planned to “cause a riot, run through the city, and kill Messer Iacopo Gabrielli and the leaders of the ruling faction, and to destroy the office of the priors and install a new government in Florence,” indeed, “some said to destroy the *popolo*.”⁴⁴ Villani describes the events in

⁴⁴ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xii, 118: “...levare il romore e correre la città, e uccidere mesere Iacopo Gabrielli e’ caporali de’ reggenti, e abattere l’ufficio di priori e rifare in Firenze nuovo stato, e cchi disse disfare il popolo.”

detail: The plot was uncovered on All Saints' Day, 1 November 1340, when Andrea Bardi, one of the conspirators, discussed it with Iacopo Alberti, his brother-in-law and a member of the ruling faction. Iacopo Alberti quickly told the priors, who, at around 7:30 PM, rang the alarm bell in the palace in spite of the objections of Taldo Valori and the lawyer messer Francesco Salviati, both of them Bardi allies on the priorate. In response to the alarm, the city gates were closed and the civic militias gathered in the piazza, shouting "*Viva il popolo* and death to the traitors [*muoiano i traditori*]!"⁴⁵ With their foreign allies still outside the city and their plot discovered, the Bardi and Frescobaldi set fire to two of the bridges across the Arno, intending to turn the *Oltrarno*, their area of the city south of the river, into a fortress. While Iacopo Gabrielli waited, seemingly paralyzed with fear, the Brescian Podestà Maffeo Pontecarrali bravely crossed one of the other bridges and convinced the conspirators "using wise words and courteous threats [*con savie parole e cortesi minacce*]" to flee, saving the city from further destruction.⁴⁶ A chronicler from a magnate clan, Simone della Tosa, describes the participation of a relative of his in the

⁴⁵ Although used on this occasion, the word "traitor" and the rhetoric of "treason" were rarely used in the context of political conspiracy in fourteenth-century Florence. But Christiane Klapisch-Zuber has shown that, according to *tamburazioni* delivered to the Esecutore, magnates most commonly insulted their victims in the 1340s by calling them traitors (*traditori*) and also that they regularly denounced the *popolo* as a whole when attacking those of an inferior class, as in February of 1349, when a member of the Bardi clan was accused of destroying the property of a *contadino* in the rural parish of San Cristofano in Perticaia (in the *pieve* of Rignano) and announced, "We already broke the *Popolo* of Florence, surely it wouldn't be hard to break that of San Cristofano!" See *Retour à la cité: les magnats de Florence, 1340-1440* (Paris: EHESS, 2006), 122; in the text Klapisch translates ASF, *Esecutore*, 119bis, f. 1r, "noi abbiamo già volte rotto il popolo di Firenze bene possiamo rompere sicuramente quello de Santo Cristofano" [my transcription].

⁴⁶ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xii, 118.

resistance against the plotters: “the Bardi and Frescobaldi, with many soldiers and exiles [*sbanditi*], fled and went away, and messer Giovanni della Tosa with some men of the *popolo* [*con certo popolo*], and also with Manno Donati and some of the Cavicciuli, went to the piazza of the priors to help the *popolo*.”⁴⁷ With magnates like the Donati and della Tosa joining forces with the *popolani grassi* and *popolo* on 1 November, it is clear that Simone wants to make the point (at least partially true) that the Bardi-Frescobaldi plot was not a conspiracy of magnates generally, but of certain magnates against the otherwise unified city.

On 2 November 1340, the priors of Florence dispatched a brief letter to the commune of San Miniato, a small but strategically important town in the lower Arno valley, announcing the repression of the terrible conspiracy. “This morning,” they wrote, “our Capitano held an inquest against the persons named below, condemning them in their persons and to the confiscation and destruction of their property... the names of the condemned are these: messer Piero, messer Gerozzo, messer Simoncino, messer Iacopo di messer Guido, and Andrea di Filippo, all from the powerful magnate clan of the Bardi. “Without a doubt,” they added, “we believe that many other magnates were accomplices in their crime, and they will be similarly condemned when the truth is revealed.”⁴⁸ Eight days later, when the priors officially placed all the

⁴⁷ *Annali di Simone della Tosa*, in *Cronichette antiche di vari scrittori del buon secolo della lingua toscana*, ed. Domenico Maria Manni (Milan, Silvestri: 1844), 237: “...i Bardi e Frescobaldi con molti fanti e sbanditi si partirono e andarono fuori e messer Giovanni della Tosa con certo popolo trasse alla piazza de Priori e ancora messer Manno de Donati e altri de Cavicciuli in servizio del popolo.”

⁴⁸ ASF, *Signori, missive, originali*, 3, f. 2r: “Hoc mane per capitaneum nostrum dictos infrascriptos processum est ad condemnationem personarum et bonarum confiscationem et devastationem... nomina vero condemnatorum sunt hec vz.

conspirators, who had fled the city and taken refuge first in nearby Bardi properties and then in Pisa, under the commune's criminal ban, the list included the names of thirty-one additional conspirators: ten more Bardi, thirteen Frescobaldi, two Rossi, one Nerli, and five men from the *contado* and upper Arno river valley.⁴⁹ In an official letter to the *signore* of Bologna and a number of other key allies sent on 9 November, the priors of Florence again declared the discovery and repression of the Bardi-Frescobaldi plot, a plot too vast to conceal, especially "since rumors fly faster than the wind, stirring up countless tongues."⁵⁰ "Certain treacherous citizens of ours from the houses of the Bardi and Frescobaldi," they wrote, "hoping to tyrannically and lawlessly subject the Florentine people to themselves, and having everywhere conspired

dominus Pierus, dominus Geroçius, dominus Simoncinus, dominus Iacobus domini Guidonis, [et] Andreas Phillippoççi... et creditur tamen indubie quod plures alii ex magnatibus dicti facinoris sunt consortes contra quos deliberate veritate reperta similiter procedetur."

⁴⁹ ASF, *PR*, 30, 27rv. These are the Florentines named: "Dominus Petrus domini Gualterocti [de Bardis], Dominus Iacobus domini Guidonis Accolti [de Bardis], Dominus Simon Geroççi [de Bardis], Dominus Geroççus domini Gualterocti [de Bardis], Dominus Nepus domini Nepi [de Bardis], Bindus Andree domini Gualterocti [de Bardis], Bartolomeus domini Francischi [de Bardis], Simon et Ciprianus Gerii [de Bardis], Francischus et Toctus Filippocçi [de Bardis], Aghinolfus domini Gualterocti [de Bardis], Pierus Ciampi [de Bardis], Bindus Benghi [de Bardis], Iacobus domini Bardi [de Frescobaldis], Dominus Albanus Gerii [de Frescobaldis], Dominus Angelus Bernardi [de Frescobaldis], Dominus Bardus Lamberti [de Frescobaldis], Giramonte et Lapus Frescobaldi [de Frescobaldis], Nicolaus et Frescobaldus Guidonis [de Frescobaldis], Mangiere domini Lapi [de Frescobaldis], Iacobus alias vocatus Paperino [de Frescobaldis], Geri Bonaguide domini Geri [de Frescobaldis], Johannes et Bartolus domini Freschi [de Frescobaldis], Silvester Bartoli domini Guidonis [de Rubeis], Robertus domini Baronis [de Rubeis], Johannes Marchi de Nerlis populi Sancti Fridiani." Additionally, the *provvisione* lists men in the employ of Iacopo di Bardo Frescobaldi, the Prior of San Jacopo.

⁵⁰ ASF, *Missive*, 5, 9rv, letter to "Marchionibus Extensibus et Marcie Ancone et Duci Spoletano et Domino Bononie et multis aliis", quotation at 9r: "quoniam fama volabilis vento celerior et infinitas linguas exagitans..."

with our enemies, yours, and those of Holy Mother Church, thereby endangering all of her cities and doing damage to all of Italy, have plotted to reduce our city to a nefarious workshop of evil men.”⁵¹ Two days later, in a letter to pope Benedict XII, the priors denounced the conspirators as “sons of perdition [*perditionis filii*],” a biblical expression associated with the Antichrist and regularly applied to traitors (*proditores*) and rebels, who had undertaken “conspiracies, seditions, and plots with enemies and rebels of Holy Mother Church and of those devoted to her in order to subvert the peaceful government of the city and people of Florence, thereby bringing about tyrannical wickedness harmful to the Church and to this city [i.e., Florence].”⁵² The Florentine government hoped to establish that the magnate Bardi and Frescobaldi conspirators were enemies of Guelfs all over Italy, possibly representing the vanguard of a dangerous Ghibelline resurgence, and, with these letters and many others to allied cities and subject towns in Tuscany, they hoped to gain necessary assistance in making sure that the plotters would be unable to find refuge in nearby communities where they could continue to conspire.

The repression of the Bardi and Frescobaldi conspiracy, it is clear, occurred in two stages: first, the actual events of All Saint’s Day, long

⁵¹ Ibid., “quidam perfidi nostri cives de domibus de Bardis [9v] et de Frescobaldis... cogitantes tirapnice et enormiter sibi subicere populum florentinum factis undique conspiracyibus cum nostris et vobis et sancte matris ecclesie inimicis in aliarum suarum periculum et totius ytalie preiudicium manifestum civitatem nostram ordinaverunt reducere ad scelestorum nefariam officinam.”

⁵² ASF, *Missive*, 5, 10r-11r, quotation at 10r: “conspiraciones seditiones et insidias cum inimicis et rebellibus sancte matris ecclesie et devotorum suorum in subversionem status pacifici Florentine civitatis et populi, ut illam perducerent ad turapnicam pravitatam in defractionem sancte matris ecclesie et civitatis eiusdam.”

remembered in the political consciousness of the *popolo*, in which the different classes of the city joined forces, under the lead of men like the Podestà, to defend guild government and expel the conspirators and their forces from the city while also locking out their non-Florentine allies; and, second, the long struggle, beginning with these letters, to monitor and punish the Bardi and Frescobaldi and their allies. The anonymous chronicler of Pistoia describes succinctly the immediate efforts of Messer Iacopo, now called in official documents the *capitaneus ad guerram*, or war captain: “The Captain sentenced those he found guilty, dismantled their houses in the city and *contado*, and destroyed all their goods.”⁵³ Meanwhile, Messer Piero de’ Bardi went to Vernio with his men and holed up there, until the forces of the commune besieged his castle, ultimately forcing him to sell it and the nearby castle at Mangona in January.⁵⁴ In the same month, nine of the counts Guidi were also condemned for participating in the plot. More than a year later, another plot was uncovered involving more of the Bardi and Frescobaldi, among them Schiatta Frescobaldi, who was beheaded, and members of the Bardi company, like Biordo di messer Vieri Bardi, as well as an Adimari and a Pazzi, all of whom were declared rebels of the commune.⁵⁵ In the same year, Florence purchased Lucca to end its war with Mastino della Scala and thereby provoked a war with Pisa. Just as the Bardi and Frescobaldi in November had

⁵³ *Istorie pistolesi*, 348: “Lo Capitano fece processi contro a quelli, che trovò colpevoli e disfece loro le case in città e in contado, e guastò tutti i loro beni.”

⁵⁴ ASF, *PR*, 30, 27v, for the initial efforts at Vernia; ASF, *PR*, 30, 37r-v, and Cesare Guasti, ed., *I capitoli del Comune di Firenze* (Florence: Cellini, 1866), vol. 1, 107-8 for the sale of Mangona on 15 January 1340[41].

⁵⁵ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xii, 119.

expected the support of their allies in the *contado* and Arno valley—most of the counts Guidi, the Tarlati of Arezzo, the Pazzi of the Valdarno, the Ubertini and Ubaldini of the Tuscan Apennines, the Guazzalotti, the Belforti of Volterra, and others—so again did the Florentine rebels join forces with the counts Guidi and the Ubaldini on behalf of Ghibelline Pisa. Within a year, the Ubaldini, with Milanese help, had besieged and burned the Florentine subject town Firenzuola, and the Pazzi Valdarno and Ubertini had started a revolt in Castiglione, Campogiallo, and Treggiaia in the upper Arno river valley (near San Giovanni Valdarno on the map below).⁵⁶ Indeed, the full story of the Bardi-Frescobaldi plot ends only in October of 1343 when the Duke of Athens, who came to power with the support of the Bardi and other magnates, absolved all of the Florentine plotters for their crimes in November of 1340 and after.⁵⁷ And before long they would plot against him.

The Conspiracies against the Duke of Athens

The fall of the Duke of Athens, who had only ten months earlier declared himself lord-for-life (*signore a vita*) of Florence, was achieved, like so many of the great political upheavals in Florentine history, through

⁵⁶ Ibid., 131 and 139.

⁵⁷ ASF, *Balie*, 2, ff. 12-13v (26 October 1343).

conspiracy.⁵⁸ According to the chronicler Giovanni Villani's account, three discrete "sects (or factions) and plots [*sette e congiurazioni*]" existed in the early summer of 1343, each committed to killing the Duke and driving his men from power. Villani's detailed list⁵⁹ of the participants in each plot can be summarized: the first plot, led by the bishop Agnolo Acciaiuoli, included mostly magnates, many of the Bardi, some of the Frescobaldi, Vieri degli Scali; and some elite *popolani* from the Altoviti, Magalotti, Strozzi, and Mancini families; the second, led by messer Manno and Corso di messer Amerigo Donati, included several Pazzi, Cavicciuli, and Albizzi; and the third, led by Antonio di Baldinaccio Adimari, included a number of Medici, Bordoni, and Rucellai, Luigi di Lippo Aldobrandini, and others of the middle-rank (*popolani mediani*). All of these groups were strongly motivated, Villani explains, because the Duke had tricked them and, metaphorically, treated them like whores, stripping from the *grandi*, who had made him lord, all their boldness, and from the people [*popolo*] their liberty and all their political power [*balia*] and offices, other than the name of prior; and he disbanded the office of the standard-bearers of the

⁵⁸ The best account of Duke's lordship remains the classic work of Cesare Paoli, *Della signoria di Gualtieri Duca d'Atene in Firenze* (Firenze: Cellini, 1862); the plots against the Duke, his expulsion, and the creation of the new government are discussed at pages 41-44.

⁵⁹ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.16, *Di certe congiurazioni che furono fatte in Firenze contro al duca d'Atene che n'era signore*, "...della prima fu capo il nostro vescovo degli Acciaiuoli... e co·llui tenieno i Bardi; ciò furono principali: messere Piero, messere Gerozzo, messere Iacopo, e Andrea di Filippo, Simone di Geri, tutti della casa de' Bardi, e rimessi in Firenze per lo duca, e di Rossi Salvestrino e meser Pino, e più suoi consorti. E de' Frescobaldi i caporali il priore di Sa·Iacopo meser Agnolo Giramonte anche di rimessi in Firenze per lo duca, e Vieri delli Scali, e più altri grandi e popolani, Altoviti, Magalotti, Strozzi, e Mancini. Dell'altra congiura era capo meser Manno e Corso di meser Amerigo de' Donati, Bindo e Beltramo e Mari de' Pazzi, e Niccolò di mesere Alamanno, e Tile Benzi de' Cavicciuli e certi degli Albizi. Della terza era capo Antonio di Baldinaccio degli Adimari, e Medici, e Bordoni, Oricellai, e Luigi di Lippo Aldobrandini, e più altri popolani mediani."

companies of the people, and took away their flags, and eliminated all the other laws and officials of the people, as he pleased, allying himself with the butchers, wine-sellers, wool carders, and minor guildsmen, giving them consuls and rectors as they wished, dismembering the old laws of the guilds to which they were subjected because they wanted higher salaries for their work.⁶⁰

For the leaders of the second group, Manno and Corso Donati, city records reveal an additional and more tangible insult: on 30 December 1342 the two men appealed to the Duke about a decision that one of his judges had made against them in a property dispute.⁶¹ All of these groups and perhaps others plotted separately, seemingly unbeknownst to each other, developing distinct and competing plans: while some conspirators dealt in secret with foreign allies (Pisans, Sienese, Perugians, and, of course, the Counts Guidi) to receive troops and support, others conspired to murder the duke while he was going to the council, or watching the *palio* (public horserace) on the feast of San Giovanni (24 June), and so on. “The third sect had decided,” Villani says, “[to attack the Duke] at the house of the Bordoni at the [narrow piazza by the] Croce all Trebbio because he regularly rode there to meet his mistress.”⁶²

⁶⁰ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.8, *Quello che 'l duca d'Atene fece in Firenze mentre ne fu signore*: “E così puttanecciava e disimulava il duca co' cittadini, togliendo ogni baldanza a' grandi che ll'aveano fatto signore, e togliendo la libertà e ogni ballia e ufficio, altro che 'l nome de' priori, e al popolo; e cassò l'ufficio di gonfalonieri delle compagnie del popolo, e tolse loro i gonfaloni, e ogni altro ordine e ufficiali di popolo cassò, se non a suo beneplacito ritegnendosi co' beccari, vinattieri, scardassieri e artefici minuti, dando loro consoli e rettori al loro volere, dimembrando gli ordini antichi dell'arti a'ccui erano sottoposti per volere maggiori salari di loro lavorii.”

⁶¹ Described in Paoli, *Della signoria*, document 210, 99.

⁶² GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.16, “La terza setta aveno ordinato, imperò ch'egli cavalcava sovente per amore di donna da casa i Bordoni alla Croce a Trebbio.”

It was the third sect, led by Antonio Adimari, which was first brought to light when a member of the allied Sienese contingent (*uno masnadiere sanese*) discussed the plot with his friend Francesco Brunelleschi, who revealed it to the Duke's men, already on heightened alert. On 18 July, the Duke had two of the lowliest men implicated in the plot, Pagolo di Francesco del Manzeca and Simone da Monterappoli, arrested and tortured. When they revealed the full scope of the conspiracy, the Duke had its *capo* Antonio Adimari and several others imprisoned; but, says Villani, "finding the conspiracy against him so great, and with so many great and powerful citizens taking part in it, he did not dare to execute the prisoners," sending instead for his own soldiers and requesting three hundred additional knights from his ally Taddeo Pepoli, the lord of Bologna.⁶³ When word arrived that these forces were approaching Florence, the Duke summoned more than three hundred leading citizens, "magnates and *popolani* from every family and house [*grandi e popolani d'ogni famiglia e casato*]," to the palace on 26 July intending, according to Villani, "to have the windows barred to seal off the entire hall, to kill and behead everyone inside, and to run through the city [*correre la terra*] as the pitiless Totila *Flagellum Dei* had done when he destroyed Florence."⁶⁴

⁶³ Ibid., "trovando la congiura contro a llui sì grande, e cche tanti grandi e possenti cittadini vi tengono mano, non ardi di fare giustizia de' detti presi..."

⁶⁴ Ibid., "...che come fossono ragunati nella sala del palagio, ch'avea le finestre ferrate, come detto avemo, di fare serrare la sala, e quanti dentro ve n'avesse fare uccidere e tagliare, e correre la terra al modo fece l'empissimo Totila Fragellum Dei quando distrusse Firenze." The title "Flagellum Dei (scourge of God)" is more correctly given to Attila, but the Ostrogoth Totila attacked Florence in the sixth century AD. The expression "correre la terra" is discussed in Richard C. Trexler, "Correre la terra: Collective Insults in the Late Middle Ages," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome: Moyen-Age, Temps modernes* 96 (1984): 845-902, but it does not here [or later in this dissertation] mean to hold a race to ritually insult an enemy,

With their murderous plots uncovered and the Duke's forces growing, the conspirators decided to act; this time:

The Adimari, Medici, and Donati were the leaders; the bells for None [around 4PM] on Saturday having rung, the workers having left their shops for 26 July, the feast of Saint Anne, AD 1343, they arranged in Mercato Vecchio and the Porta San Piero for some thugs [*ribaldi fanti*] to start a fake brawl and cry, "To arms! To arms!" which they did. ... And right away, *as was planned*, all citizens took up arms, whether they fought on foot or on horseback, each in his own neighborhood, bringing out flags with the arms of the *popolo* and the commune, *as was planned*, shouting, "Death to the Duke and his men [*seguaci*], and long live the *popolo* and Commune of Florence and liberty!" ... Those in the *sesto* ["sixth," an official district] of the Oltrarno [south of the river], both magnates and *popolani*, swore an oath and kissed each other on the mouth, and they blocked the ends of the bridges, so that even if the whole city on the other side were lost, they would courageously control their side."⁶⁵

As their plans to murder the Duke collapsed, the various "sects" combined—with the Adimari, Medici, and Donati representing at least the second and third—and conspired to begin a general insurrection. Corso Donati, who had led the second "sect," broke open the communal jail called the Stinche "with his brothers and other followers," releasing all the prisoners within, including a

signifying instead either "to sack a town or rise up in revolt," a meaning noted by Trexler on page 847.

⁶⁵ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.17, *Come la città di Firenze si levò a romore, e cacciaronne il duca d'Atene che nn'era signore*: "Gli Adimari, e Medici, e Donati principali, sabato sonata nona, usciti i lavoranti delle botteghe di XXVI di luglio, il dì di santa Anna anni Domini MCCCXLIII, ordinarono in Mercato Vecchio e in porta San Piero che certi ribaldi fanti fitiziamente s'azzuffassono insieme, e gridassono: «All'arme, all'arme!»; e così feciono. ... e di presente, com'era ordinato, tutti i cittadini furo armati a cavallo e a piè, ciascuno alla sua contrada e vicinanza, traendo fuori bandiere dell'armi del popolo e del Comune, com'era ordinato, gridando: «Muoia il duca e' suoi seguaci, e viva il popolo e 'l Comune di Firenze e libertà!». ... Quelli del sesto d'Oltrarno, grandi e popolani, si giurarono insieme e baciaron in bocca, e abarraro i capi de' ponti, con intenzione che se tutta la terra di qua si perdesse, di tenersi francamente di là."

number of friends and kinsmen. Elsewhere, his brother Manno, along with men from the Medici, Cavicciuli, Pazzi, and other families, stormed the palace of the Podestà and the communal treasury, the Camera del Comune, where “they took the books containing the names of bandits, rebels, and convicted criminals and burned them all.”⁶⁶ On the night of Sunday 27 July, the troops that had been summoned to the city by the plotters began to arrive, including three hundred knights and four hundred crossbowmen from Siena, two thousand footsoldiers from San Miniato and Prato, and four hundred soldiers led by the Count Simone Battifolle and his nephew Guido. Five hundred knights were dispatched from Ghibelline Pisa, but when this was discovered, vociferous complaints were heard against the magnates who had called them (*grande mormorio contro a que’ grandi a ccui richiesta venivano*) and they were sent back.

According to a later account of the chronicler Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, the Duke, still shut inside the palace, called upon his priors for advice:

They counseled him to release all those he had arrested right away, and he wanted to make Antonio di Baldinaccio [Adimari] a knight... Having exited to the outside, [Antonio] and the other prisoners went to their houses. Believing it would pacify the people, the Duke hung the banners of the People and of the Commune on top of the tower. But this was not enough for the people, who barricaded the piazza on every side and kept it well guarded, so that no one could enter or leave the palace.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Ibid., “...e poi ruppono la camera del Comune, e di quella tratti tutti i libri ov'erano scritti gli sbanditi e rubelli e condannati, e arsi tutti...” Paoli, *Della signoria*, document 371, 149, shows that funds to rebuild the Camera del Comune were dispensed in March of 1344.

⁶⁷ STEFANI, rubr. 579, 206: “Li quali lo consigliarono che subito lasciasse tutti i presi, onde volle fare cavaliere Antonio di Baldinaccio... Ed uscito di fuori egli e gli altri pregioni se n'andarono alle lor case. E così il Duca credendo rappacificare il

While the Duke and his men were barricaded within the palace, where they would stay until finally surrendering on 3 August and leaving Florence three days later, the bishop Agnolo Acciaiuoli called a great council (*parlamento*) and created an *ad hoc* plenipotentiary commission (*balìa*) of fourteen men (seven magnates and seven *popolani*) to reshape the government: Rodolfo Bardi, Pino Rossi, Sandro di Cenni Biliotti, messer Giannozzo Cavalcanti, messer Simone Peruzzi, Filippo Magalotti, messer Giovanni Gianfigliuzzi, Bindo di messer Ottone Altoviti, messer Testa Tornaquinci, Marco Strozzi, messer Francesco de' Medici, Bindo di messer Biligiardo della Tosa, messer Talano Adimari, and Bartolo Ricci,⁶⁸ one of whom (Pino Rossi) had been named by Villani as a conspirator, half of whom came from families implicated in those plots, and all of whom were magnates or came from the narrow elite of families accustomed to ruling Florence. In his account of the year 1343, another chronicler, Simone della Tosa, begins by explaining that “the *grandi* of Florence reached an agreement with the *popolo grasso*, making certain pacts before the revolt on 26 July about how Florence would be ruled [*patti di reggimento*].”⁶⁹ Under the bishop’s guidance, the *balìa* (and then a second,

popolo, misse le bandiere del Popolo e comune in sulla torre. Questo non bastò al popolo, ma asserragliata la piazza d’ogni parte, e fatte buone guardie, che niuno non entrasse, nè uscisse di palagio.”

⁶⁸ An official list is transcribed in Paoli, *Della signoria*, document 316, 126: “dominus Rodulfus de Bardis; dominus Pinus de Rubeis; Sander Cennis Biliocti. □ dominus Giannoczus de Cavalcantibus; dominus Symon de Peruzzis; Philippus de Magalottis; □ dominus Iohannes de Gianfigliuzzis; Bindus domini Oddonis de Altovitis; □ dominus Testa de Tornaquincis; Marchus de Strozzis; □ dominus Franciscus de Medicis; Bindus domini Biligiardi de la Tosa; □ dominus Talanus de Adimaribus; dominus Bartholus de Ritiis.”

⁶⁹ *Annali di Simone della Tosa*, 239: “i grandi di Firenze s’accordarono col popolo grosso con ordine posto intra loro, di certi patti di reggimento di Firenze, il quale poi non fu bene attenuto per li popolani.”

larger one that subsumed the first) brought into existence a short-lived oligarchic and magnate-friendly regime in which the Ordinances of Justice were abolished and the priorate expanded to twelve men (four of whom were magnates).⁷⁰ It would not be at all surprising if, in secret discussions before the revolt, in which conspirators from different plots joined together, the outline of these electoral and political reforms had already been hammered out. Simone della Tosa, himself a prominent magnate, also noted of this agreement, however, that “it was not well-kept by the *popolani*,” and, indeed, on 22 September popular forces expelled the magnate priors from the palace of the priors and re-made the government. And already, within a year, at least one of the men who had plotted against the Duke would plot against the new popular government.

The story of the 1343 plots against the Duke of Athens, as told by the chronicler Giovanni Villani, provides a rough yet succinct template for the conspiracies of the fourteenth-century: the party or faction of elite Florentines hoping to claim the *stato* for themselves, the swearing of oaths, the request for foreign troops and assistance, the outbreak of armed violence (the *romore*), often scheduled for a special feast day; the burning of buildings, the use of banners and political slogans, the seizure of a government palace, and, finally, the creation of a *balìa* or commission to remake the government in favor of the plotters and legitimate their conspiratorial activities as a revolution. In the thirty-five years between the summers of 1343 and 1378, however, no other plot would reach this last stage. Again, in this respect, the events of 1343

⁷⁰ Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*, 130-2.

provide a template, this time for how Florentine conspiracies came to be foiled: the conspirator who tells the wrong person of his involvement, the arrest and torture of named participants, the ultimate disclosure of the full extent of the plot, and the dispatching of armed guards to quell any disturbance. The extent to which plots were investigated and the ferocity with which they were repressed varied, with some regimes being unwilling to execute conspirators or even to fully investigate their plots, and others willing to go to bloody, if perhaps necessary, extremes. Whatever the strategies employed by the regimes in power, however mild or harsh, the history of conspiracy between 1343 and 1378 is the history of a political practice seemingly doomed to failure.

The Corso Donati Plot of 1344

In the history of early fourteenth-century factionalism in Florence, there is undoubtedly no figure more notorious than Corso Donati, whom the chronicler Dino Compagni described as “a knight resembling the Roman Catiline, but more cruel... with a spirit always dedicated to wrongdoing”⁷¹ and whose eternal punishment Dante prophesied in the voice of Corso’s brother Forese: “I see the one who is most at fault being dragged by a beast to a

⁷¹ *La cronica delle cose occorrenti ne’ tempi suoi*, ed. Isidoro del Lungo (Florence: Le Monnier, 1908), ii.20, 100: “Uno cavaliere della somiglianza di Catellina romano, ma più crudele! ...con l’animo sempre intento a malfare...”; on the image of Catiline in the Florentine context, see Patricia J. Osmond’s fascinating article, “Catiline in Fiesole and Florence: The After-Life of a Roman Conspirator,” *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 7 (2000): 3-38.

valley where no one is pardoned.”⁷² Not surprisingly, Corso’s death in October of 1308 immediately followed his condemnation as a traitor and rebel for having plotted and made an alliance (*fatta lega e giura*), with his father-in-law, the Ghibelline mercenary captain or *condottiere* Uguccione della Faggiuola, to “betray the *popolo*, and overthrow the government of the city [*tradire il popolo, sovvertire e sommettere lo stato della cittade*].”⁷³ And in the case of Corso’s grandson and namesake, Corso di Amerigo di Corso Donati, the proverbial fruit did not fall far from the tree. As we have already seen, Corso was, with his relative messer Manno, leader of the second “sect and conspiracy” formed to murder the Duke, and he played an active role in the events of 26 July. Less than one year later, in the spring of 1344, Corso, like his grandfather, would be condemned for a plot to overthrow the government of Florence with foreign assistance.

The chronicles of Giovanni Villani and Stefani are, in this case, short on details. “Corso di messer Amerigo di messer Corso Donati was condemned in contumacy in his person and property,” says Villani, “for some letters that were found, which he was exchanging with certain Lombard tyrants, with whom he was engaged in a conspiracy [*trattato*] against the people [*popolo*] of Florence.”⁷⁴ To this, Stefani adds only two details, that Corso’s house was

⁷² *Purgatorio*, 24, ll. 82-4: “...che quei che più n’ ha colpa / Vegg’ io a coda d’una bestia tratto / in ver la valle ove mai non si scolpa.”

⁷³ GIOVANNI VILLANI, ix, 96, *Come fu morto il nobile e grande cittadino di Firenze messer Corso de’ Donati*.

⁷⁴ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.32, *Di certe novità state in Firenze in questi tempi*: “Ancora nel detto tempo fu condannato Corso di meser Amerigo di meser Corso Donati nell’avere e nella persona per contumace, per certe lettere che furono trovate, che mandava ed erano mandate a lui da certi tiranni di Lombardia, con cui tenea

searched to find the letters, and that the Lombard tyrant was Luchino Visconti,⁷⁵ the *condottiere* and lord of Milan, whose armies were then in the nearby Lunigiana, a strategic region to the northwest of Lucca, skirmishing with those of his one-time ally Pisa. The sentence against Corso of the Capitano, messer Paoluccio da Calboli of Forlì,⁷⁶ a famous knight and *condottiere* from a family that had long provided Florence with rectors, states that “in writing and receiving the letters, he conspired and plotted with enemies and adversaries” of Florence,⁷⁷ but the list of named enemies does not include Luchino Visconti or any of the tyrants of Lombardy; they were instead adversaries closer to home: the brothers Guido, Bustaccio, and Francesco di Biordo Ubertini, along with three of their sons, the Count Bandino di Uberto of Romena, and Trenta di Ficazzaio of the Pazzi family of the Valdarno.⁷⁸ In the

alcuno trattato contro al popolo di Firenze...”

⁷⁵ STEFANI, rubr. 605, 220: “...trattato co’ tiranni di Lombardia, cioè con messer Luchino Visconti... la casa fu cerca, e trovarsi le lettere che davano colore alla materia.”

⁷⁶ For some of Paoluccio’s exploits, see Leone Cobelli, *Cronache forlivesi dalla fondazione della città sino all’anno 1498*, eds. Giosuè Carducci and Enrico Frati (Bologna: Regia Tipografia, 1874), 104 and 419. One may also find biographical sketches for him, his father (Fulceri), and son (Francesco), on Roberto Damiani’s impressive website www.condottieridiventura.it, *note biografiche* 0328-0330.

⁷⁷ The sentence “contra Corsum domini Almerighi Donati de Florencia de populo Sancti Petri maioris de Florencia magnatem et potentem et de domo magnatum et potentum civitatis Florencia” is located in ASF, *Capitano*, 11, f. 1r: “...et sic rescribendo et literas recipiendo tractavit et tractatum habuit cum predictis inimicis et emulis dicte civitatis...”; see also f. 73r, for the condemnation of a Siense conspirator named Alberto who assisted Corso.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*: “Guidonem, Bustacium, [et] Francischum, fratres et filios Biordi de Ubertinis... Nicolaum filium dicti Guidonis, Gualterium filium dicti Bustaccii, Bustacinum filium dicti Francisschi, Bandinum Uberti comitem de Romena, Trentam olim Figazaie de Paçis vallis Arni...”

months following the Bardi-Frescobaldi plot of 1340, some of these families had conspired along with the Visconti and other Ghibellines against Florence, but their resistance to Florentine supremacy and their alliances with Florentine magnates and, earlier, Ghibellines, is part of a longer story.

Before merging with the Sieve river and flowing west to Florence, the Arno forms a large loop made up of three distinct regions: the Casentino, the plain of Arezzo (*la piana di Arezzo*), and the upper Arno valley (*il Valdarno superiore*). Throughout the thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries, dominant clans in these regions had regularly challenged the power of Florence, which was always pressing to extend and expand its territorial dominion; and, among these clans, the Counts Guidi, of which the Counts of Romena were a branch, the Ubertini of Arezzo, and the Pazzi of the Valdarno were the most prominent.⁷⁹ Below is a map of the Arno river valley east of Empoli. It is impossible here even to adumbrate the history of this resistance against

⁷⁹ The literature on these regions and families is vast, particularly on the Conti Guidi and the Casentino. On the early history of that region and family, see Chris J. Wickham, *The Mountains and the City: The Tuscan Apennines in the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 151-344; Currado Curradi, "I conti Guidi nel secolo X," *Studi romagnoli* 28 (1977): 17-64; and Natale Rauty, *Documenti per la storia dei conti Guidi in Toscana. Le origini e i primi secoli, 887-1164* (Florence: Olschki, 2003). By the mid-eleventh century, the Guidi controlled Romena, Castel Castagnaio, Porciano, Papiano, Stia, Lonnano, Battifolle, Poppi, Buiano, and other towns. On the later history, one may consult Giovanna Benadusi, *A Provincial Elite in Early Modern Tuscany: Family and Power in the Creation of the State* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), especially 14-16, but *passim*; and Marco Bicchierai, *Ai confini della repubblica di Firenze. Poppi dalla signoria dei conti Guidi al vicariato del Casentino (1360-1480)* (Florence: Olschki, 2005). On the Valdarno, see the essays in *Lontano dalle città: il Valdarno di sopra nei secoli XII-XIII. Atti del convegno di Monteverchi-Figline Valdarno (9-11 novembre 2001)*, eds. Giuliano Pinto and Paolo Pirillo (Florence: Viella, 2005). On the reach of the Ubertini, see Giovanni Cherubini, "La signoria degli Ubertini sui comuni rurali casentinesi di Chitignano, Rosina e Taena all'inizio del Quattrocento," *Archivio storico italiano* 126 (1968):151-169.

Florentine power, but three elements of it are crucial. First, Florentine policy in the region was often explicitly directed against them. When, in March of 1337, for example, the *condottiere* Pier Saccone Tarlati sold Arezzo to Florence for just under fifty thousand florins, the official act of submission required the Aretines to forbid any members of the Ubertini or Valdarno Pazzi from entering or residing in the city.⁸⁰ Second, these families were, to a large extent, interrelated by blood and marriage and politically allied.

It is telling, given Corso Donati's fellow conspirators, that, for example, when Count Aghinolfo di Guido of Romena made his testament in 1338, Trenta Pazzi was present as a witness.⁸¹ And, third, these families were often tied by similar bonds to Florentine magnates. For example, Dino Compagni notes in his chronicle that Corso's infamous grandfather and namesake had married the daughter of Accirrito da Gaville, who was himself one of the Ubertini of the Valdarno superiore, but Dino appears to have been in error as he actually married Tessa, the daughter of Ubertino degli Ubertini.⁸²

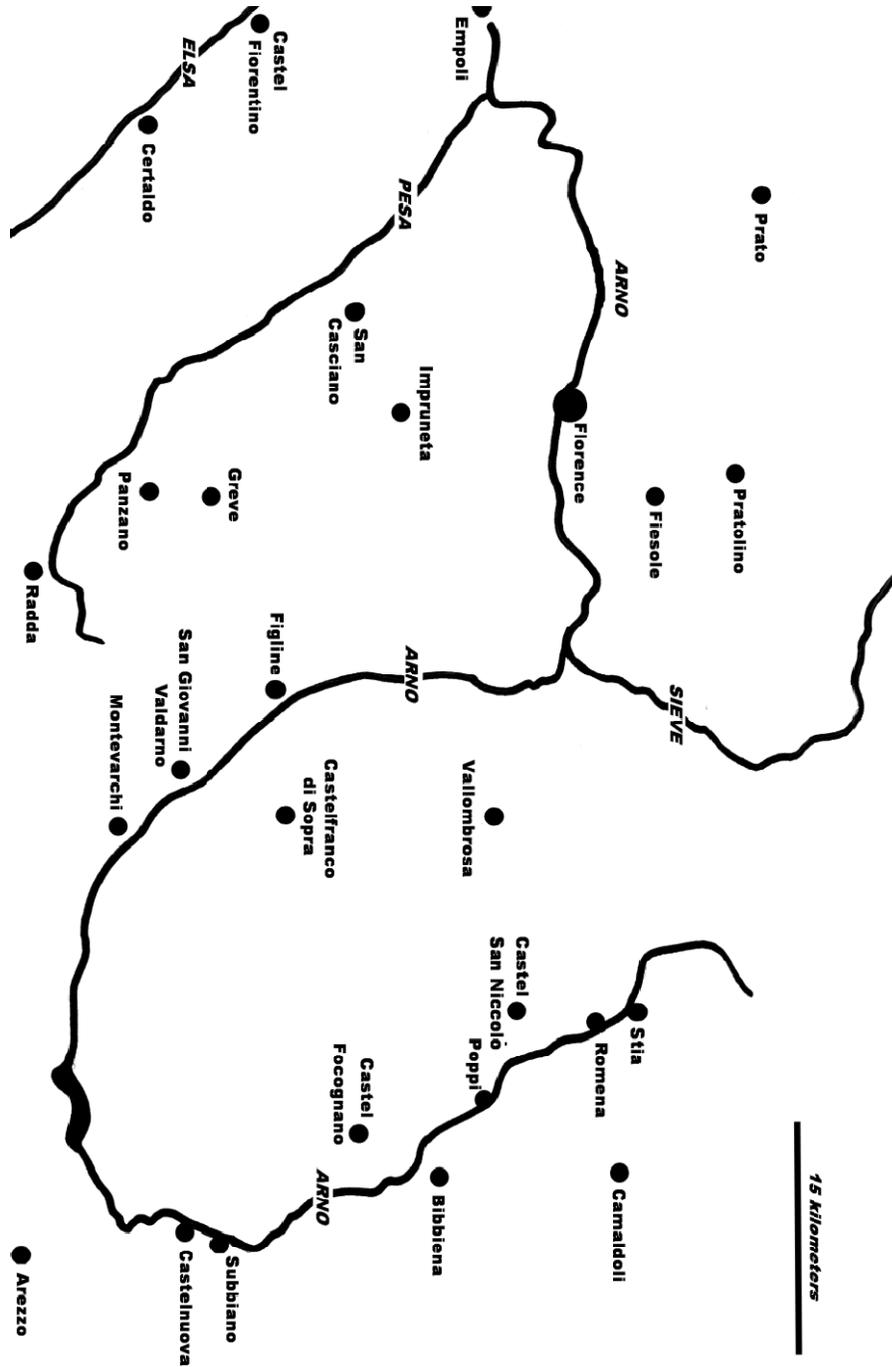
⁸⁰ The "Submissio civitatis aretii anno millesimo trecentesimo trigesimo sexto, indictione v, die septimo mense martii," [7 March 1336[7]], is printed in *Annales Arretinorum maiores et minores*, eds. Arturo Bini and Giovanni Grazzini (Città di Castello: Lapi, 1902), 51-60; see the article on 53: "Item quod pro pacifico et tranquillo statu civitatis Aretii et ad omne scandalum evitandum, nullus de domo Ubertinorum nec de domo de Pacis vallis Arni... nec eorum vel alicuius eorum filii et descendentes per lineam masculinam possint venire, habitare, stare vel morari in civitate, comitatu et districtu Aretii, per totum dictum tempus decem annorum, nec prope dictum comitatum et districtum Aretii, per decem millaria."

⁸¹ The testament is transcribed in *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, ed. Ildelfonso di San Luigi, volume 8 (Florence: Cambiagi, 1777), appendix to the second volume of Stefani's *Istoria fiorentina*, 116-121, quotation at 121: "...presentibus nobiles viris... Trenta quondam nobilis viri Figazzai de Pazzis Vallis Arni..."

⁸² *La cronica*, i.20, 84; for Accirrito as an Ubertini, see Paul Scheffer-Boichorst, *Florentiner Studien* (Leipzig: Herzl, 1874), 126-7; on the correct name, see Davidsohn, *Forschungen*, iv, 259-60.

ILLUSTRATION II

Map of the Arno River Valley east of Empoli circa 1340



Samuel Cohn has recently argued that the Florentine “state” was created in the early fifteenth century by negotiating with rebellious and largely-autonomous mountain peasants,⁸³ but it is clear that in the mid-1340s the same kind of revolts were being orchestrated and led by members of these powerful families who had large peasant followings or clientele, just as many Florentine magnates had retainers throughout the *contado* and Arno valley. In December of 1344, for example, the Ubertini attempted to reclaim their ancestral castle at Cennina (near Montevarchi, see map above), bringing with them a large contingent of peasants.⁸⁴ It is not clear exactly what relationship Corso di Amerigo Donati had with these rebellious Tuscan lords and their peasant clientele, or what relationship, if any, they had with Luchino Visconti in 1343, but it is clear that Corso’s plot may fruitfully be viewed in two parallel contexts—the repeated attempts of the Florentine magnates to regain their political dominance and break the *popolo*, as well as the widespread feudal resistance—and, in this way, Corso’s plot is remarkably similar to the Bardi-Frescobaldi efforts in the earliest years of the decade. Remarkably, as we will see, magnate disaffection and hopes to end popular government in Florence would persist even as the factional lines in the city began to be redrawn between the dueling Ricci and Albizzi factions.

⁸³ Samuel K. Cohn, *Creating the Florentine State: Peasants and Rebellion, 1348-1434* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For the crux of his argument, see especially chapter 9, “What the Peasants Won,” 244-268.

⁸⁴ ASF, *Podestà*, 116, f. 18rv.

Corso Donati's plot was likely the most serious plot against the popular government that was instituted in 1343 and would ultimately crumble in 1347-8, but the entire period was one of seemingly smaller-scale conspiratorial tensions within the city and outside of it. Late in November of 1343, little more than two months after the expulsion of the magnate priors and the creation of the popular regime, the Podestà fined the magnate Tommaso di Riccardo de' Bardi one hundred florins for a conversation he had had in the shop of a tailor named Bartolo di Lapo. According to the sentence, Tommaso boasted to Bartolo, "I'm telling you, the *popolani grassi* want to get rid of the men of the *Popolo* [*populares minores*] who are now in charge in Florence and the *grassi* have already asked many magnates to help them trample and crush the lesser *popolani*, and one day soon, when the *Popolo* doesn't see it coming, it'll really be check mate!"⁸⁵ The Podestà's sentence declares that these words "were not and are not true," but notes that the words themselves, spoken to create "strife and trouble," were capable "of disturbing the peaceful and tranquil government [*turbare statum pacifichum et tranquillum*]" of the city. Such scandalous words were not, at the time, uncommon. In another sentence from 1346, for example, a furrier (*pelliparium*) named Brunaccio Sulli was speaking to one Iacopo di messer Spina (called variously "Tengna" and "Tengha" in the record) and said something likely to cause trouble and conflict (*scandalum et*

⁸⁵ Transcribed in Niccolò Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, document 18, 107-08: "...infrascripta verba acta ad inducendam zizaniam et scandalum in dicta civitate Florentie, et firmiter tibi dico quod populares grassi dicte civitatis Florentie volunt deponere populares minores modo regentes in dicta civitate et iam dicti populares grassi requisierunt plures magnates dicte civitatis ad hoc ut sint cum eis ad conculcandum et deprimendum dictos populares minores, quod si dicti populares minores sibi non providebunt una die cito firmiter habebunt scaccho macto, que verba dicta per dictum Thomassum non fuerunt et nec sunt vera..."

divisio): “that the magnates, the popolani grassi, and bankrupt persons ought to start a riot, using this slogan, ‘death to the Ghibellines and *viva il popolo* and the guilds!’”⁸⁶ Both of these statements (and others like them in the criminal records) speak to the possibility of larger plots against the government, but such conspiracies did not materialize. Nonetheless, unrest did occur. On 26 June 1347, for example, Lotto di Giovanni da Sassoferrato, the Capitano del Popolo of Florence, condemned a certain Monte di Lippo of the parish of Santa Lucia in Ognissanti who, the sentence reads,

shouted in the garden of the church of San Michele against the Lords priors of the People and Commune of Florence, and, running, came to the piazza of the priors with a very great multitude of men, both citizens of Florence and foreigners, crying out and shouting against the priors; and in the piazza he cried out and exclaimed in this way, “To the ground! To the ground! From the windows! Thrown them down!” As a result, great masses of people came together in the piazza of the Priors, and riot and tumult and trouble and strife arose in the city of Florence, and because of these things, the good and peaceful and tranquil government of the city of Florence and its *contado* and *distretto* was able to be disturbed and was disturbed.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ The words are recorded in the sentence “contra Brunaccium Sulli pelliparium de populo Sancti Remoli” and others, in ASF, *Capitano*, 42, 11r: “debet fieri rumor per magnates, populares grossos, et per fallitos sub hoc colore et nomine, vz., moghano i ghibellini et viva ‘l popolo et l’arti.”

⁸⁷ The sentence “contra Montem Lippi populi Sancte Lucie omnium sanctorum de Florentia” is in ASF, *Capitano*, 48, f.31rv: “...exclamavit in orto sancti michelis contra dominos priores populi et communis Florentie, et currendo venit ad plateam dominorum priorum cum maxima multitudine hominum civium et forensium gridando et exclamando contra predictos dominos priores et in ipsa platea gridavit et exclamavit hoc modo videlicet ad terra ad terra, dale fenestre bulliatelgiusu bulliatelgiusu [*a terra, a terra, dalle finestre, Buttateli giù su*] propter que infinite gentes trasserunt ad plateam predictorum dominorum priorum et rumor et tumultus, scandalum et divisio orti fuerunt in civitate florentie et propter que omnia et singula bonus, pacificus, et tranquillus status civitatis Florentie eiusque comitatus et districtus turbari potuisset et turbatus fuit...” Monte’s accomplices and followers, “eiusque complices et seguaces,” are not named. Monte brought with him both *cives* and

The reasons for Monte's angry denunciation of the priors are unclear, but his ability to attract a large crowd of men attests to an environment of widespread political unrest. This environment of unrest was largely eliminated after the fall of the popular government, which ushered in a twelve-year calm before the next major conspiracy against the government, which would prove to be the only serious elite plot between the 1340s and 1370s.⁸⁸

The Ricci-Magnate Plot of December 1360

By the mid-1350s the tumultuous relationship between Guelf Florence, which produced vast quantities of goods for export, and Ghibelline Pisa, which controlled the great seaport where the Arno emptied into the Ligurian Sea, had already twice erupted into full-scale war, first in 1315-16 and then (as discussed above) in 1340-42—the latter conflict ending, in the words of Giovanni Villani (xiii.25), with a fake peace and lingering ill-will (*la infinta pace co' Pisani rimanendo la mala volontà*). In June of 1356, under the influence of a popular party calling themselves the Raspanti, the Pisans violated the fragile peace by imposing a two-*denarii*-per-pound impost on all Florentine goods

forenses, citizens and likely men of the *contado*, where unrest was common at this time; for another example of men from the *contado* causing trouble in the city, see the sentence contra "Ser Johannem ser Lapi de artimino comitatus florentie" in ASF, *Esecutore*, 17, 17rv.

⁸⁸ I do not, in this thesis, discuss the well-known conspiracy undertaken by two men from Prato to turn their city over to the papacy in 1375, described in Alessandro Gherardi's masterful article, "Di un trattato per far ribellare al comune di Firenze la terra di Prato, nell'anno 1375," *Archivio storico italiano*, iii, 10 (1869): 3-26, which precipitated the war against the papacy.

passing through the port, to which the Florentines quickly responded by reaching an agreement with the Siense to use Talamone, a small port-city on the coast of the Maremma, as an alternative.⁸⁹ By early November, the Florentines had left the Porto Pisano; but the move proved, to some extent, a double-edged sword: harming the Pisan economy and inciting political unrest there, but also damaging the all-important Florentine wool industry,⁹⁰ and possibly contributing to a general decline in the Florentine economy between 1358-1360.⁹¹ Early in 1360, word reached Florence of a plot resulting directly from the move to Talamone; “the guildsmen of the city of Pisa, and especially those of the minor guilds,” Matteo Villani explains,

⁸⁹ Luciano Banchi, “I porti della Maremma Senese durante la Repubblica,” *Archivio storico italiano*, 3rd series, nn. 55-56, 58-60 (1869-70): 58-84, 79-91, 73-106, 92-105, 39-129; especially chapters 4 and 5, at n. 58 (1870): 73-106, with the treaty of 1356 transcribed at n. 60 (1870): 74-87. These events are also described very briefly in Charles C. Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: The De militia of Leonardo Bruni* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 26. Even after the subsequent war with Pisa (1362-4) had ended, Florentines continued to use Talamone and Florentine commercial use of Porto Pisano did not return to pre-1357 conditions until 1369; on the conclusion of that conflict, see Dante Catellacci, “La pace tra Firenze e Pisa nel 1364,” *Archivio storico italiano*, 5th series, n. 167 (1888): 145-165, with the transcribed pacts beginning at page 148 and containing no mention of the port.

⁹⁰ Larger and more secure, Porto Pisano was naturally superior to Talamone as a port for Florentine merchants, for reasons discussed in Marco Tangheroni, *Politica, commercio, agricoltura a Pisa nel Trecento* (Pisa: Pacini, 1973), chapter 5. On Siena’s largely-failed efforts to transform Talamone into a major and fully-capable port in the fourteenth century, see William M. Bowsky, *The Finance of the Commune of Siena, 1287-1355* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 23-5. The impact of the move to Talamone on the Florentine wool industry is discussed in Hidetoshi Hoshino, *L’arte della lana in Firenze nel basso Medioevo: il commercio della lana e il mercato dei panni fiorentini nei secoli XIII-XV* (Florence: Olschki, 1980), 163-4.

⁹¹ Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 15, has noted that there were twelve bankruptcy commissions initiated in those two years, compared to seven in the preceding nine years (1349-57) and only two in the following five years (1361-5), as evidence that this was a recessionary period.

seeing a loss of income due to the Florentines' decision to prohibit the export of goods through their port, were mumbling, grumbling, and speaking ill of them. When these complaints did not go away, many of them very secretly swore oaths together [*si giurarono insieme molto occultamente*] and decided among themselves that on 3 April, which was Good Friday, they would kill many of the most important men [*maggioventi*] in the city's government, wherever they could be found either together or apart.⁹²

This plot, aimed ultimately at a regime change in order to come to terms with the Florentines over the port controversy (*riformare la terra, e pacificare co' Fiorentini, per riavere il porto*), included, in addition to the lower guildsmen, "some religious, both priests and other clerics" [*religiosi alquanti, e preti, e altri cherici assai*]," one of whom was arrested after being spied upon cursing and speaking obscenely (*sconciamente*) with other lay conspirators (*secolari della congiura*) about the plan. The disgraceful priest's confession led to the arrest by Pisan officials of four priests, seven friars, and one hundred minor guildsmen (*cento artefici d'arti minute*), and to the discovery of a wider plot that was quickly and cruelly suppressed with the hanging of twelve of the chief conspirators. But "this political unrest [*novità*]," Villani concluded, "troubled and impoverished the city greatly by destroying the regime of the faction which was then ruling; and there was still great rivalry in the city and the *popolo minuto*

⁹² MATTEO VILLANI, IX.78, "Gli artefici della città di Pisa, e massimamente quelli dell'arte minuta, vedendo loro mancare i guadagni per la partita de' Fiorentini, i quali il loro porto teneano in divieto, se ne doleano, e mormoravano e parlavano male; e perseverando nelle querele, una quantità di loro si giurarono insieme molto occultamente, e presono ordine tra loro, per il quale il venerdì santo, a dì 3 d'aprile, doveano uccidere gran parte de' loro maggioventi ch'erano al governo della città dove e come trovar gli potessono insieme o divisi..."

remained unhappy and in a worse condition.”⁹³ In many respects the contours of this Pisan plot, as described by Matteo Villani, follow the same pattern as the plots in *Trecento* Florence—secret meetings and oaths, the planned outbreak of violence on a holy day, even the involvement of clergy; but, in its scope and in the viciousness of its repression, the Pisan was greater than any such plot at Florence until December of 1379. More representative of Florentine plots in this era was the conspiracy uncovered in December of 1360, eight months after the bloodshed in Pisa, and also possibly causally linked to the closure of the Pisan port.

Just as wool manufacturers were suffering on account of their city’s foreign policy decisions, magnates and members of the Ricci faction found themselves in a precarious political situation on account of the vicissitudes of Florentine internal affairs. The year 1355, in which the emperor Charles IV entered Italy to be crowned in Milan and then Rome, saw in Florence a renewed debate about the political status of magnates that resulted, against sometimes fervent opposition in the councils, in legislation that loosened restrictions on magnate office-holding and abolished the use of the *tamburo*, a box in which magnates could be secretly denounced to the Esecutore for crimes and offenses against *popolani*.⁹⁴ On 12 September 1360 this measure was overturned, and the *tamburo* was re-instated. This revival of secret denunciations followed the creation, in 1358-9, of *ammonizione*, a method of

⁹³ Ibid., “Questa novità molto conturbò e impoverì la città con guasto dello stato della setta che allora reggea, la quale ne rimase in grande gelosia, e il popolo minuto malcontento e peggio disposto.”

⁹⁴ See, for example, the debate in ASF, *CP*, 1, f. 148rv, about magnate office-holding; and for the measure eliminating *tamburazioni*, see ASF, *PR*, 41, 137v-138r. MATTEO VILLANI describes the emperor’s journey to Rome in IV.92 and V.2.

proscription employed by the Parte Guelfa to declare their enemies Ghibellines and thus exclude them from office-holding without trial.⁹⁵ Both techniques of political warfare were associated at that time with the ascendancy of the Albizzi faction over that of the Ricci,⁹⁶ who were then interested in reaching out to magnates for political support, as well as with the Albizzi faction's alliance with the oligarchic leadership of the Parte Guelfa, an alliance that truly ruptured only in January of 1373, when the Guelf extremist and oligarch Migliore Guadagni brought about the 10-year exclusion of both the Ricci and Albizzi from office-holding, and that healed itself to some extent during the war against the papacy (1375-8).⁹⁷

In December of 1360, the Podestà of Florence repressed a plot to overthrow the government with the help of several foreign lords. The official list⁹⁸ of conspirators included twelve men—of these, a full half were from

⁹⁵ For the renewed *tamburo*, see ASF, *PR*, 48, ff. 32rv; for the measures which created *ammonizione*, see chapter 2 at page 95-6. The practice of *ammonizione* in the early 1360s is best discussed in Gene Brucker's classic article, "The Ghibelline Trial of Matteo Villani (1362)," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 13 (1960): 48-55.

⁹⁶ This is clear, for *ammonizione*, in the *pratiche* of January-February 1360, with notable Albizzi partisans like Bindo Strozzi favoring it and Ricci partisans like Filippo Capponi opposing; see ASF, *CP*, 2, 159v-161v.

⁹⁷ On Guadagni's role, see STEFANI, rubr. 733; for the legislation, ASF, *PR*, 60, 143r-144v.

⁹⁸ ASF, *Podestà*, 1525, f. 57-58r contains the sentence, pronounced by the Umbrian rector dominus Lodovicus Juvenalis domini Cardoli de Narnia, against "Nicholaum Bartholi Boni quarterii Sancti Spiritus, Dominichum Donati Bandini populi Sancti Fridiani, dominum Pinum domini Johannis de Rubeis, Ubertum Ubaldini Infangati populi sancte Cecilie, Beltramum Bartholomei de Pacçiiis, Andream Thelli populi Sancti Jacobi, Niccholaum Guidi Samontane de Freschobaldis, Andream Pacchi de Adimariis, Pacçinum domini Aparadi de Donatis, Pelliciam Bindi Sassi de Gerardinis, Lucham Fey populi Sancti felicis inpacça [sic] et fratrem Christo[xpo]farum Nuccii de Florentia, solitum morari in Palatio dominorum Priorum Populi civitatis Florentie" (at 57r). Pellicia Gherardini would be later pardoned in ASF, *PR*, 56, 161r. It

magnate clans (messer Pino di messer Giovanni Rossi, Beltramo di Bartolomeo Pazzi, Niccolò di Guido da Sammontana Frescobaldi, Andrea di Pacchio Adimari, Pazzino di messer Apardo Donati, and Pelliccia di Bindo di Sasso Gherardini), while a third of them had been declared Ghibellines, two through the use of *ammonizione* in 1358 (Niccolò di Bartolo del Buono and Domenico di Donato Bandini) and two in earlier trials (Uberto di Ubaldino Infangati and Andrea di Tello Lischi);⁹⁹ and three of them (Luca di Feo Ugolini, who had just served as prior in May-June, and the already named Andrea Lischi and Niccolò del Buono) were wool manufacturers.¹⁰⁰ The twelfth plotter was the friar Christoforo di Nuccio who regularly stayed in the priors' palace with other religious and thus, from his position of trust, had access to the keys. To the official list, chroniclers like Villani and Stefani added several other men, including the reputed ringleader Bartolomeo di messer Alamanno de' Medici, and two other men from ancient families that had recently been victimized by the Parte Guelfa: Attaviano di Tuccio Brunelleschi and Tommaso Adimari, who had himself been proscribed in 1359.¹⁰¹

is interesting to note here that at least two of these plotters, Niccolò del Buono and Pino Rossi, were close friends of Boccaccio, who dedicated his *Commedia delle ninfe fiorentine* to the former and sent a letter of consolation (on his unjust "exile") to the latter in 1361; for the letter, see Francesco Corazzini, ed., *Le lettere edite e inedite di messer Giovanni Boccaccio* (Florence: Sansoni, 1877), 67-97.

⁹⁹ See STEFANI rubr. 678 and 681 for the *ammoniti* of 1358-9; and the documentary appendix to volume 8 of Stefani's *Istoria fiorentina* in *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, vol. 13, ed. Ildefonso di San Luigi (Florence: Cambiagi, 1780) for the 1347 Ghibelline trials.

¹⁰⁰ This was discovered by Brucker in his investigation of the plot in *Florentine Politics*, 147, n. 148, where he cites records of the Arte della Lana. Brucker, following Villani, calls one of the men Andrea dell'Ischia, but I believe Andrea di Tello came from the "famiglia di ghibellini, chiamati Lischi"; STEFANI rubr. 718, 273, and this is supported by the Podestà's sentence.

The Podestà's sentence declared that these "sons of iniquity plotted, conspired, and made a plot, a deliberation, a conspiracy, and an illicit alliance" with "the spirit and intention of overthrowing, disturbing, and removing the peaceful government and replacing it with another."¹⁰² And their daring, if ill-conceived plan called for them "forcefully, violently, and with weapons in hand, a group of foreign foot-soldiers with them, to invade, seize, and occupy during the night the palace of the People and the residences of the Lords Priors of the People of the city of Florence, and, having taken the palace, to seize and take over the city by means of a revolt and thereby to completely overthrow the current, peaceful government of the city."¹⁰³ In seizing the palace, they hoped to be aided by the friar Christoforo, who would turn over the keys to the plotters at the right time. And, if successful in taking control of the city, these men intended to govern Florence with a new constitution (*novis modis*), under which the number of priors would be increased to twelve and the Ordinances of Justice would be abolished. The Podestà sentenced all of the condemned

¹⁰¹ Although Bartolomeo de' Medici was not officially condemned, his participation seems to have followed him well after the plot; for example, Franco Sacchetti in *novella* 180 relates, "Ed è vero che poco tempo innanzi del MCCCLX era stato un trattato in Firenze di molti cittadini, e furono due dicapitati; il qual trattato nell'effetto era di cacciare alcune famiglie; e in questo fu Bartolommeo di messer Alamanno de' Medici; e ancora tra' Medici e gli Ubaldini non fu mai né pace né buona volontà"; in *Trecentonovelle*, ed. Antonio Lanza (Florence: Sansoni, 1984), 405.

¹⁰² ASF, *Podestà*, 1525, 57r: "animo et intentione dictum pacifichum statum subvertendi turbandi et removendi et ipsum statum in alium conmutandi... iniquitatis filii tractaverunt conspiraverunt tractatum ratiocinium et conspirationem et confederationem fecerunt".

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 57v: "Per vim et violentiam et manu armata cum aliqua forensium peditum conmitiva noctis tempore invadere capere et occupare palatium populi et residencias dominorum priorum populi dicte civitatis et dicto palatio prehabito ipsam civitatem capere et occupare ad rumorem ita et taliter [quod] ipse presens pacificus status civitatis predicte firmiter mutaretur."

to death, to have their property confiscated, and to have their images painted on the walls of his palace to publicize their infamy; but only two, Niccolò del Buono and Domenico Bandini, were actually beheaded, while the rest were declared rebels, placed under the ban, and forced to leave Florence.¹⁰⁴

In his description of the plot (x.24-5), Matteo Villani claims that these two *ammoniti*, in looking for ways to achieve their conspiratorial ends, had discovered that Uberto Infangati, a “greedy and seditious man [*uomo cupido e vago di novitadi*] ,” had already discussed a possible plot with Bernarduolo Rozzo, the Milanese secretary (*cameriero*) of Giovanni da Oleggio, then the beleaguered ruler of Bologna, a plot interrupted only when, under assault from Bernabò Visconti, Giovanni surrendered the city to cardinal and papal legate Gil Albornoz.¹⁰⁵ With Giovanni out of the way, Bernarduolo offered the plot first to Albornoz, who refused to participate and ultimately revealed its existence to the Florentine ambassador, and then to Bernabò Visconti himself, who showed interest. Villani also reveals two fascinating details about the plot’s exposure and repression. First, Bartolommeo de’ Medici, concerned that the plot could not remain secret, confessed to his brother Salvestro, who promptly revealed it to the priors in order to “save his brother from danger and infamy

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 58r; the practice of painting defaming portraits of criminals in public, which likely began in thirteenth-century Bologna, was often used in central Italy in cases of treason; on the practice, see Gherardo Ortalli, “... *pingatur in palatio*”: *La pittura infamante nei secoli XIII-XVI* (Rome: Jouvance, 1979) and Gino Masi, *La pittura infamante nella legislazione e nella vita del comune fiorentino: secoli XIII-XVI* (Rome: Società del foro italiano, 1931); I discuss the nature of the criminal ban throughout chapter 4.

¹⁰⁵ A good account of the events of 1360 in Bologna is found in Salvatore Muzzi, *Annali della città di Bologna*, vol. 3 (Bologna: San Tommaso, 1841), 295-316; on Giovanni, see Lino Sighinolfi, *La signoria di Giovanni da Oleggio in Bologna, 1355-1360* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1905).

[*per trarre il fratello di pericolo e d'abominio*]” and to preserve the honor of his whole family, which explains his absence from the Podestà’s list. Second, once implicated, the treacherous Bernarduolo offered to provide a full list of conspirators in exchange for a reward (ultimately of 500 florins), but when he turned in a lengthy list of questionable veracity compiled by Uberto Infangati, “the whole council assembled and the list was burned in everyone’s presence.”¹⁰⁶

Villani is entirely clear that the Parte Guelfa’s new technique of proscription led to the plot, concluding his account with these words of prophecy and discontent: “The law that for the most part had been the reason and cause of so much trouble, and that promised worse in the future, was not amended at all, nor changed, nor adjusted in any way.”¹⁰⁷ And Villani and Stefani alike also attribute the birth of the conspiracy to the factional struggle then underway in Florence, with Stefani going one step further, voicing suspicions that magnates in the Ricci faction (*grandi della setta de’ Ricci*) were implicated in the plot but escaped punishment because “big fish and large animals break through the nets.”¹⁰⁸

Assuming that the objectives of the plotters described in the Podestà’s sentence are accurate, Stefani’s suggestion gains credence, especially since the so-called “new ways [*novi modi*]” desired by the plotters were actually old ways: a twelve-man priorate and the abolition of the Ordinances of Justice had

¹⁰⁶ MATTEO VILLANI, x.25: “Ragunato il consiglio, *coram omnibus* la scritta fu arsa...”

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.: “La legge, ch’era stata in gran parte cagione e materia di tanto male, e peggio per l’avenire promettea, per tutto ciò amendata non fu , né regolata nè agiustata in niuna sua parte.”

¹⁰⁸ STEFANI, rubr. 685, 257: “...chè li grossi pesci e bestie rompono le reti.”

been the central features of Agnolo Acciaiuoli's magnate constitution in 1343. If the leaders of the plot were magnates, as the objectives suggest, the question of why so many other non-magnates would have joined in the plot remains. It is not possible to say much about these conspirators' motivations, but the identities of the condemned certainly speak to a plot coordinated in response to the threat of *ammonizione*, a plot that likely sought to expel the leaders of the Parte Guelfa and Albizzi faction and to institute an elite government of compromise among magnates, elite Ricci partisans, and the enemies of the Parte. The Sienese chronicler Donato di Neri alludes to another possible motivation in his discussion of the year 1360: "there was a great conspiracy undertaken in Florence," he says, "by the leaders of the wool guild, who were all ruined because, without having access to the port of Pisa any longer, the guild was not working."¹⁰⁹ The presence of wool manufacturers among the ranks of conspirators does not entirely corroborate Donato di Neri's claim, but it does add to our picture of a plot that took shape amid many brewing varieties of discontent—political, personal, and economic. In light of this climate, what seems at first glance most striking about this plot—the government's cautious and public decision not to prosecute, or even investigate, everyone implicated—makes sense; as Stefani puts it, a large investigation could have brought about a great deal of trouble (*avrebbe gittato grande scandolo*) in the city, laying bare irresolvable tensions and perhaps even further inciting a sizeable, though inchoate, opposition. Whatever the

¹⁰⁹ *Cronaca senese di Donato di Neri*, in *Cronache senesi*, ed. Alessandro Lisini and Fabio Iacometti (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1935), 595: "In Firenze si fe' uno grande trattato... per certi caporali dell'arte de la lana, i quali erano tutti disfatti peroché l'arte non lavorava per non avere più el porto di Pisa"; in using this source, I follow Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 187 and n. 147.

causes of the 1360 plot, the growing arrogance of the Parte Guelfa faction and its political weapon, *ammonizione*, would, within two decades, motivate Florence's best known group of conspiracies, the so-called Ciompi tumult, and begin a period of more than three years that saw the city engulfed by conspiracy.

Workers' Conspiracies and Revolts

The conspiracies against the Duke of Athens, described earlier, and the popular revolt that occurred only one and a half months later are the essential context for the series of workers' riots and revolts that erupted in Florence in 1343. The popular backlash against the elite and magnate government created by bishop Agnolo Acciaiuoli's fourteen-man *balìa* began even before its first priorate was seated. After the scrutiny of August 1343, the chronicler Giovanni Villani tells us, "word spread through the city that Manno Donati and similiar leaders of overly powerful families were going to be priors, so the people [*popolo*] became very upset and nearly took up arms in resistance until the new priors were drawn and disclosed," and those men had not in fact been selected.¹¹⁰ It is certainly possible that Manno, who had led one of the conspiracies against the Duke of Athens, and others like him had been chosen

¹¹⁰ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.18, *Come la città di Firenze si recò a quartieri e si raccomandarono gli ufici co' grandi, ma poco durò*: "...fu messa una voce per la terra, che de' priori dovea essere meser Manno Donati e di simili caporali di case troppo possenti, onde il popolo si turbò forte, e ffu quasi in arme per contradiare infino che non furono tratti e palesati i nuovi priori..."

to serve on the new priorate, just as the conspirator Pino Rossi had served on the fourteen-man *balìa*; if so, this outburst of popular resistance, which forced the hand of the powerful families and produced a more moderate, but still magnate-inclusive priorate, presaged the events of 22 September. When, on that day, the *popolo* demanded that the magnate priors leave the palace, they did so after first meeting in secret and working out a plan [*segretamente trattaro*] with the bishop, some of the non-magnate priors, and a group of *popolani* knights who had given them “assistance and approval [*aiuto e favore*],” including none other than messer Antonio Adimari, who had led another of the plots against the Duke and been knighted by the Duke in prison as a sign of goodwill to his enemies. When this plan came to light, prominent magnates in the Bardi, Rossi, and Frescobaldi families cried out at what they saw as injustice: “Let’s see who will take away our share in the government and drive us out of Florence, we who freed her from the Duke!”¹¹¹ Some of the plotters, like the Bardi and Frescobaldi who had turned the Oltrarno into a fortress on Saint Anne’s day, would be excluded from the new government and others, like Antonio Adimari, would help create it. It is not surprising that the Bardi would, as Villani tells us, call the bishop a “traitor who had first betrayed the commune and people [*popolo*] and given the government [*signoria*] to the Duke, and then betrayed and chased them out”;¹¹² not surprising, especially since it had been Acciaiuoli who first conspired with the

¹¹¹ Ibid., xiii.19, *Come il popolo trassono i grandi dell’ufficio del priorato, e riformaro la terra*: “Noi vedremo chi-cci torrà la parte nostra della signoria, e-cci vorrà cacciare di Firenze, che-lla francammo dal duca.”

¹¹² Ibid., “E di ciò erano più principali i Bardi chiamando il vescovo traditore, ch’avea tradito prima il Comune e popolo, e data la signoria al duca, e poi tradito e cacciato lui...”

Bardi and Frescobaldi against the Duke. When the angry magnates began to arm themselves, a crowd led by the knights Antonio Adimari, Giovanni della Tosa, and Geri Pazzi¹¹³ marched to the palace and ejected the magnate priors by force. On the very next day, another *popolano* knight would lead another crowd through the streets of Florence.

The Rebellion of Andrea Strozzi

“Fearing that the magnates might revolt [*fecessono novità*],” the *popolani* “rebuilt the barricades all over the city, making them bigger and stronger than when the Duke was expelled, and they kept watch day and night with a large, armed force.”¹¹⁴ Amidst this tension, according to the Podestà’s later criminal sentence, the knight Andrea Strozzi,

with the intention of disturbing and subverting the peaceful government of the city of Florence, formed a large mob of armed men [*congregatio gentium et hominum armatorum*], with their heads held high and banners raised, who started a riot, yelling, “To arms! To arms!;” and with them he went to the palace of the Lords Priors and Standardbearer of Justice and fought and waged war, firing crossbow bolts and hurling stones against the

¹¹³ Ibid., “...col consiglio e ordine di sopradetti III cavalieri del popolo, che nn’erano capo...” Villani calls them “knights of the people,” but STEFANI, rubr. 595, 216, notes that Antonio and Giovanni were made *popolani* only after the later defeat of the magnates.

¹¹⁴ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.20, *Di quello medesimo, e d’altre novità che nne seguirono*: “...rifecono i serragli per la città più grandi e più forti che quando fu cacciato il duca, facendo grande guardia di di e di notte e stando sotto l’arme, temendo che i grandi non facessono novità.”

honor and the government of the said city and the commune and people of Florence and of the Podestà and the Lords Priors.¹¹⁵

According to Villani, Andrea's army was made of "scoundrels and wool carders and like people wanting to rob, numbering into the thousands," whom he attracted by promising to "make them rich, give them plenty of grain, and make them lords [*signori*]"; and, in Stefani's account, it was made of "around four thousand wool carders and men of the working classes [*gente minuta*] and the poor."¹¹⁶ According to Villani, as Andrea led them to the palace, he cried, "*Viva il popolo minuto* and death to the gabelles and the *popolo grasso!*," while, at the same time, from behind the barricades, the magnates, who hoped to ally themselves with the *popolo minuto* (*presono speranza d'acostarsi insieme col popolo minuto*), were also yelling, "*Viva il popolo minuto* and death to the *popolo grasso* and the gabelles!" The crowd was dispersed by the Podestà's forces, who rained arrows upon them from within the palace, and Andrea, who

¹¹⁵ The sentence, dated 3 November 1343, "contra dominum Andream domini Andree de Strozzi" is transcribed in Niccolò Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto: Note di storia fiorentina (1343-1378)* (1899, but repr. Florence: Olschki, 1968), 93: "...facta congregatione gentium et hominum armatorum... animo et intentione ac proposito turbandi et pervertendi statum pacificum civitatis Florentie, erectis cervicibus et banderis elevatis cum dicta congregatione et gentibus armatis cum tumultu impetu et clamore gridando altis vocibus ad arma ad arma, venit ad palatium populi dominorum priorum artium et vexilliferi iustitie... et ad dictum palatium pugnavit et bellum dedit proiciendo quadrellos et lapides contra honorem et statum dicte civitatis et comunis [sic] et populi Florentie et domini potestatis et dominorum priorum..." The expression *cervicem erigere*, to straighten your neck or hold your head up, signified open rebellion; see J. W. Fuchs and Olga Weijers, eds., *Lexicon latinitatis nederlandicae medii aevii* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), s.v. "Cervix," second meaning, at page 710, defined as "in opstand komen," to rebel, and where, among several examples, one finds this one from a Dutch source, "in rebellionem et conspirationem erectis cervicibus".

¹¹⁶ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.20: "...ragunando rubaldi e scardassieri e simile gente volonterosi di rubare, in grande numero di parecchie migliaia, promettendo loro di farli tutti ricchi, e dare loro dovizia di grano, e farli signori..."; STEFANI, rubr. 590, 212: "...circa quattromila tra scardassieri e gente minuta e povera..."

was captured by his kin and forced to leave the city, was later sentenced in contumacy to death and property confiscation, in Villani's words, "as a rebel and inciter of riot and conspiracy against the republic [*siccome ribello, e somovitore di romore e di congiura contro alla repubblica*]." Although it is not entirely corroborated by any of the Florentine chronicles or criminal archives, an anonymous chronicler of Pistoia and contemporary of Villani has left a remarkable account of Andrea's insurrection. Until the end, the account is similar to those of Villani and Stefani, except that he describes a crowd of five hundred men, made of workers drawn from every aspect of the wool industry: "scardassieri, battitori ad arco, vergheggiatori, tintori, ed altra gente di piccola condizione." But after Andrea was taken away by his kinsmen, the Pistoiese adds, "a dyer named Corazza rose up and made himself leader of the *popolo minuto*," bringing the original five hundred and an additional "eight hundred footsoldiers of the *popolo minuto*" to the palace, where the priors let him inside and convinced him to desist with flatteries and promises.¹¹⁷

Within days of Andrea's assault on the palace, rumors spread through Florence that the magnates, thwarted in their improvised attempt to curry favor with the *popolo minuto* and thereby bring down the new government, were themselves planning to attack on 25 September. So, on the 24th, "the

¹¹⁷ *Istorie pistolesi, ovvero delle cose avvenute in Toscana dall'anno 1300 al 1348*, ed. Antonio Maria Biscioni (Prato: Guasti, 1835), 413-4: "E per la partita di M. Andrea si levò uno tintore, che avea nome Corazza, e fecesi caporale del popolo minuto, ed era di piccola nazione e prese tanto di baldimento, che andava al palazzo de' Priori con cinquecento, e con ottocento pedoni del popolo minuto, e da' Priori per tema non gli era tenuto porta, e metteanlo dentro, e gli Priori con lusinghe, e con buone parole lo vinceano, e davangli buone promesse e con buone parole lo teneano; sicché non fece novità nessuna." This Corazza is discussed in Samuel K. Cohn, *Lust for Liberty: The Politics of Social Revolt in Medieval Europe, 1200-1425: Italy, France, and Flanders* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2006), 128.

popolani of the quarter of San Giovanni, who had made the Medici, Rondinelli, and the lawyer messer Ugo della Stufa their leaders, and the *popolani* of Borgo San Lorenzo with butchers and other guildsmen, without the order of the commune, in a group numbering one thousand men, and without any other company or other forces” attacked the houses of the magnate Cavicciuli (a branch of the Adimari) and defeated them in a three-hour street battle.¹¹⁸ Over the next five days, the crowds of *popolani* surged and routed the magnate families, of which the Bardi put up the longest struggle before being overwhelmed and having their houses ransacked and burned. “The angry *popolo*,” says Villani, “robbed, set fire to, and burned twenty-two palaces of the magnates and wealthy families [or, possibly of the Bardi alone], resulting in damages of more than sixty thousand gold florins.”¹¹⁹ The forces that defeated the magnates on 24-29 September were not likely drawn entirely from the ranks of prominent *popolani grassi* and guildsmen: Villani speaks of a very large “force of *popolani* from Borgo San Frediano and Cuculia and the Fondaccio of Santo Spirito [*forza di popolani di borgo San Friano e della Cuculia e del Fondaccio*]” that expelled the Nerli from their houses, a force almost certainly (given the areas described) made of unrepresented woolworkers and laborers of all types.

¹¹⁸ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.21, *Come il popolo di Firenze assaliro e combattero i grandi e rubarono i Bardi e missono fuoco in casa loro*: “...i popolani del quartiere di San Giovanni, onde si feciono capo i Medici e’ Rondinelli e meser Ugo della Stufa giudice, e’ popolani di borgo Sa·Lorenzo co’ beccari e altri artefici, senza ordine di Comune, in quantità di mille uomini sanz’altra compagnia o forza di gente...”

¹¹⁹ Ibid., “E·ll’arabbiato popolo, rubate le case, misono fuoco in casa loro, e arsonvi XXII tra palagi e case grandi e ricche, e stimossi il loro danno tra di ruberie e d’arsione il valere di più di LX^M fiorini d’oro.”

On the next day, 30 September, it was not the magnates who rose up, but the *popolo minuto*. The chronicler Stefani provides the most detailed account of these events, which began when a crowd of “perhaps thirteen hundred wool carders and other *gente minuta*” gathered at the church of the Servites. The chronicler says that “it wasn’t known what they wanted to do or ask for.”¹²⁰ In response, the rectors and other forces went out with the “axes for beheading, the chopping blocks, and the nooses [*mannaie e ceppi e caprestl*]”. The very same forces that had risen up against the magnates one day earlier were now, it seems, ready to defeat or suppress the *popolo minuto*, either with swift public punishments and executions, or the fear of them. “When [the forces of the commune] were at the loggia of the Pazzi, they heard the riot [*romore*] and saw the crowd [of the *popolo minuto*] fleeing, [the men in the crowd] having already gone to the house of the Visdomini, and already defending themselves from attack.”¹²¹ The Podestà, who was the marquis Giovanni of Monte Santa Maria in the Marche, stepped forward and asked the crowd why they were revolting, and “they said that messer Ciritieri had ruined Florence and committed robberies; and that, because they were poor, they wanted some of the property of the Duke which was put in the house of the Visdomini.”¹²² They were unable to reach an agreement, and a fight broke out

¹²⁰ STEFANI, rubr. 593, 215: “si ragunarono tra scardassieri ed altra gente minuta forse 1300 uomini; li quali si ragunarono tutti a’ Servi, e non si sapea quello volessero fare, e non richiedieno...”

¹²¹ Ibid., “Quando furono alla loggia de’ Pazzi, sentirono il romore, e vidono la fuga. Questi erano mossi, ed iti già a casa li Bisdomini, li quali già si cominciavano a difendere, che erano assaliti.”

¹²² Ibid., “dissero che messer Ciritieri fu quello che guastò Firenze, e che avea di ruberie fatte, e della roba del Duca messa in casa Bisdomini, che la voleano, ch’erano poveri.”

that ended with two workers punished—one having his hand cut off, and one his foot. According to Stefani, the workers said, “We will grow very much, so we can be very rich; for, the poor will one day be rich.”¹²³ This messer Ciritieri (or Cerretieri) Visdomini had been a counselor of the Duke of Athens and had been knighted by him, and, early in 1344, would be painted on the wall of the Podesta’s palace along with him as a sign of his infamy¹²⁴; but it is not clear why the crowd on 30 September blamed him for ruining Florence or what goods, if any in particular, of the Duke they wanted from his house. One possibility is that messer Ciritieri had somehow been complicit in the Duke’s downfall and that the robberies he had committed were (in addition to the metaphorical robberies of high gabelles) against the Duke himself, which would explain how the Duke’s goods ended up in his house—goods that the workers thought belonged more to them than to the treacherous messer Ciritieri, since the Duke had been their benefactor. Another possibility is that this crowd was related to the one that had followed messer Andrea and then Corazza a week earlier, and that they rose up again after the priors’ false promises proved empty.

¹²³ Ibid., 216: “Noi cresceremo tanto, che noi faremo grandi ricchezze; sicchè i poveri saranno una volta ricchi.”

¹²⁴ Ibid., rubrics 556, 567, and 608, at pages 196, 200, and 221. In the “Frammento di altra cronica,” covering the period 5 August 1342 to 24 May 1345, appended to the *Cronica di Firenze di Donato Velluti dall’Anno MCCC in circa fino al MCCCCLXX*, ed. Domenico Maria Manni (Florence: n.p., 1731), 141-8 [hereafter “Frammento”] it is also noted that “Messer Cerretieri Bisdomini” stayed with the Duke on St. Anne’s day. This “chronicle” is actually the *ricordanze* or “memorie” of the merchant Francesco di Giovanni di Durante, located in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, *Magliabechiana*, 2, 3, 280.

The Tumultuous 1340s

The events of late September initiated a period of great tension in Florence, with men from all ranks of society plotting, rioting, and brawling in the streets. Tommaso Bardi's frightful boast that the *popolani grassi* and magnates would crush the *popolo* and Corso di Amerigo Donati's nefarious plot to enlist the aid of Florence's Tuscan enemies against the government have already been noted. But it was not only magnates who threatened, or appeared to threaten, the stability of the regime. In December, what started as a street fight in the parish of San Paolo seems to have become a riot. According to the Capitano's sentence, a group of about two dozen men "armed with offensive and defensive weapons, to wit, swords, daggers, helmets, bracers, and other arms, formed a mob" and "caused a riot... to which many people were attracted... shouting, 'Viva il popolo!'" The crowd went to the houses of Francesco di ser Segna, called Mazzone, and Francesco di Tura, called Cece, fighting and "shouting and saying, 'Die, you dogs!'"¹²⁵ No Florentine chroniclers mention this case, and it is not known why or to what effect the mob shouted the political slogan, "*Viva il popolo!*," but it is

¹²⁵ ASF, *Capitano*, 3, ff. 5r-6v, quotation at 5v: "armati armis offensibilibus et defensibilibus vz. spatibus cultellis feritoriis corbelleriis bracciavolis et aliis armis fecerunt congregationem contra statum pacificum et tranquillum communis et populi Florentie... fecerunt clamorem et tumultum... ad quem rumore multae gentes trasserunt... clamantes *viva el pupolo* [sic]"; "clamantes et dicentes *mora li cani*." The sentences originally pronounced against "Franciscum ser Segne vocatum Maçone populi Sancti Blancatii" and "Franciscum Ture vocatum Cece populi Sancte Lucie omnium sanctorum" were later cancelled. None of the condemned persons had surnames and many had nicknames, such as a Lapo di Chele called Lapocchio and Filippo di Ciccho called Capostaccia.

a cry that surely accompanied the exploits of similarly armed bands less than two months earlier.

After another street fight in early March 1344, a certain Agnolo di Terrino of the parish of Santa Maria Maggiore, “armed with offensive and defensive weapons, that is, with a sharp lance in his hand and a small shield on his arm and with other weapons, ran, shouting and saying, “Long live the guilds and the people! And death to the Rucellai!” and he shouted in a loud voice, saying, “Fire! Fire! To the house of the Rucellai! Death to the *popolani grassi!*” And Agnolo’s neighbor and associate Betto di Vannuccio di Cialdieri, likewise “armed with an unsheathed sword in his hand and a buckler, ran, shouting and saying, “Long live the Guilds! And death to the Rucellai traitors! Swords! Fire! To the house of the Rucellai!” As a result, a large crowd gathered and “there was a very large riot and many people shouted ‘Long live the guilds!’”¹²⁶ Again, it is not clear why these people wanted to incite a riot against the Rucellai—one diarist notes that the Rucellai were also attacked when the Duke’s notorious gabelle official, ser Arrigo Fei, was cruelly

¹²⁶ The sentence “contra Phillipum Cenni Nardi..., Angnolum Terrini et Bettum Vannutii Cialderii populi Sancte Marie Maioris de Florentia,” dated 6 March 1343[4], is transcribed in Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, 108-9; quotation at 109: “armatus armis offensibilibus et defensibilis videlicet quadam lancea ferrata in manu et quadam rotella in brachio et aliis armis cucurrit clamando et dicendo Vivat artes et populus et moriantur Orcellarii et clamavit alta voce dicendo Al foco al foco ad casa delli Orcellari mora li popolari grassi. Et... dictus Bectus armatus quadam spata nuda in mano et quodam bocchiolerio cucurrit clamando et dicendo viva viva larti et mora li Orcellari tradituri, al fero al foco ad casa delli Orcellari. Ad quem rumorem factum per predictos et quemlibet ipsorum multe gentes trasserunt et factus est maximus rumor et clamabatur per multos viva larti...”

murdered in July 1343, so it is possible that this crowd hoped to settle unresolved disputes from the days of the Duke's expulsion.¹²⁷

In early September, two men were fined five hundred florins each for having spoken with "many persons capable of creating a scandal and tumult among the people, saying that there should have been a riot and revolution in the city" on 28 August, the day on which the names of the September-October priors would be drawn.¹²⁸ The sentence does not address the motivation of these men, but the priorate of July-August had been marked by the presence of two men from families in the oligarchic core of the *popolo grasso*, an Albizzi and a Strozzi. Although nothing can be said with certainty, it is likely that the two men calling for a revolution spoke to (and perhaps for) a contingent within the lesser ranks of the *popolo* or *popolo minuto* that was unhappy with the character of the government.

And, of all the criminal cases pertaining to tumults and riots in this period perhaps none is more remarkable than that of Pagnozzo di messer Andrea Strozzi who, fewer than six months after his father had led an attack on the palace of the priors, was condemned by the Capitano for seditious behavior. According to the sentence, a crowd of men had gathered in the small street in front of a wine shop and tavern called the Cella di Ciardo in the

¹²⁷ "Frammento," 144, "...allora vi s'abbatterono gli Oricellari..."

¹²⁸ The sentence "contra Francischum Bandini populi Sancti Remixi de Florentia et Phillippum Iohannis Balisteri populi Sancti Pauli de Florentia," dated 3 September 1344, is located in ASF, *Capitano*, 11, f. 16r: "...pluribus personis que poterant generare scandalum et turbacionem in populo videlicet dicendo quod rumor tumultus et novitas debebat esse in dicta civitate et maxime quando casetta dominorum priorum debebat portari ad palatium pro extrahendo priores de mense augusti..." The September-October 1344 priorate, led by Lapo da Castiglionchio's son Ruggiero as Standardbearer of Justice, was unremarkable.

parish of San Lorenzo,¹²⁹ and Pagnozzo incited them to riot, revolt, and weaken the regime (*in turbationem, seditionem, et diminutionem presentis status*) by shouting loudly (*alta voce clamando*): “Rabble! Rabble! You rabble who are dying of hunger, and have thrown out the one who would have given it to you at ten *soldi per staio!*”¹³⁰ According to Villani, grain was recently being sold at twenty *soldi per staio* (that is, imperfectly translated into English, twenty shillings per bushel), so Pagnozzo was inciting them to riot by telling them that they should be getting bread at roughly half the current cost, and possibly that his father would have supplied them with grain at that price.¹³¹ It is not clear if

¹²⁹ In the sentence (see the note immediately below), this place is described as the “cantum Celle olim Ciardi” and later as the “cantum Ciardi positum in populo Sancti Laurentii iuxta viam a duobus lateribus et domos Dominici et Nuti olim dicti Ciardi...”; this tiny street now appears to be called the Via dell’Amorino (formerly dell’Amoricchio) and stretches from present-day Piazza Madonna to Via Sant’Antonino (formerly dell’Amore). A traditional story about the street is repeated in Gene Brucker, *Florence, the Golden Age, 1138-1737* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 267, where he states that the “Cella di Ciardo” was the location of the wineshop of Ciardo di Betto, who was “condemned to death for leading the Ciompi revolution.” One of the July Ciompi leaders was Betto di Ciardo, a wool beater (*vergheggiatore*), who lived in the area, but SER NADDO, 17, also lists a “Ciardo di Berto, vinattiere” who was one of the “tassatori sopra gli sbanditi” appointed in August 1378 along with Salvestro de’ Medici. The name “Cella di Ciardo” clearly refers to a wineseller named Ciardo who operated a tavern and/or wine store (“Cella”) there and who died before 1343, leaving at least two sons, Domenico and Nuto.

¹³⁰ The sentence is transcribed in Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, 94: “...dixit canallia, canallia, canallia, che morete di fame, che avete cacciato quello che v’avrebbe dato ad dece soldi lo staio, ma anch’io ne farò una manecata di questa canallia.” The word “canallia,” rabble or mob, derives from *cane*, dog. At page 93 in Rodolico’s appendix, this sentence is accidentally misdated 18 March 1342[3]; the correct date, found in ASF, *Capitano*, 3, f. 62r, is of course 18 March 1343[4].

¹³¹ GIOVANNI VILLANI, xiii.13; this year is not covered in Domenico Lenzi, *Il libro del Biadaiuolo: Carestie e annona a Firenze dalla metà del ‘200 al 1348*, ed. Giuliano Pinto (Florence: Olschki, 1978); but on prices generally in the period, see Richard Goldthwaite, “I prezzi del grano a Firenze dal XIV al XVI secolo,” *Quaderni Storici* 28 (1975): 15-36.

the angry Pagnozzo was simply berating the workers standing outside the Cella di Ciardo or if, perhaps, he shared his father's grandiose ambitions and hoped to start a revolution of his own; but he denied the charges and was sent into confinement in Siena with a 1000 *lire* fine.

Since the criminal court records before 1343 were destroyed on Saint Anne's day and no extant chronicles treat the subject extensively, we cannot determine the extent of earlier secret labor organization among the *popolo minuto*, but the mid-1340s clearly saw an increase in agitations among those employed in the wool industry. In early October 1343, just after the defeat of the magnates, the Podestà executed two workers. The first, a Sienese named Aldobrandino Ciecharini, was condemned to death and later hanged for inciting "many men in the city of Florence, and especially the workers" of two wool manufacturers, Salvi di messer Lotto Salviati and Matteo di Panizzo degli Albizzi, to revolt "on many different days and times"; the second, a certain Francesco di Lapo called Grello from the Florentine *contado*, was condemned and hanged a day later for stealing a sword and for having violently "incited a riot" among the workers in the parish of San Lorenzo; in this he was joined, says the sentence, "by many men, his associates and accomplices, both men from the city and foreigners."¹³² Whether the two condemned were in communication or not is unclear, but it is clear that their crimes emerged out of an historical moment in which such violent insurrections and political upheavals were an almost daily occurrence. Yet, whereas the forces of the

¹³² ASF, *Podestà*, 23, f. 87r: "...pluribus diversis diebus et horis invitavit et requisivit multos et multos homines per civitatem Florentie et maxime discipulos et operarios...", and f. 91r: "cum pluribus et multis hominibus suis sociis et complicitibus tam civibus quam forensibus... tumultum fecit oriri...."

popolo and the *popolani grassi* succeeded in creating a new government and expelling the magnates, the demands of the *popolo minuto* went unanswered. Less than two years after the executions of Aldobrandino and “Grello,” yet another Florentine in the woolen cloth industry was hanged, this time for conspiring to create a guild of wool workers. In his diary of the early 1340s, the merchant Francesco di Giovanni di Durante records the execution, devoting more words to this crime and punishment than he does to the popular revolt and defeat of the magnates: “On 24 May 1345,” he writes,

the Capitano of Florence, Messer Neccio [de’ Gabbrielli] of Gubbio arrested the wool carder Ciuto Brandini and his two sons at night because Ciuto wanted to form an association, group, and gathering of workers at Santa Croce; on the same day, as soon as they heard and knew that Ciuto had been taken that night in his bed by the Capitano, the workers, i.e., the combers and carders, refused to work unless they got Ciuto back, and they went to the priors and asked that he be released safe and happy, and said they would bring the whole city to a boil if he was not, and that they wanted to be paid better. Ciuto was hanged by the throat.¹³³

¹³³ “Trattato,” 148: “A dì 24 di Maggio 345. il Capitano di Firenze cioè fue Messer Neccio da Gobbio prese di notte Ciuto Brandini iscardassiere e suoi due figliuoli, imperocchè ‘l detto Ciuto volea fare una compagnia a Santa Croce, e fare setta, e ragunata cogli altri lavoranti di Firenze, e in questo medesimo dì i lavoranti di Firenze, cioè pettinatori e scardassieri sì incontanente, ch’udirono e seppono che ‘l detto Ciuto era istato preso di notte in sul letto dal Capitano, incontanente veruno non lavorò, e istettonsi e non voleano lavorare se ‘l detto Ciuto non riavessono e andaronne i detti lavoranti a Priori pregandogli che ‘l detto Ciuto facdessono ch’ eglino il riavessono sano, e lieto, e detti lavoranti tutta la Terra misono a bollire, che sela sarebbono, se ‘l detto Ciuto non riavessono sano e lieto, e anche voleano essere meglio pagati. Il detto Ciuto fue poi impiccato per la gola.” Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, 37, quotes this passage, though making several changes. Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 110-11, partially translates this account, citing the original manuscript of the *ricordanze* (see note 147 above), at f. 23v.

The Capitano's sentence describes Ciuto as "odious and hateful to Florentine citizens because of the illicit gatherings he incited and other criminally subversive activities" and describes these activities in some detail:

He devised a brotherhood of carders, combers, and other wool workers, as many as he could... and, so that they might have the means to gather together and have consuls in their meeting and illicit gathering, so that they could bring about these things and worse, he organized and encouraged a meeting and illicit gathering of very many of the aforementioned disorderly and lowly persons on several occasions on different days; and in these meetings, among other things, Ciuto proposed and arranged for the collection of a certain quantity of money to be collected from those who attended the meetings and illicit gatherings so they could be stronger and sturdier in this evil association and illicit assembly.¹³⁴

The "modern" aspects of this *iniqua societas* have been pointed out—with, for example, Cohn calling Ciuto's *postura seu collectio* a "strike fund" and Brucker openly discussing the "parallels between this episode and modern industrial conflict"—as well as some of the contemporary features—with Najemy calling

¹³⁴ The sentence is transcribed in Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, 102-3: "quod per scardazerios pettinatores et alios laboratores in artificio lane, in maiori numero quantum habere posse, fingeretur quedam fraternitas... et ad hoc ut haberent materiam se ad invicem congregandam et possent consules et capitudines habere in eorum congregatione et conventicula, ut facilius predicta et peiora ad effectum deducerent, subiessit procuravit sollicitavit et fecit adunantiam congregationem invitata et conventiculam pluries et pluribus vicibus et diversis diebus multorum et multorum hominum predictorum inordinatorum et male conditionis; et in dictis adunantiis et conventiculis inter alia dictus Ciutus proposuit arengavit deliberavit et ordinavit quod in dicta cohadunatione congregatione et conventicula fieret postura seu collectio inter ipsos certam quantitatem pecunie colligende seu exigende a quolibet predictorum de dictis adunantiis congregationibus et conventiculis ut fortiores et duriores essent in dicta iniqua societate et conventicula..."

the association “a guild, complete with consuls.”¹³⁵ Whatever words we use to describe Ciuto’s actions, the Capitano and his judge described them, as we would expect, as conspiracies (*tractationes ordinate per eum*) that caused sedition and unrest (*propter que tumultus seditio et turbatio fuit*). We are left to wonder to what extent men like Aldobrandino and “Grello” had been similarly attempting to form guilds or other protective or fraternal associations, and to what extent Ciuto and his colleagues were responding to the wider environment of political and social unrest. This environment certainly provides the context in which Ciuto’s associates presented their demands to the priors and threatened to riot, as well as the context for Ciuto’s swift hanging—in the early years of its tenure, the popular government of 1343–48 was governing a city in which enemies were or seemed to be plotting everywhere, magnates, *popolani grassi*, and woolworkers alike. In such a period, all kinds of troublemaking and unrest were described in the familiar language of conspiracy. Just after Ciuto’s hanging, for example, a group (*conmixtiva*) of only nine men, among them Niccolò di messer Giovanni de’ Medici and Piero di Bandino dell’Ischia, were accused of bringing about an illicit gathering (*choadunationem et congregationem non licitam*) that caused a great riot (*cum maximis rumoribus clamoribus et tumultis*) in the piazza of San Marco.¹³⁶

During the tenure of the popular government, excluding plots clearly undertaken by magnates or *popolani grassi*, more than a dozen groups of men

¹³⁵ Samuel K. Cohn, Jr., *Lust for Liberty: The Politics of Social Revolt in Medieval Europe, 1200–1425* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 211; Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 111; and John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence 1200–1575* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 157.

¹³⁶ ASF, *Capitano*, 19, f. 38r: “conmixtiva hominum et personarum civitatis Florentie choadunata esset in platea Sancti Marci de Florentia,” etc.

were condemned for having started riots and tumults by the Capitano alone, who was charged with maintaining political stability and public safety. According to my survey of conspiracies and political crimes in the courts of the three foreign rectors from 1343 to 1382, the period 1343-48 (about 15% of the total time) witnessed about 40% of such crimes, or 2.7 times as many as one would expect with an even distribution. Yet the nature of labor unrest and “conspiracy” in this period can perhaps be best understood by examining two incidents that occurred in 1346. In the first case, the Podestà condemned a group of sixteen wool spinners, predominantly from San Frediano, who first created a gathering (*congregationem et cohadunationem*) “in the street that is called the ‘Street of San Pancrazio among the *Stamaglioli*” and then walked to the house of a cloth manufacturer named Lorenzo di Buonaccorso, where an employee of his named Filippo di Piero, a *stamaiuolo*, and Filippo’s clerk (*factor*) Iacopo di Buonsignore were staying.¹³⁷ There, says the sentence, the group “forcefully and violently expelled Filippo and Iacopo from the house with the intention of injuring and harming Lorenzo and of taking and depriving him of his house.”¹³⁸ In the second case, nine workers were harshly punished by the Capitano for fighting in the street. This “brawl and unrest [*rixa et rumor*],” in which the participants were armed “with lances, swords, knives, iron spears,

¹³⁷ Combed wool was called *stame*, and a *stamaiuolo* was “the man who gave out combed wool to be spun”; see Florence Edler [De Roover], *Glossary of Mediaeval Terms of Business: Italian Series, 1200-1600* (Cambridge, Mass.: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1934), 413.

¹³⁸ The sentence is transcribed in Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, 104-5, “in via cui dicitur via di San Prancaçio tra gli stamaglioli; ...et ipsum Filippum et Iacobum de ipsa domo expulerent per vim et violentiam animo et intenctione iniurandi et molestandi dictum Laurentium et tenentes pro eo in possessionem dicte domus et ipsum Laurentium sua possessione privandi.”

and large and small shields [*lanceis, spatīs, cultellis, et lançonibus de ferro, pavexiis, rotellis, et tavolacciis*],” as well as with stones (*sassis et lapibus*), pitted one group of four wool nappers (*cardatores*)—

Antonio di Vieri of Campognanno (*parish*: S. Maria in Campo)
Giovanni di Caurigia called Caurillia (S. Maria in Campo)
Lappo di Zenino (S. Michele Visdomini)
Pagnuccio di Rustico (S. Pier Maggiore),

against a group of five dyers (*tintores*)—

Ciappo di Chele (S. Iacopo tra Fossi)
Bonella di Bindo (S. Maria in Campo)
Iacopo di Dinco called Thonica (S. Maria in Campo)
Giovanni di Gherardo (S. Maria in Campo)
Giovanni di Lapo called Soccha (S. Maria in Campo).¹³⁹

The men identified in the sentence as the instigators of this brawl, Antonio di Vieri and “Caurillia,” were, like three of the five dyers, from the parish of Santa Maria in Campo. It is not clear if the clash resulted from disagreements between the nappers and dyers as occupational groups, or from some personal disagreement between men from the same neighborhood, who brought friends and fellow laborers into the dispute. Even in the mid-1340s, when the memory of the Duke’s guild for dyers was fresh, such acts of retribution against employers and worker-on-worker violence were far more common than the more celebrated efforts of men like Ciuto to form a woolworkers’ guild, and all of these crimes were severely suppressed by the

¹³⁹ ASF, *Capitano*, 62, ff. 60r-61v.

authorities.¹⁴⁰ Words like *coadunatio* and *rumor* were multivalent enough to encompass a very wide array of illicit behaviors, all of which were considered politically subversive and especially dangerous when undertaken by workers.

The Grain Riot of 1368

Samuel Cohn has pointed out that, quite unlike the contemporary peasant insurrections of England and France, worker unrest in Florence was rarely occasioned by grain or food shortages. In this sense, as he says, “the accepted models of insurrectionary activity in a preindustrial period” do not apply to insurrection in the urban Florence of the *Trecento*.¹⁴¹ Only a single grain riot is recorded in the Florentine criminal records between 1343 and 1382; and if we exclude unrest in the *contado*, that grain riot’s eruption in 1368 came after nearly two entire decades without serious political upheaval caused by workers or the urban poor. On 19 August 1368, the Podestà messer Guido de’ Fortebracci of Montone absolved four men—

Massario di Bertino (*parish*: San Pier Maggiore)
Betto di Stefano (San Piero di Monticello [in the Valdarno superiore])
Frogino di Tano (San Quirico [a Legnaia, in the *contado*])
Piero di Berto (San Pier Maggiore)

¹⁴⁰ For another example, see ASF, *Podestà*, 127, f. 336rv (1345), in which a group of workers came to the rescue of a delinquent debtor.

¹⁴¹ “Florentine Insurrections, 1342-1385, in Comparative Perspective,” in Rodney Hilton and T. H. Aston, eds., *The English Rising of 1381* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 148.

—and sentenced one, Berto di Puccio (San Pier Scheraggio), to death in contumacy for having participated in a grain riot that had been suppressed in July by the former Podestà messer Ungaro di messer Giovanni degli Atti of Sassoferrato. These five men are described in the sentence as having rioted “with more than five hundred others, whose names were for the best not mentioned in this criminal process.” This large group, yelling “Viva il popolo!” the entire time, went to the grain market and spilled many sacks of grain on the ground there before bringing more than twenty *staia* each of grain and flour to the palace of the priors. There, they spilled the grain and flour on the ground and threw rocks at the priors’ and Podestà’s staff and guards (*familia*), and “the good and peaceful government of the commune of Florence could have been disturbed by any of these acts.”¹⁴² At this moment in the late 1360s, as in the early 1340s, the criminal records reveal a great deal of tension on the streets of Florence, not all of it political. In the previous summer, a mob had attacked the forces of the Capitano Francesco di Matteo degli Alperini while he was moving through Santo Spirito searching for illegal weapons, and, at nearly the same time as the grain riot, a child rape led to a riot described in precisely the same terms as political tumults (*propter que magnus rumor tumultus insurrexit et multe gentes trasserunt*).¹⁴³

¹⁴² This sentence is transcribed by Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto*, 97-9, quotations at 98 and 98-9: “cum pluribus aliis ultra numerum quingentorum quorum nomina in dicta inquisitione tacebantur ad presens pro meliori...”; “...ex quibus omnibus et singulis verisimiliter bonus et pacificus status communis Florentie turbari debuit et potuit...”

¹⁴³ For the mob, see ASF, *Capitano*, 145, f. 7r; for the rape, *Esecutore*, 568, quotation at 41r; the sentence was “contra Soldum Nuttini populi Sancte Lucie omnium sanctorum de Florentia,” who attacked the seven-year-old daughter of “Bandinus quondam Matthey populi sancti pauli de florentia.”

The history of workers' revolts and conspiracies before the summer of 1378 will always be seen as precursory. Nearly one hundred and ten years ago Niccolò Rodolico first combed the Florentine criminal archives in search of the men "who were the Ciompi before the tumult."¹⁴⁴ Rodolico's approach was flawed in one crucial way. He began, as it were, in 1378 and looked back to find proto-Ciompi, when he should have started in 1343 and seen the workers' revolts and conspiracies of 1343-8 as the product of the revolutionary atmosphere surrounding the expulsion of the Duke and the destabilizing environment created by the popular government. As we have seen throughout this chapter, the period of the popular government was one of unrest in Florence at both ends of the socio-economic spectrum, as the period 1378-82 would also be. Popular revolutions in Florence stirred up conspiratorial passions among magnates and the elite who were excluded from power or who had their power reduced; but, at the same time, they stirred up the working classes, who, in the radically expanded office-holding classes of those periods, were able to see the real possibility of political representation through guild membership. "Some historians," wrote Gene Brucker in 1972, referencing Rodolico, "have argued that the clothworkers developed a strong sense of solidarity, and even after their initial efforts to organize were crushed in the 1340s, ... kept alive their ideal of a laborers' guild. But given the instability of the poor and the wave of epidemics that periodically decimated the urban population, this does not seem credible."¹⁴⁵ Brucker's tendentious

¹⁴⁴ *Il popolo minuto*, 4, "che furono i Ciompi prima del tumulto."

¹⁴⁵ "The Florentine Popolo Minuto and its Political Role, 1340-1450," in Lauro Martines, ed., *Violence and Civil Disorder in Italian cities, 1200-1500* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), 155-183, quotation at 171.

point, while perhaps supported by the nearly three-decade lull in labor unrest between 1348 and 1378 is also flawed in one crucial way. In many respects, the events of 1378 clearly reveal that the summer revolutionaries, both Ciompi and non-Ciompi, were consciously re-enacting the drama that had been played out in the summer of 1343 and that they were also working within the traditions of Florentine political conspiracy. When Salvestro de' Medici set the events of the "Ciompi tumult" in motion, he chose for his model the expulsion of the magnates in 1343—enlisting the aid of the men from San Frediano and Cuculia, dismantling and burning down the houses of his enemies, even re-promulgating the Ordinances of Justice against the magnates when his real enemies were the mostly non-magnate leaders of the Parte Guelfa faction. In the same way that the *popolani grassi* lost control of events in 1343 and saw their revolution become a revolution of the guilds, Salvestro's revolution likewise came to be co-opted by the minor guildsmen and, momentarily, by the workers themselves. Just as the workers of Florence in 1343 would not cease, going to the palace of the priors with demands, neither would the workers of 1378.

CHAPTER 2:

CONSPIRACY AND THE TUMULT OF THE CIOMPI

*Non sia alcuno che muova una alterazione in una città, per credere poi, o fermarla a sua posta, o regolarla a suo modo [No one should start a revolution in a city, thinking he can then stop it where he wants or control it his way]. –Machiavelli, speaking of Salvestro de' Medici, in *Istorie fiorentine*, III.10¹⁴⁶*

The unidentified fifteenth-century author of a brief set of concluding additions to the chronicle of Alamanno Acciaiuoli supplies the preceding story of the tumult of the Ciompi with a bitter moral, “how necessary it is to prevent similar troubles by not allowing bad seeds to sprout in any way, because once they start growing, they spring up too much in the Florentine air”; and he adds, “whoever reads Giovanni Villani, the Aretine [Leonardo Bruni], Poggio [Bracciolini], and the writings of other historians will surely understand that one needs a scissors more than a comb to keep this bit of hair tidy,” suggesting both that future class tensions need to be nipped in the bud and that Acciaiuoli’s narrative needs heavy pruning to meet the standard set by the leading lights of pre-modern Florentine historiography.¹⁴⁷ The account that

¹⁴⁶In this conclusion, Machiavelli seems to mirror a passage in the the rabidly pro-Guelf chronicle of ser Nofri di ser Piero, which he clearly used as one of his sources; see NOFRI, 55, quoted below in note 205.

¹⁴⁷ AGGIUNTE, 41: “Dove si potrebbe facilmente cognoscere, allargandosi discorrendone, quanto è necessario per fuggire simili inconvenienti non lasciare in modo alcuno germogliare nelle città i cattivi semi, quali poi, cominciati a crescere, si

follows would surely disappoint our anonymous author because it seeks to further uncover and understand the political and class tensions that flowered violently in the summer of 1378 and to give a greater voice to both the laborer-insurgents (as they were and not as we would like them to be) and, crucially, to their non-Ciampi allies, leaders, instigators, and fellow conspirators; and it resolutely proceeds with a comb instead of a scissors, attending to often overlooked details, carefully untwisting them in an attempt to disentangle one of the knottiest issues in Florentine history: the conspiratorial politics of the Ciampi tumult.

The events of June-August 1378 and the leading interpretations of them are well enough known as to require no more than a brief summary: On 18 June, in response to the Parte Guelfa's campaign of proscription (*ammonizione*), Salvestro de' Medici presented an anti-magnate petition to the priors and colleges that is passed only after a riot and an armed show of force on the streets. On 22-23 June, a crowd of guildsmen and workers destroy the houses of prominent members of the Parte Guelfa faction, while workers also attack several churches and public buildings; a *balìa* (executive commission) is created; and forces of the government suppress the riots. On 26 and 28 June, the temporary *balìa* is transformed into a long-term entity and new names are drawn for the priorate, to be seated three days later. On 19 July, the existence of a large working-class conspiracy mostly centered in the Oltrarno is betrayed to the priors. Over the next four days, 20-23 July, these men rise up, destroy the Standardbearer of Justice's house, seize the

innalzan troppo nell'aria fiorentina; ... E chi leggerà Giovanni Villani, l'Aretino, e il Poggio, e degli altri istoriografi, che hanno scritto, intenderà molto bene, che a tenere bene assetta questa treccia, ci fa più di bisogno della forbici che del pettine."

Standard of Justice, knight more than sixty men, force the government to accept a series of petitions after meeting *en masse* with allies and advisors at the church of San Lorenzo, force the priors to flee, and appoint a new priorate led by Michele di Lando. Between 23 and 31 July, a new government is created along with three new guilds and a corps of crossbowmen, and the bags containing the names from the old scrutinies are destroyed. The new scrutiny ends on 21 August. On 27-8 August, a radical group within the ranks of the Ciompi¹⁴⁸ (temporarily allied with Luca da Panzano) elects a group of

¹⁴⁸ Ciompi is a term properly used to describe unskilled workers in the textile and woolen cloth industries (the men who would be incorporated into the revolutionary twenty-fourth guild), but it is sometimes expanded in general discussions to describe even skilled (but historically not corporately-recognized) workers from the *popolo minuto*. Contemporary chroniclers often used both terms (Ciompi and *popolo minuto*) without much discrimination. The enormous complexity of the terminology is explored with gusto in Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi, passim*, but especially in the appendices; at pages 333-6, for example, he lists the nearly four hundred different occupations that might have fallen within the twenty-fourth guild. STEFANI, rubr. 575, 203, famously locates the origin of the word “Ciompi” in the language of worker solidarity following the fall in 1343 of the Duke of Athens, the Frenchman Walter of Brienne: “Having overheard the French saying “Compar, allois a boier [that is, *compère allons boire*]: Compare andiamo a bere ... il popolo rozzo di vocabolo francesco diceano: Ciompo, andiamo a bere; e così diceano: Ciompo, Ciompo; e quasi erano tutti ciompi, cioè compari.” For brief discussions, see Samuel K. Cohn Jr., *The Laboring Classes in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 88, and recently Patrick Gilli, *Au miroir de l’humanisme: les représentations de la France dans la culture savante italienne à la fin du Moyen Âge (c. 1360-c. 1490)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1997), 521. Trexler calls Stefani’s etymology “ridiculous” and, following a suggestion of Rodolico, believes “Ciompi” was originally the name of a festive organization created by the Duke of Athens in 1342 in Camaldoli, a working-class neighborhood in the Oltrarno, and derived from the name of the town of Sompuis (about 35 kilometers from the Duke’s ancestral castle, Brienne-le-Château); see “Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Revolt Seen from the Streets,” page 41 and n. 40, in Trexler, *The Workers of Renaissance Florence* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1993). The accuracy of Stefani’s etymology notwithstanding, what is striking is that, like the Ciompi standard, Stefani and his contemporaries well understood that the origins of the term were to be found in the Duke’s reign; on the Duke’s relationship with the working classes, see John M. Najemy, *A History of Florence 1200-1575* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 136-7 and, briefly, in chapter 1 of this thesis.

eight leaders, the so-called Otto Santi del Popolo di Dio (*Eight Saints of the People of God*), calls mass meetings first at the Dominican priory of San Marco and then at church of Santa Maria Novella, and forces the government to accept a petition. At the end of August, the Ciompi are betrayed and defeated by Michele di Lando's government, and the twenty-fourth guild (of the Ciompi) is disbanded.

Much of the historiographical debate about the Ciompi tumult in the twentieth century has focused on the question of just how revolutionary the Ciompi were—the extent to which they acted spontaneously, independently of more elite forces, and in pursuit of class-conscious economic and political reforms—with some scholars (Bertelli, Brucker) denying their revolutionary credentials, some accepting them (Rutenberg, Stella, Cohn, Rodolico), and others accepting but problematizing them within their socio-political context (Trexler, Najemy).¹⁴⁹ I can add nothing new to our understanding of the

¹⁴⁹ The scholarship on the Ciompi is enormous and varied, and thus cannot be properly surveyed in a note, but some key and representative works of the named scholars on this issue are: Sergio Bertelli, "Oligarchies et gouvernement dans la Renaissance," *Social Science: Information sur les sciences sociales* 15 (1976): 601-23; Gene Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society 1343-1378* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), the final chapter; and idem, "The Ciompi Revolution," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (London: Faber & Faber, 1968) [it is often said that Brucker withdrew some of the claims in this article or even recanted, but he did not do so in print]; Viktor Rutenberg, *Popolo e movimenti popolari nell'Italia del '300 e '400*, trans. Gianpiero Borghini (Bologna: Mulino, 1971); Alessandro Stella, *La révolte des Ciompi: Les hommes, les lieux, le travail* (Paris: EHESS, 1993); Samuel K. Cohn Jr., *The Laboring Classes in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic, 1980), and idem, "Florentine Insurrections, 1342-1385, in Comparative Perspective" in Rodney Hilton and T. H. Aston, eds., *The English Rising of 1381* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 143-64; Niccolò Rodolico, *Il popolo minuto. Note di storia Fiorentina, 1343-1378* (Florence: Olschki, 1899), and idem, *I Ciompi: Una pagina di storia del proletariato operaio* (Florence: Sansoni, 1945); the three essays collected in Richard C. Trexler, *Power and Dependence in Renaissance Florence*, vol. 3: *The Workers of Renaissance Florence* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1993); and John M. Najemy, "Audiant omnes artes: Corporate

personnel, neighborhood organization, and political vocabulary (Trexler) of the Ciompi, of their economic and social conditions (Stella, Cohn), or the milieu of guild foment out of which their revolt and program in part sprang (Najemy). Rather, from Gene Brucker's evocative description of Florence in the summer of 1378—"the city was transformed into a pulsating network of conventicles, groups which met secretly in churches, in taverns and private homes to discuss events and issues, and perhaps to plot"¹⁵⁰— I will remove the "perhaps," showing that not until late August can the actions (and even the political program) of the Ciompi and *popolo minuto* be extricated from the conspiracies undertaken to purge the government of the leaders of the Parte Guelf faction. Salvestro de' Medici and his allies, knowing that the Parte Guelfa faction planned to overthrow the government on the feast of John the Baptist in 1378, preemptively overthrew it with the help of the minor guilds and the *popolo minuto*. When the temporary executive commission (*balia*) meant to legitimate the regime change failed to entirely eliminate the influence of their political enemies and to completely re-integrate those who had been proscribed (*ammoniti*), this was done through the famous political petitions of July, which were orchestrated with the help of the leaders of the war party, representatives of the whole guild community, and moderate elements in the *popolo minuto*. The radical forces of the Ciompi in August, finally, rose up against the newly created regime and the men who had inspired and were fully implicated in the earlier events. This discussion will add, I believe, a crucial

Origins of the Ciompi Revolution," in *Il tumulto dei Ciompi. Un momento di storia fiorentina ed europea* (Florence: Olschki, 1981), pp. 59-93.

¹⁵⁰ Brucker, "The Ciompi Revolution," in *Florentine Studies*, ed. Rubinstein, 326.

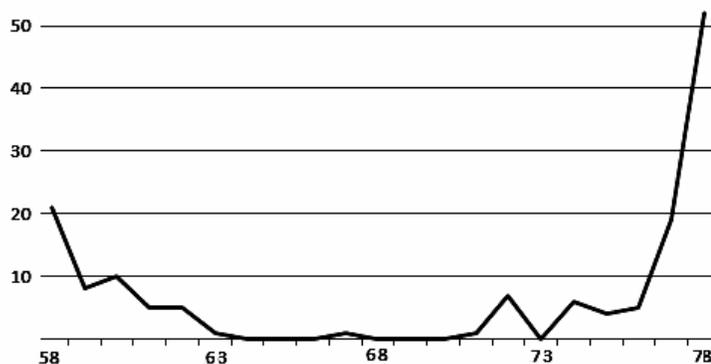
additional dimension to our knowledge of the Ciompi: the summer of plots and counter-plots must be understood, in part, within the context of the history of late-*Trecento* political conspiracies.

The Plots of June 1378

The technique of *ammonizione* (literally “warning”) or proscription, which effectively deprived “suspected Ghibellines” of office-holding rights without trial, was pioneered in 1358-9 by the Captains of the Parte Guelfa.¹⁵¹ Nearly twenty years later, the most conservative and pro-papal forces in the Guelf hierarchy finally took full advantage of this, their most devastating weapon, in what can only be described as an evolving and long-term¹⁵² “legal”

¹⁵¹ Many of the records of the Parte Guelfa are no longer extant, but their program, which began after the famous *provvisione* of December 1358 (ASF, PR, 46, ff. 62-3), was given communal sanction in May of 1359 in ASF, PR, 46 144v-146r.

¹⁵² Although his data are incomplete, Modesto Rastrelli, *Priorista fiorentino storico*, vol. 2 (Florence: Tofani, 1784), *passim* between pages 62-148, provides yearly lists of *ammoniti* (years in modern style here) which show the striking trend in the Parte Guelfa’s use of proscription from 1358 to 1378:



coup d'état: from September 1377 through June 1378, they proscribed well over one hundred citizens,¹⁵³ who came largely from the pro-war faction, from the anti-Albizzi and popular camp, and from the swelling ranks of those whose families had in the 1360s and 1370s entered the priorate for the first time.¹⁵⁴ By the end of 1377, it had become clear that the Eight of War and the Captains of the Parte were set on a collision course. In a communal assembly on 26 December, Gino di Bernardo Anselmi, a vocal opponent of the Parte faction, called for peace not between Florence and the Papacy but between the two factions: "The priors should make the Captains and the Eight of War remain happy and at peace."¹⁵⁵ That the situation had reached a boiling point is made abundantly clear by the imprisonment of Alessio di Borghino Baldovinetti, who was accused in a criminal trial of shouting "Viva il popolo!" outside of the Parte's palace, and of threatening to set it on fire, burning the Guelf Captains alive.¹⁵⁶ In January, the Parte enacted a series of internal measures to defend the Captains from prosecution by other communal magistracies, to create an *ad hoc* committee (*balia*) of forty-eight men

¹⁵³ Writing decades later and only possibly exaggerating, Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Le Monnier, 1956), 318, claimed that around 200 families were proscribed in the two-year period: "[a]l tempo di questi Otto della guerra, e quasi nell'ultimo, s'ammunì gran gente, circa di 200 famiglie quasi in tempo d'anni due."

¹⁵⁴ See Appendix 1, in which I construct a list, compiled from various sources, of 133 *ammoniti*.

¹⁵⁵ ASF, *CP*, 15, 67v: "Et [the priors] faciant ita quod Capitanei et Octo guerre remaneant contenti et concordēs".

¹⁵⁶ ASF, *Capitano*, 1089, ff. 3-4v; the context of Alessio's threats is given in STEFANI, rubr. 779, 310, and his imprisonment decried as a "cosa stranissima ed abominevole e fuori d'ogni ragione ed equità," something very strange and abominable, without any reason or justice.

dedicated to defending the group and doing its business for one year, and to fashion a new banner for the Parte, which was to be adorned with the arms of Charles of Anjou and entrusted to the party's new standardbearer, Benghi Buondelmonti.¹⁵⁷ The chronicler Stefani understood the full import of these measures: "so the Captains were lords (*signori*) of the Parte for a year, and whoever was lord of the Parte was lord of Florence; and messer Lapo [da Castiglionchio] reserved that power for himself for life."¹⁵⁸ The power to proscribe gave the Captains almost complete *de facto* (and, within the constitution as it was, *de iure*) power to ensure that their enemies would not serve on the priorate, and the creation of the year-long *balìa* would extend their influence far into the future.¹⁵⁹ Stefani's choice of words, *signori*, could

¹⁵⁷ ASF, *Capitani di Parte Guelfa (rosso)*, 1, ff. 46v-52r.

¹⁵⁸ STEFANI, rubr. 778, 310: "sicchè erano signori i detti capitani per uno anno della Parte, e chi era signore della Parte era signore di Firenze. E messer Lapo serbò la balìa a sè a vita."

¹⁵⁹ Official Parte lists of Captains do not survive, but these can be reconstructed for 1378 from ANONIMO 347, 351, and 355; STEFANI rubr. 778; the document published in Ildelfonso di San Luigi, ed., *Delizie degli Eruditi*, vol. XV (Florence: Cambiagi, 1781) corresponding to STEFANI rubr. 789; and the list of the 72 men whose names had been drawn for the office, "le pallottole ch'avieno fatte i Capitani," which would be destroyed on 5 July 1378; see ANONIMO, 362. Generally, "pallottole" were waxen pellets that contained parchment name slips, as is made clear in a passage from Donato Velluti's *Cronaca* discussed in John M. Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus in Florentine Electoral Politics, 1280-1400* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 141 and n.31; here they seem to be hand-picked groups or electoral slates of names. Those who took office on 20 January were: messer Lapo da Castiglionchio, Bonaiuto Serragli, messer Benghi Buondelmonti, Domenico di Cassiano called Tessinaia or Tassinaia (calzolaio), Adoardo de' Pulci, Giovanni di Ser Donato (ferrator) [OR Giovanni di ser Dato (maliscalco)], Veri di Cambio de' Medici, Antonio di Guidotto de' Pazzi, and Giovanni di Cambio (balestriere). Those who took office on 20 March were: Ristoro Canigiani, Filippo di Fornaino de' Rossi, Tommaso Soderini, Istoldo Altoviti, Simone del Chiaro (fabbro), Alessandro di messer Francesco Buondelmonti, Francesco di Donato Marchi, Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi, and Matteo di Iacopo Arrighi. Monaldi, 513, perhaps noting who were the leaders in that group, described them as "Tommaso Soderini, e Benedetto di Simone di Ranieri Peruzzi, e la loro compagnia." And those

not have been entirely accidental—in a sense the *signori* of the Parte Guelfa would control, and thus even supplant, the *signori* (as the priors were called) of Florence. On 22 April 1378, the Captains, having fortified themselves for the struggle, finally and boldly struck directly at the heart of the Eight with their policy of *ammonizione*, proscribing the spice merchant Giovanni Dini, one of the so-called “Eight Saints” charged with undertaking the war against the papacy.¹⁶⁰ Whether the Parte Guelfa intended to indefinitely continue their gradual coup and thereby achieve their ends, or whether they had already been plotting to hatch a more decisive coup in the near future, their hand was forced when Salvestro de’ Medici was elected Standardbearer of Justice.

Having been drawn for the position of Standardbearer of Justice at the end of May, Salvestro di Alamanno de’ Medici, a long-time foe of the Parte hierarchy and staunch supporter of the war, found himself serving on a priorate alongside men loyal to the Parte Guelfa who were capable of blocking attempts at reform and delaying any move against Lapo and his allies.¹⁶¹

who took office on 20 May are additionally listed in ASF, CR, 11, ff. 124v (24 June 1378): Giovanni di Bartolo Biliotti, Tommaso di Serotino Brancacci, Bese di Guido Magalotti, Iacopo di Giovanni Risaliti, Ghino di Bernardo Anselmi, Bernardo di Andrea (corazarius), Iacopo di Iacopo Gherardini, Bettino di messer Bindaccio Ricasoli, and Taddeo di Cantino degli Agli.

¹⁶⁰ As the records of the war *balia* reveal, Dini was immediately replaced for this reason by Niccolò Gianni; see Alessandro Gherardi, *La guerra dei fiorentini con papa Gregorio XI, detta la guerra degli otto santi* (Florence: Cellini, 1868), Document 391, p. 219: “...loco dicti Ioannis Dini a dicto offitio remoti die vigesimasecunda seu vigesimatertia mensis aprilis presentis anni Mcccclxxviii, esistente proba viro Niccholao Niccholai Gherardini Iannis...”

¹⁶¹ On Salvestro’s career, the old monograph of Brunetto Dami, *Un demagogo del secolo decimoquarto: Salvestro de’ Medici* (Florence: Seeber, 1899), has largely been superseded by Brucker, *Florentine Politics, passim*; and Gene Brucker, “The Medici in the Fourteenth Century,” in *Speculum* 32 (1957): 1-26, especially at 17-20. Brucker’s grim appraisal of Salvestro as “a petty politician whose major asset was demagogic oratory” is particularly striking for the summer of 1378 given how little he

According to the chronicler Stefani's account, which is replete with detail, when dissatisfaction with the "damned faction [*maladetta setta*]" and its political skullduggery grew unbearable, Salvestro declared, "We'll settle things when I am *proposto*" (when he served his week, that is, as presiding chairman, charged with presenting business to the other priors), and he sprung into action, mobilizing a network of allies: "he sent for those whom he trusted, and came to an understanding with them in person, with the others he did so through go-betweens."¹⁶² What happened next—a conspiratorial meeting to overthrow the government, to *mutare lo stato*—had happened many times before in the political history of Florence. "After Salvestro de' Medici had spoken to his allies, many people gathered together secretly at night in the house of Luigi di Lippo Aldobrandini, who was a great citizen, had a discussion with the Standardbearer, and made a plan."¹⁶³ Upon becoming *proposto*, Salvestro made his move—an unexpected and understated gambit. Afraid that he would propose retaliatory legislation or worse, the leaders of the Parte Guelfa swung into action, preparing themselves for violence in the streets, as the chronicler describes:

spoke according to the chronicle literature; a similar point is astutely made by Samuel K. Cohn in relation to both Salvestro and Michele di Lando; see his *Lust for Liberty: The Politics of Social Revolt in Medieval Europe, 1200-1425: Italy, France, and Flanders* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2006), 200. Rodolico, *I Ciompi*, 184, more accurately describes the Salvestro of 1378 as "furbescamente prudente e silenzioso," cunningly prudent and silent.

¹⁶² STEFANI, rubr. 789, 317: "Noi l'acconceremo quando sarò Proposto.' E mandò per quelli di cui si fidava, e intesesi con loro personalmente, con alquanti ed altri per mezzani..."

¹⁶³ STEFANI, rubr. 790, 317: "...Avendo parlato Salvestro de' Medici a cui gli parve, ed essendo in casa di Luigi di Lippo Aldobrandini, il quale era grande cittadino, ragunatosi di notte molta gente segretamente, sollecitarono il gonfalonieri della giustizia, e dato l'ordine."

the Captains gathered together right away at the palace of the Parte and quickly called on all the leaders of the families of the *grandi* who liked their policies, and nearly all of them came armed with hauberks and knives, some even had swords hidden at their side. They also called on all the heads of the *popolani* families who supported and favored their policies. And present at this gathering were the men who were the cornerstone of the whole thing: messer Lapo da Castiglionchio, Carlo degli Strozzi and his sons, Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, Niccolò Soderini, and Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti, who is called Mastino. They were the strength of the whole endeavor. And it is also true that one of the Parte's other champions was not among them, namely Stoldo di messer Bindo Altoviti, who was away on a peace mission to Rome.¹⁶⁴

Stefani then lists, dividing them among the quarters of the city, all the major supporters of the Parte Guelfa. The list includes more than forty named individuals and a handful of families, including “all” of the Albizzi, Altoviti, and Buondelmonti, and “some” of the Acciaiuoli and Ardinghelli.¹⁶⁵ On behalf of

¹⁶⁴ STEFANI, rubr. 790, pp. 317-8: “...i capitani subito furono al palagio della Parte ragunati, e feciono richiesti subito, e quasi tutti i capi delle famiglie de' Grandi, a cui piaceano le materie che essi teneano alla Parte, e tutti quasi con panziere e coltella, e chi stocchi celatamente allato. E furvi richiesti tutti i capi delle famiglie popolane, le quali faceano alla materia adiuto e favore, e quivi furono questi, li quali erano il bilico di tutta la materia: messer Lapo da Castiglionchio, Carlo degli Strozzi con gli figliuoli, Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, Niccolò Soderini, Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti, detto Mastino: questi erano il fermo di tutta la faccenda. È vero che appresso di loro non era uno, ch'era l'altro campione: ciò era Stoldo di messer Bindo Altoviti, li quale era in ambasciata per la pace a Roma.”

¹⁶⁵ STEFANI, rubr. 790, pp. 318. This is the list of men, using Stefani's spellings: Bonaiuto di ser Belcaro Serragli, Giovanni di Bartolo Bigliotti, Antonio di Niccolò di Cione Ridolfi, Bortolommeo di Niccolò di Cione Ridolfi, Guerrieri di Tribaldo de' Rossi, Piero di Dato Canigiani, Ristoro di Piero di Dato Canigiani, Uberto di Schiatta Ridolfi, Messer Filippo Giammori e Giovanni di Piero Bandini de' Baroncelli, Michele e messer Lotto di Vanni Castellani, Simone di Ranieri Peruzzi, Benedetto di Simone di Ranieri Peruzzi “e consorti tutti,” Adoardo de' Pulci, Bonaccorso di Lapo, Giovanni de' Bonaccorsi, Guerriante Bagnesi, Bardo di Tingo Mancini, Bese Magalotti, Salice Cavalcanti, Guccio di Cino Bartolini, Iacopo di Gian Gherardini, “Buondelmonti tutti, Acciaiuoli alcuni, Altoviti tutti, alcuni degli Ardinghelli,” Ramondino Vecchietti di Giovanni, messer Albizo Rucellai e quasi tutti, Messer Pazzino degli

these men, Lapo and Giovanni di Bartolo Biliotti, then the standardbearer of the Parte, went to the palace to see what legislation had been proposed. Salvestro's petition, in fact, contained no direct reprisals against the Parte and did not even broach the incendiary subject of *ammonizione*; rather, it asked the councils to promulgate anew the Ordinances of Justice in order to, as the preamble states, "resist the unbridled power of the magnates, make harming the weak and perverting popular government and liberty impossible, allow *popolani* to live more securely and more freely, have offices be exercised for the public good, and revive justice in the city."¹⁶⁶ In a remarkable show of political resolution, Salvestro and his allies had, against all expectations, not proposed legislation against the Parte or its policy of *ammonizione*, instead invoking the transcendent revolutionary ideals of the Ordinances of Justice, casting the leaders of the Parte Guelfa in the role of the prepotent and lawless magnates¹⁶⁷ and themselves as champions of the *popolo*, and thereby radically

Strozzi, Andrea e Cipriano di Lippo Mangioni, Andrea di Signino, Biagio di Bonaccio Guasconi "e consorti, Brunelleschi tutti i figliuoli di Boccaccio," Iacopo di Messer Francesco de' Pazzi, "gli Albizzi tutti," Migliore Guadagni, Vieri di Messer Pepo de' Cavicciuli, Pigello di messer Talano. "Andrea di Signino" is a reference to Andrea di Signino Baldesi. I have not been able to identify all of Carlo Strozzi's sons. An examination of the data in the ONLINE TRATTE suggests that four of them were named Azzolino, Lorenzo, Michele, and Strozza. Boccaccio Brunelleschi had at least two sons, Attaviano and Jacopo. On the basis of archival and other evidence, I believe the "Pigello di messer Talano" in STEFANI is an error and refers instead to Pigello and Talano di messer Luigi degli Adimari, described in ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, 55r, as "Pigellum [et] Talanum, fratres et filios quondam Domini Loigii de Adimaribus populi Sancte Marie Nepotecose de Florentia."

¹⁶⁶ ASF, *PR*, 67, f.49v; and transcribed in ANONIMO, 504: "ut resistatur ineffrenate potentie magnatum, et ut tollatur possibilitas impotentes offendi et popularem statum et libertatem pervertendi, et ut populares possint securius ac liberius vivere, et officia pro utilitate publica exercere, et ut civitas comitatus et districtus Florentie revivescat justitia."

¹⁶⁷ Although the ranks of the Parte leaders contained mostly elite *popolani*, most magnates were indeed allied with them, as is noted in STEFANI, 790, 317:

recasting the partisan struggle (Parte Guelfa vs. war party) as another battle in the ancient struggle for popular liberty. When news of this reached the Parte palace, “it was argued that things should be left alone, and some said that the banner should be brought out,” presumably to rally friends for the coming struggle under the recently-fashioned standard, or to broadcast the message of triumphant Guelphism.¹⁶⁸ “The *popolo* and the guilds were in the Palace of the priors,” says the anonymous chronicler, when Salvestro’s petition appeared destined to fail in the colleges and he dramatically attempted to resign his post as Standardbearer, noting the presence of enemies in the hall who had thwarted his efforts and made working for peace and unity from within the priorate impossible.¹⁶⁹ Then, Stefani recalls, “some rose up and went to the windows and began to shout, Viva il popolo! There was disorder (*romore*) throughout the city, and in many places men armed themselves, as *had been ordered*, saying, Viva il popolo e libertà!”¹⁷⁰ It is apparent that this order, given to men all over the city to arm themselves, was part of the plan formulated in the secret night meeting in Luigi Aldobrandini’s house, and that the men who conveyed the order were part of Salvestro’s network of trusted

“...generalmente quasi tutti i Grandi voleano, e studiavano l’ammonire, se non era alquanti buoni, ch’ erano in alcuna delle famiglie de’ Grandi, li quali erano pochi...”

¹⁶⁸ STEFANI, rubr. 790, 318: “quivi si ragionò di lasciar fare, e chi dicea di trar fuori il gonfalone.”

¹⁶⁹ ANONIMO, 357: “...e ‘l popolo e l’Arti erano nel palagio di nostri Signori...”; Anonimo records Salvestro’s speech, the part referred to: “l’ò qua su di quegli che mi sono contrai per volere questa vostra città mettere in pace ed in unità.”

¹⁷⁰ STEFANI, rubr. 790, 318: “Alcuno si levò, e fecesi alla finestra, e cominciò a gridare: ‘Viva il popolo’. Il romore fu per la città, ed in molte luogora s’armò, *come era ordinato*, dicendo: “Viva il popolo e libertà.” My emphasis.

friends and intermediaries. While Salvestro and his allies plotted, so, it is clear, did the leaders of the Parte Guelfa faction, who were, however, divided on how to proceed. The chronicler Stefani, who obviously had connections and informants on both sides of this conspiratorial factional struggle, tells us that he himself made inquiries and learned of a nefarious plot:

On the night before John the Baptist's day [24 June], Piero di Filippo [degli Albizzi] planned to have in his house the standard of the Parte Guelfa covered with lilies, the arms of France, the standardbearer of which was Giovanni di Bartolo Biliotti. And for the festivities in Florence, everyone in their faction [*setta*] was to have at home a band of foreigners, made of villagers and men from all over, which was easy to do because on that day peasants regularly came to Florence and no one was watching. ... when fewer than twenty persons were left in the palace, they agreed to shout slogans, join together, and cause a tumult [*di gridare ed essere in concio e correre la Terra*], and to go right away to the palace of the priors, take it without a fight, run through the city shouting, "Long live the people and the Parte Guelfa," bring their people to the houses of the proscribed [*ammoniti*] and the Ghibellines and certain of their enemies, and then reform the city according to their plan, leaving sixty men in charge of the government [*nel reggimento*].¹⁷¹

If Stefani was able to learn of this plot, so, we imagine, was Salvestro; and his faction was obviously not content to let the Parte leaders "bring their people to

¹⁷¹ STEFANI, rubr. 792, p. 319: "Trovossi poi per domandare più innanzi che Piero di Filippo doveva il dì San Giovanni la notte dinanzi avere in casa sua il gonfalone della Parte a gigli, l'arme di Francia, del quale' era gonfalonieri Giovanni di Bartolo Biliotti, e per la festa che si facea in Firenze tutti quelli di quella loro setta doveano avere foresteria di villani e d'altronde in casa; ed era leggiera avere, perocchè di nulla si guardava in Firenze, e pure da loro i contadini si vengono in Firenze tal dì. ...in palagio rimane meno di venti persone, aveano diliberato di gridare ed essere in concio e correre la Terra, e subito ire al palagio de' Priori, e quello senza contasto torre, ed appresso correre la città, gridando: "Viva il popolo e Parte Guelfa," e menare il popolo a casa gli ammoniti ed i Ghibellini ed a certi loro nemici, poi riformare la città a loro modo e lasciare nel reggimento, diceano, sessanta uomini."

the houses of the proscribed,” instead bringing the proscribed and their allies to the houses of the Parte leaders.

In his record of those days, almost certainly the earliest surviving account of a working-class revolt left by a worker, the woolshearer Pagolo di ser Guido breathlessly describes the assault against the Parte leaders:

On Tuesday a riot broke out and the people [*popolo*] and all the guilds armed themselves and ran into the piazza of the priors with their flags, yelling “Viva il Popolo!” At thirteen hours [about 8:30AM] the Furriers’ guild took their flag, left, and went to the house of Messer Lapo da Castiglionchio and robbed and burned his property and that of his kinsmen; and they went to the house of [Bartolo Siminetti, called] Il Mastino and robbed and burned it, then they went to the house of Carlo [degli Strozzi] and robbed and burned it, and then they went to the house of the Albizzi and burned the property of Piero di Filippo and of Pepo di Antonio’s sons, and the sons of Uberto di Antonio di Jacopo di Alesso and a few of their kinsmen, and they burned the house of Migliore Guadagni, and burned those of Iacopo, Simone, and Sandro de’ Pazzi, and then burned those of the Buondelmonti, then they went to break open the Stinche [the communal jail], then they burned the houses of Niccolò and Tommaso Soderini, then they robbed that of Messer Filippo Corsini, then they robbed those of Bonaiuto Serragli and his brother and of Messer Coppo from San Frediano, then they burned the house of messer Ristoro Canigiani, then they robbed the [convent of the Romiti degli] Agnoli, then they wanted to destroy the Camera del Comune [the communal treasury], but it was defended by the Guild of Oil and Cheese Sellers, then they rested for the evening.¹⁷²

¹⁷² PAGOLO DI SER GUIDO, 272: “Poi il martedì si levò il rumore e armossi il Popolo e tutte l’Arti corsono in su la Piazza de’ Priori co’ loro Gonfaloni gridando Viva il Popolo, alle 13 hore partissi l’Arte de’ Vaiai co’ loro Gonfalone e andò a casa di Messer Lapo da Castiglionchio e rubaro e arsono lui e Consorti, e andarono a casa il Mastino e arsono e rubarono, poi andarono a Carlo e arsono e rubarono, e poi andarono a casa gli Albizi e arsono Piero di Filippo e figli di Pepo d’Antonio, e figli di Uberto d’Antonio di Jacopo d’Alesso con certi Consorti, e arsono il Migliore Guadagni, e arsono Jacopo e Simone e Sandro de’ Pazzi e poi arsono i Bondelmonte, poi andarono a rompere le Stinche poi rubarono poi arsono Niccolò e Tommaso Soderini, poi rubarono Messer Filippo Corsini, poi rubarono Bonaiuto Serragli e’l fratello, e Messer Coppo da San Friano rubarono, poi arsono Messer

The Machiavelli chronicler similarly attributes the destruction to the guildsmen: “all the guilds and consuls, all of them armed, along with their guildsmen and the flags of their guilds, went into the piazza of the priors, crying out: ‘Send those traitors down to us!’ Then suddenly they ran in a frenzy to [burn the houses].”¹⁷³ “While some say that the *popolo* rose up on its own accord,” Stefani notes, “others say that a plan came from the palace, where those whose houses were to be burned were written.”¹⁷⁴ Among those writers who left accounts of that summer, the latter view is clearly dominant. One anonymous contemporary, for example, explained that “the cause of all these things was the authority of Salvestro de’ Medici and Benedetto Alberti, who

Ristoro Canigiani, poi rubarono gli Agnoli, poi vollono rompere la Camera del Comune, difesela l’Arte de’ Pizzicagnoli, poi si ripose la sera.” It is clear from other sources that several of the later arsons occurred in July; see below.

¹⁷³ ANONIMO, 358-9: “Oggi, martedì [22 June], alle xii ore di dì [around 7:30AM], andarono in sulla Piazza di nostri Signori tutte l’Arte e Capitudine, tutti armati, co’ loro artefici e co’ loro gonfaloni delle loro Arte, gridando: «Mandateci giù cotesti traditori». Onde subito corsono a furore a casa di ...” Anonimo’s order of the arsons is: (1) Carlo Strozzi, (2) “casa gli Albizi”, (3) Lapo da Castiglionchio, (4) Bartolo “Mastino” Siminetti, (5) Migliore Guadagni, (6) “casa de’ Pazzi”, (7) Filippo Corsini, (8) Antonio di Niccolò di Cione Ridolfi, (9) Coppo di Lippo di Cione “del Cane”, (10) Niccolò and Tommaso Soderini, (11) Ristoro Canigiani; then (12) Romiti degli Agnoli and (13) the “Fрати di Settimo in Cafaggiuolo”.

¹⁷⁴ STEFANI, rubr. 792, p. 319: “...e chi dice che il popolo da sè si mosse, e chi dice, che venne scritta di palagio, ove erano scritti quelli che dovessero essere arsi...”; Stefani continues, “Ma io credo che vero giudizio divino fosse che niuno altro che gl’infrascritti furono nè arsi, nè tocchi, nè rubati,” presenting two possible interpretations: that Stefani found it miraculous that the arson was limited, or that he believed the right houses were burned. STEFANI, rubr. 792, p. 319-20, gives this order for the arsons: (1) Lapo da Castiglionchio (2) Carlo Strozzi (3) Bartolo Siminetti (4-5) Niccolò and Tommaso Soderini, (6) Benghi Buondelmonti, (7) Ristoro Canigiani, (8) Piero degli Albizzi and a handful of other Albizzi, (9) the Pazzi, (10) Vieri Cavicciuli, (11) Migliore Guadagni, and “molte altre case e tutte di coloro che erano di quella maledetta setta dell’ammonire,” many other houses and all of them of the damned faction that used proscription, (12) the Stinche, (13) the Romiti degli Angeli, (14) Santo Spirito.

called the people [*popolo*] from the palace windows.”¹⁷⁵ Alamanno Acciaiuoli attributes the opening of the Stinche to “the plan of Bardo di Guglielmo Altoviti, who had two of his nephews in the jail.”¹⁷⁶ Bardo had been a member of the commission appointed to impose a *prestanza* of 130,000 florins on church property in July of 1375, was a strong supporter of the commune’s anti-clerical position during the War of the Eight Saints, and, as such, had likely been present at Salvestro’s conspiratorial gathering.¹⁷⁷ In the midst of his description of the burnings, the Machiavelli chronicler, possessing inside information for obvious reasons (see note below),¹⁷⁸ adds a revealing detail:

¹⁷⁵ Quoted in Falletti-Fossati, *Ciampi*, p. 88, n.1: “Di tutte queste cose fu causa l’autorità di Salvestro de’ Medici e Benedetto Alberti che chiamò il popolo dalle finestre del palagio.”

¹⁷⁶ ALAMANNO ACCIAIUOLI, in SCARAMELLA, 15: “per operazione di Bardo di Guglielmo Altoviti [sic]; imperocchè il detto Bardo v’aveva due suoi nipoti carnali, figliuoli d’una sua sirocchia, l’uno era Alesso [di Francesco] Baldovinetti, e l’altro figliuolo d’Andrea [di Lapo] delle Botti.” Both of Bardo’s nephews are called “nipoti carnali,” the children of one’s siblings, to distinguish them from “nipoti cugini,” first cousins; on this distinction, see, e.g., Susannah F. Baxendale, “Alberti Kinship and Conspiracy in Late Medieval Florence,” in *Florence and Beyond: Culture, Society and Politics in Renaissance Italy*, ed. David S. Peterson (with Daniel E. Bornstein) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 340; but it is not clear how, unless she married twice, Alesso Baldovinetti and Andrea delle Botti’s son could both be sons of one of Bardo’s sisters. In his account of these events, almost certainly indebted to Alamanno Acciaiuoli’s, the sixteenth-century historian Scipione Ammirato appears to describe only the son of Andrea delle Botti as Bardo’s nephew; see the *Istorie fiorentine di Scipione Ammirato*, ed. F. Ranalli, vol. 3 (Florence: Batelli, 1847), p. 282.

¹⁷⁷ ASF, PR, 63, 69r-72r. These men were called the “Otto dei preti”; see Richard C. Trexler, “Who were the Eight Saints?,” *Renaissance News* 16 (1963): 89. Bardo would go on to serve the guild government outside of the city; see Carlo Fabbri, *Origini e istituzioni di Castel San Giovanni tra Medio Evo ed età moderna* (Fiesole: Servizio editoriale fiesolano, 2001). I have lost the page reference.

¹⁷⁸ Roberto Davidsohn, “L’avo di Niccolò: Machiavelli cronista fiorentino,” *Archivio storico italiano* 355 (1935): 35-48, argues that Buoninsegna was the author of the chronicle; Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 128, is not convinced, but accepts that a member of the Machiavelli wrote it.

“Buoninsegna Machiavelli kept watch because he was afraid that the Scali wanted to rob him and burn down his house; so the priors sent for Giorgio Scali and Buoninsegna and made them drink together and they made peace and with Michele di Vanni Castellani ended their dispute. God be praised.”¹⁷⁹ The chronicles all make clear that those who burned the houses of the Parte leadership were (at least led by) guildsmen, from both minor and major guilds (like the Furriers); they are also clear that the violence was quickly co-opted by a band from the *popolo minuto*, who wreaked havoc upon communal and religious institutions. For example, the Machiavelli chronicler (as the woolshearer Pagolo had) reveals that the *popolo minuto* was, in some of their attempts, even blocked by guildsmen: “On this day, he says, “the *popolo minuto* went and broke into the Stinche, and let out all of the prisoners, who altogether had debts of more than 40,000 gold florins, and even those who had been sentenced to death. And they destroyed it and burned it down and did great damage to our commune. God make them pay for this! And then they went to the Camera del comune of Florence, but there were guildsmen there who would not let them destroy it, and enough of them got hurt that they couldn’t destroy it.”¹⁸⁰ Stefani likewise attributes the attacks on religious

¹⁷⁹ ANONIMO, 359: “Boninsegna Machiavelli ebbe paura che gli Scali noll’andassono a rubare e mettervi fuoco, onde istette a buona guardia; e in questo mezzo i Signori mandorono per Giorgio degli Scali, e’ nostri Signori mandorono per Boninsegna, fecio’gli bere insieme, e fu fatto pacie e fine co’ Michele di Vanni [dei Castellani]. Lodato Iddio.”

¹⁸⁰ ANONIMO, 359: “Dì xxii di giugno 1378. Questo dì andò il popolo minuto e ruppono le Stinche, e tutti i prigioni se n’uscirono fuori, che v’aveva prigioni per più di 40 miglia’ di fiorini d’oro, e anche ve n’avea assai ch’erano per perdere la persona; e ruppono e arsono e feciono gran danno al nostro Comune. Iddio gliene paghi. E andarono alla camera del Comune di Firenze; onde vi furono l’Arte e nolla lasciarono rompere, e furonvene fediti assai, e nolla ruppono.”

institutions to “una gente minuta,” a crowd of men from the *popolo minuto*; “on the next day,” he explains, this crowd “raised a hat on a lance, ran to the convent of the Hermits of the Angels and the church of Santo Spirito and robbed them... looting reliquaries as well as the goods and merchandise stored there by just men and sinners alike.”¹⁸¹ As we will see, fear of retribution for these thefts at religious institutions would become a major factor in later *popolo minuto* plotting, but the assault against the Parte leadership first allowed Salvestro’s faction to begin remaking the city’s laws according to their wishes. Always a true believer in the Guelf cause and full of bile for the popular leadership, the chronicler Ser Nofri explained that the fiery events of June were orchestrated by “suspected Ghibellines, malcontents, and their leaders,” namely Tommaso Strozzi, Salvestro de’ Medici, Benedetto Alberti, Giovanni Dini “and other inciters of such evil and scandal,” who used the popular uprising in order to gain *balìa* before giving the order for it to stop. “But,” he added, “the masses, when they are incited, don’t always stop where those who incite them stop, and this is what happened in Florence.”¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ STEFANI, rubr. 792, 320: “...corsono una gente minuta, e rizzarono uno cappello in su una lancia, ed andarono ne’ Romiti degli Angeli e nella Chiesa di S. Spirito... rubarono infino all’orlique insieme colla roba e mercanzia, che v’era dentro, del giusto e del peccatore.”

¹⁸² NOFRI, 55: “...tutto operarono i ghibellini sospetti e macontenti [sic] e capi d’essi... Ma la grande [part of the populace], quando è mossa, ispesse volte non ristà a posta di chi la muove; e così fe la citta di Firenze; non si fermò dove averebbe voluto messer Tommaso di Marco degli Strozzi, messer Salvestro de’ Medici, messer Benedetto degli Alberti, Giovanni Dini e gli altri movitori di tanto male e scandalo, quanto ne seguì; come che alla fine tutti ne capitarono male.” This is the passage referenced in the first note of this chapter.

From 23 to 30 June 1378, a *balia* of more than eighty men addressed themselves to pacifying the city in the aftermath of the violent events, aware that the city still seethed with conspiratorial tensions (*considerantes murmur et scandalum*).¹⁸³ With one arm they punished the leaders of the Parte—

¹⁸³ The measure that created the *balia* is in ASF, *PR*, 66, 51r-52v; a summary of its decisions is in ASF, *CR*, 11, 124r-158r, and, in part, edited in Falletti-Fossati, at pages 333-45; the quotation (“considerantes...”) is at f. 125r. In order to maintain consistency with the other lists used in this chapter, the names have been *volgarizzati* (from the original Latin contained in ASF, *PR*, 66, 51rv, and *CR*, 11, 124r-v and alphabetized by given name, with additional details sometimes added in brackets, and the quarters (Santo Spirito = SS, Santa Croce = SC, San Giovanni = SG, Santa Maria Novella = SMN), offices (Gonfaloniere di Giustizia = 01, Priori = 08, Sedici gonfalonieri = 16, Dodici buonomini = 12, Capitani di Parte Guelfa = CPG, Dieci di Libertà = DL, Otto di balia e guerra = OG, Guild representatives = A-guild name), and occupations when available noted in parentheses. The members of the *balia* were: Agostino di ser Piero (A-Cuoiai), Alessandro di messer Riccardo Bardi (OG), Andrea di messer Francesco Salviati (OG), Andrea di Segnino Baldesi (16, SMN), Angelo di Borgognone (12, SG), Antonio di Spigliato (A-Vaiai, pellipaio), Barduccio Cherichini (12, SS), Bartolo di Michele (A-Correggiai), Bartolo di ser Tino (16, SC, tavoloiaio), Bartolomeo di Leone di Simone (16, SC), Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti (A-Calimala), Benozzo di Francesco di Andrea (16, SS), Bernardo di Andrea (CPG, corazzaio), Bernardo di Iacopo Beccanugi (DL), Bernardo di Ligi (A-Chiavaoli, calderaio), Bernardo di Matteo Velluti (12, SS), Bese di Guido Magalotti (CPG), Bettino di messer Bindaccio Ricasoli (CPG), Buonaccorso di Lapo di Giovanni (12, SC), Buonaccorso di Vanni (12, SC, orafo), Cenni di Marco (A-Albergatori), Cristofano di Barbarino (A-Corrazzai), Domenico di Tieri Magalotti (16, SC), Donato Busini (16, SC), Filippo di Rinaldo Rondinoli (A-Lana), Firenze di Pancia (A-Calzolai), Francesco di Feduccio [di Cione] Falconi (08, SS), Francesco di Salvestro Peruzzi (DL), Francesco di Spinello (08, SC, vaiaio), Francesco di Tieri called “Calcagno” (A-Beccai), Gentile di Lippo Belfredelli (16, SS), Gerozzo di Nastagio Cacciafuori (16, SS), Ghino di Bernardo Anselmi (CPG), Giovanni di Bartolo Biliotti (CPG), Giovanni di Federigo (A-MSM, speciale), Giovanni di Gherardino [Canacci] (A-Maestri), Giovanni di Lapo Corsi (DL), Giovanni di Mone (OG, biadaioiaio), Giovenco di Daniello Arrigucci (16, SG), Giovenco di messer Ugo della Stufa (16, SG), Grazia di Nardo (A-Fornai), Guccio di Dino Gucci (OG), Iacopo di Bernardo (A-PSM, ritagliatore), Iacopo di Giovanni Risaliti (CPG), Iacopo di Iacopo Gherardini (CPG), Iacopo di Neri Paganelli (DL), Iacopo di Schiatta Mangioni (12, SMN), Lapo di Orlanduccio (A-Oliandoli, biadaioiaio), Lapo di Vanni Rucellai (12, SMN), Leonardo di Neri di ser Benedetto (12, SG), Lorenzo di Matteo Buoninsegni (08, SMN), Marco di Giotto Fantone (16, SMN), Mariotto di Simone Orlandini (12, SC), Matteo di Federigo Soldi (OG, vinattiere), Matteo di Pacino (A-Legnaioli), Michele di Neri (A-Fabbri), Neri di Riccuccio (A-Vinattieri), Niccolò Cambini (A-Rigattieri), Niccolò di Bartolo Cini (12, SMN, ritagliatore), Niccolò di Bono Rinucci (12, SS), Niccolò di Geri Geri (16, SG), Niccolò di Lippo Alberti (08, SS), Niccolò di Niccolò di Gherardino Gianni (OG), Nofrio di

declaring Lapo da Castiglionchio a rebel of the commune; making Piero degli Albizzi, Carlo Strozzi, Bonaiuto Serragli, messer Ristoro Canigiani, messer Benghi Buondelmonti, Francesco and ser Taddeo di Donato Marchi, and all of Lapo's agnatic kin (*omnes et singuli consortes et coniuncti per lineam masculinam*) magnates; making the magnates Adoardo Pulci, Attaviano Brunelleschi, Alessandro Buondelmonti, Vieri Adimari, Iacopo Pazzi, and Guerrieri di Tribaldo Rossi "supermagnates"; and excluding a handful of men from office-holding without declaring them magnates: Bartolo Siminetti (for ten years), Niccolò Soderini (for life), and Piero Dell'Antella (from the Captainate of the Parte Guelfa for life).¹⁸⁴ With the other arm they embraced the *ammoniti*, but not entirely—they put to a vote the question of whether a long list of recently proscribed citizens should be re-integrated into the commune, accepting many, but with a *divieto* blocking them from office for three years, and also rejecting a number of them, including messer Donato Aldighieri, the ropemaker Maso di Neri, Giovanni Mozzi, messer Giovanni da Poggibonsi, and messer Giovanni di messer Scolaio.¹⁸⁵ A petition officially presented "on behalf of all the consuls [*capitudini*] of the twenty-one guilds of the city of

Giovanni di messer Lapo (A-Cambio), Paolo di Matteo Malefici (DL), Piero di Cenni [Ghetti] (08, SG, spadaio), Piero di Fronte (08, SC, lanaiolo), Piero di Rosso (16, SS, fornaio), ser Piero Nelli (A-Giudici e notai), Salvestro di messer Alamanni de' Medici (01, SG), Salvi di Guglielmo (DL, beccaio), Simone di Bartolino (08, SG, calzolaio), Simone di Benedetto di Gherardo [Del Bello] (08, SMN), Simone di Rinieri Peruzzi (OG), Stagio di Bartolo (DL, ferraio), Taddeo di Cantino degli Agli (CPG), Temperano di Manno del Chiaro (16, SMN), Tommaso di Bartolo (12, SG, pellipaio), Tommaso di Marco Strozzi (OG), Tommaso di Meglio Fagioli (16, SMN, lanaiolo), Tommaso di Serotino Brancacci (CPG, lanaiolo), Vieri di Cambio de' Medici (DL), and Zanobi di messer Marabottino Tornaquinci (DL).

¹⁸⁴ ASF, CR, 11, 126v.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 145v-148v.

Florence, and of each and every guildsman of those guilds” and approved as law on 9 July officially legitimized the destruction of the Parte Guelfa’s weapons of terror, and did so in the name of the entire guild community. It stripped from the Captains of the Parte Guelfa the power to proscribe (*ammonire*) any Florentine citizen from a lineage that had held major communal or guild office since 1312, to send Florentines into confinement outside the city borders, and to proscribe foreign officials; and it invalidated “every scrutiny made by the Parte Guelfa during the tenure of Lapo da Castiglionchio and his associates.” The law also certified the powers and privileges of Salvestro de’ Medici and his fellow priors as well as all legislation between 24 and 30 June (i.e., the acts of the *balìa*), established new guidelines for scrutinies for the priorate and communal councils and for the name selection process (*imborsazione*), and it seemingly converted the wide-ranging authority of the emergency *balìa* of June into what could have become a stable, consent-driven guild government.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶ The measure of 9 July 1378, now found in ASF, *PR*, 66, ff. 57r-59v, is completely transcribed in Falletti-Fossati, *Ciampi*, as document VII in the appendix at pages 346-56: “per parte di tucte le Capitadini delle ventuna Arti della città di Firenze, et per parte di tutti et singuli artefici delle decte Arti” (346)... “ogni scrupitino facto alla Parte Guelfa al tempo di messer Lapo da Castiglionchio et de compagni” (351)...” Najemy, “Audiant omnes artes,” 63-4, has shown how this legislation arose out of the corporate principles of the Florentine popolo, principles that had been stressed anew in recent communal assemblies.

The Plots of July 1378

No extant chronicle of 1378 more readily attributes the events of the summer to conspiratorial activity or reveals more about those conspiracies than that of Alamanno di messer Alamanno Acciaiuoli, who was drawn for the priorate on 28 June and thus provides a level of detail possible only from a first-hand witness.¹⁸⁷ On the afternoon of Monday 19 July, he reports, an informant came before the priors and claimed that a group of *ammoniti* were planning to revolt (*romoreggiare e levare la terra a romore*) on Tuesday.¹⁸⁸ “If you want to know the truth about these things,” he said, “go apprehend someone named Simoncino, who’s called Bugigatto and lives near the Porta di San Pier Gattolino [the city’s southernmost gate], or Pagolo del Bodda, or

¹⁸⁷ On the identification of Alamanno Acciaiuoli as the author of the chronicle formerly attributed to Gino Capponi “il vecchio,” see Gino Scaramella, “Avvertenza” to the “Cronache e ricordanze di pubblici magistrati del giugno-luglio 1378” in SCARAMELLA, 5-9, and, more importantly, his “Questioni varie intorno alle cronache capponiane pubblicate dal Muratori,” *Archivio muratoriano* 1 (1913): 307-325. Alamanno was moderately wealthy (his forced loan assessment before the summer of 1378 was 2 f., 15 s., 4 d.; see ASF, *Prestanze*, 334, 8v), a traditionalist and critic of the war against the papacy (SCARAMELLA 18, and David S. Peterson, “The War of the Eight Saints in Florentine Memory and Oblivion,” in *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, ed. William J. Connell [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002], 207), and had served the government previously as one of the 16 *gonfalonieri* in early 1377 (ONLINE TRATTE). He was also a vociferous critic of Salvestro de’ Medici and this undoubtedly colors his account. One of the manuscripts containing ACCIAIUOLI has recently been edited entirely in Luciano Formisano, ed., *Iddio ci dia buon viaggio e guadagno: Firenze, Biblioteca Riccardiana, ms. 1910, Codice Vaglienti* (Florence: Polistampa, 2006).

¹⁸⁸ ACCIAIUOLI, 20: “In quello medesimo dì del lunedì, in sull’ora della nona [around 4PM] si senti per li priori d’alcuno, lo quale aveva nome [...], come per questi amuniti il martedì si dovesse romoreggiare e levare la terra a romore.” The names of the informant and possibly of one or more of the *ammoniti* are missing; this lacuna is present in all of the manuscripts. That the informant describes the conspirators as “amuniti,” and not as Ciompi, is noteworthy, as we will see.

Lorenzo Ricomanni from San Frediano; and whichever of these three you bring in can tell you all about the planned conspiracy [*trattato*] and what was planned.”¹⁸⁹ The first of the three, having been quickly brought in and questioned by the *proposto* (possibly Acciaiuoli himself) in front of an altar in the priors’ chapel, admitted that he and his associates were afraid because they had committed a number of robberies and heard that a police official (*bargello*) named ser Nuto from Città di Castello had been hired to capture and hang them, and that, on account of this fear, twelve of them (including Pagolo del Bodda, Lioncino di Biagino, Lorenzo Ricomanni, Nardo di Camaldoli, Luca di Melana, Meo del Grasso, Zoccolo, Guido Bandiera, Salvestrino da San Giorgio, Guanda di Gualfonda, and Galasso) had gathered at the Spedale de Preti (Priests’ Hospital) in via San Gallo and called together a group of men from Belletri and San Gallo.¹⁹⁰ “We agreed there to cause a revolt [*levare il rumore*] at around 8:30 in the morning,” Simoncino explained. “It was planned by certain syndics we’d elected a few days earlier at Ronco outside the Porta di San Pier Gattolino. Know this, my lord prior, we have conspired together [*congiurati insieme*], and we have with us a lot of guildsmen and men from good families [*ben dell’artefici assai e de’ buoni*], and most of the proscribed [*grandissima parte dell’ammoniti*], who are very willing to help, are with us

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., “Se voi volete sapere la verità di questi fatti, fate avere uno che ha nome Simoncino, chiamato Bugigatto, dalla Porta a San Piero Gattolino o Pagolo del Bodda o Lorenzo Ricomanni da San Friano. E quale avete di questi tre, eglino vi diranno tutto el trattato per ordine, che è ordinato.” Simoncino’s nickname Bugigatto (now more commonly “bugigattolo”) means “a little room”

¹⁹⁰ Two of the manuscripts used by Scaramella add that more than fifty men from Belletri came to the hospital at the call of the conspirators; see the note to line 4 in SCARAMELLA, 21: “piu di 50 de’ belletrani.”

too.”¹⁹¹ The *proposto* then asked Simoncino “if any citizen, *popolano o grande*, was their leader,” and he replied that they were lead by “certi amuniti” including “the spice merchant Giovanni Dini, the pavers Guglielmo [or Giuliano] and Andrea [di Feo], and the ropemaker Maso [di Neri],” adding: “But be certain of this, my lord prior, that many *ammoniti* were eager to bring about these events.”¹⁹²

Later that night, the priors summoned most of the government, including all the *gonfalonieri* and guild consuls, and they decided together that Simoncino should be forced to tell the truth about the conspiracy (*il vero di questo trattato*) under torture. Simoncino broke under the pain of the strappado (*parecchi tratti* of rope) and added one crucial element to his earlier description of the plot: “that the leader and organizer of the conspiracy was Salvestro di messer Alamanno de’ Medici”.¹⁹³ Following the interrogation, an assembly was held in which various representatives of the government weighed in on what to do about Simoncino’s revelation. Marco di Giotto Fantoni, one of the *gonfalonieri* from the quarter of Santa Maria Novella,

¹⁹¹ ACCIAIUOLI, 21: “quivi si determinò di levare il rumore in sul l’ora della terza; e così era dato l’ordine per certi sindachi, che noi facemmo nel Ronco fuori della Porta a Sanpiero Gattolino più di sono. E sappiate, signor mio, che noi siamo bene [...] congiurati insieme, ed ecci in fra noi ben dell’artefici assai e de’ buoni; e sono con noi grandissima parte dell’ammoniti, e quali ci si sono molto profferti.” The lacuna is present in all manuscripts, and it is likely only a number of plotters that is missing.

¹⁹² Ibid., “...Giovanni Dini, speziale, e di Guglielmo e Andrea, lastraiuoli... e di Maso funaiolo...” Two of these individuals can easily be identified (as in the brackets above), but the third, the lastraiolo Guglielmo (or, in one manuscript, Giuliano) resists identification. “Ma tenete di certo, signor mio, che da molti amuniti sono stati sollecitati di fare commovere a questi fatti.”

¹⁹³ Ibid., 22: “che capo e guida di questo trattato era Silvestro di messer Alamanno de’ Medici.”

argued that the confession should be believed and called on the Capitano del Popolo (who had administered the interrogation) to take into custody all those named by Simoncino while he was under interrogation “in order to understand the basics of the whole crime.”¹⁹⁴ Niccolò di Bono Rinucci, on behalf of the Twelve, agreed, but asked that force not be used in their capture and added, crucially, that Salvestro be sent for without any delay.¹⁹⁵ Speaking on behalf of the consuls of the guilds, the banker Francesco di ser Santi Bruni presented a cautious plan, requesting that the matter be kept secret, that an armed guard (pretending to hold a demonstration) be placed in the piazza in the morning, that the city’s shops remain open, and, as the others had, “that in the meantime all the persons named should be brought in, and that Salvestro di messer Alamanno [de’ Medici] should be brought in immediately”.¹⁹⁶ According to Alamanno Acciaiuoli’s account, it was Giovanni di Cambio di Geri (sometimes called “el Balestriere,” the crossbowman), one of the sixteen *gonfalonieri* in May-June and a member of the late-June *balìa*, who found Salvestro and questioned him about the plot. Unable to deny (*disdire*) what Simoncino had revealed, Salvestro admitted that he had spoken with the

¹⁹⁴ ASF, CP, 17, f. 10r: “Marcus Giotti pro Gonfaloneriis dixit: Quod detur credentia et cum sollicitudine et diligentia fiat quod nominati per examinatum omnes seu illi qui possunt haberi capiantur et ponantur in manibus Capitanei Populi, ita quod sciatur fundamentum totius rei.”

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., “Nicholaus Boni pro Duodecim dixit idem quod Gonfalonerii salvo quod non fiat aliqua captura per vim, sed requirantur nominatim per magistratus et non fiat aliquis apparatus armorum. Et quod mittantur indilate per Salvestrum.”

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., “Franciscus ser Santi pro Capitudinibus dixit: Quod preparetur gens armorum et sub pretextu mostre sit in platea in aurora diei. Et quod interim procuretur quod habeantur omnes nominati, et subito habeatur Silvester d. Alamanni. Et quod nullus mercator aliquid cesset sed stent apotheca aperte, et iuretur secretum.”

Ronco conspirators (*lo confessò*), but claimed that he had refused to listen to their plans because they were “dangerous to the government” (*pericolose allo stato*), adding, “they told me that they had discussed the plot with certain other citizens, Barna di Valorino [Ciurianni] and others, who had advised them to ask for these things [presumably, i.e, their list of demands].” “Lords priors,” Salvestro explained, “I know well that I made a mistake by not coming to tell you about this, but considering that these people are not very much worth mentioning to lords of your power, I didn’t bother to tell you.”¹⁹⁷ The priors were merciful and did nothing to punish Salvestro but, Acciaiuoli adds, they were later very sorry (*molto ripentiti*) that they had not.

Acciaiuoli describes the men who met at Ronco as “li ribaldi e gente minuta e di vile condizione” who feared retribution for their crimes, particularly those against Church property at the Romiti degli Agnoli and Santo Spirito, but he invests their meeting with a strange, almost liturgical solemnity:

In order to be joined together one to the other in life and death and to defend each other from anyone who would want to harm them, they bound themselves with great promises and oaths [*sagramenti e leghe*] and kissed each other on the mouth. They gave the order to go to all of their peers in the places and neighborhoods where they lived and to administer the oath and receive promises. And they selected certain representatives [*sindachi*] to remain alert and ready so that, if any crime or harm

¹⁹⁷ ACCIAIUOLI, 23: “Di che eglino mi dissono, che n’aveano avuto ragionamento con alcuno altro cittadino, il quale gli avea consigliati dovessino queste cose domandare, e questi erano suti il Barna Valorini e altri. Di che, signori, ben conosco che io fallai a non venirevelo a dire; ma considerato che gente son queste da farne poca menzione alla possanza della vostra signoria, non mi curai di significarvelo.”

was done against any one of them, they would all come to his defense; for this reason they were on high alert.¹⁹⁸

It has been argued that these men could have been forming in their “fraternal binding together and oathtaking” the “rudimentary organization” that would become the guild of the *popolo minuto*,¹⁹⁹ and that may very well be true. But the same binding and oathtaking are also central to the *coniuratio* or conspiracy. Whatever the Roncans were up to, Acciaiuoli is clear about who, ultimately, was responsible for the fear that drove them to take the oath, and why:

The *ammoniti* were going around day and night inciting and stirring up the *popolo minuto*, saying, “You wicked people, you’ll all be hanged for robbing citizens and churches; the priors have called in police officials [*difensori e bargelli*] for this very reason.” They were saying these things and putting fear in their hearts in order to start another revolt to get everything they wanted.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ ACCIAIUOLI, 19: “...quivi con grandi sacramenti e leghe si legorono insieme e bacioronsi in bocca d’essere alla morte e alla vita l’uno coll’altro e difendersi contro a chi li volessi offendere; e dierono ordine d’andare a tutti e loro pari, per li luoghi e contrade dove dimoravano, a dare il sacramento e ricevere promessioni; e ferono certi sindachi, che questi fussino e stessino avvisati e attenti, che, se a nullo fussi fatto villania o ingiuria, d’essere tutti in difesa di quello tale; di che eglino stavono in grande riguardo.”

¹⁹⁹ Najemy, “Audiant Omnes Artes,” 61.

²⁰⁰ ACCIAIUOLI, 19: “Li amuniti ... andavano di dì e di notte commovendo e sottraendo questi del popolo minuto, dicendo loro: ‘Cattiva gente, voi sarete tutti impiccati per la gola per le ruberie che avete fatte a cittadini e alle chiese; imperochè i priori hanno ordinato di fare venire difensori e bargelli, per questa cotale cagione.’ E questo dicevano, a fine che altra volta si romoreggiasse per avere interamente loro intenzione; e mettevono loro questa paura in corpo.

It is also interesting, in this respect, that Salvestro would claim that they had formulated their demands and plotted along with Barna di Valorino Ciurianni, a prominent and politically independent merchant who had served on the priorate in the middle of 1377, and who was only loosely allied with Salvestro's faction.²⁰¹ Assuming that Acciaiuoli's account is accurate, and we have no reason to believe otherwise, it is possible that Salvestro was himself only tenuously tied to the plotting in July, plotting in which his allies were obviously active participants. It is also possible, though, that Salvestro was simply biding his time, knowing that violence would again soon erupt.

The accuracy of Acciaiuoli's description of the extent to which fear of being caught and executed by ser Nuto or other police officials drove Simoncino and his colleagues likewise cannot be entirely verified, but it is strongly supported by the account of the wool shearer Pagolo di ser Guido, who devotes a great deal of space to the city's and the wool guild's efforts to physically punish thieves in the summer; they went searching all over the city, he says at one point, bringing with them the savage tools of capital punishment—"col ceppo e con la mannaia e con capresti"—the chopping block, the sword for beheading, and nooses.²⁰² That ser Nuto in particular was

²⁰¹ On Barna, see Marvin Becker, *Florence in Transition*, vol. 2, 141. Writing to his father more than twenty years after the tumults of 1378, this same Barna would note the change that had occurred in the practice of Florentine politics: "nowadays vendettas are fought in the palazzo; there are no more street battles with knives"; see Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 29-30. This is striking because the plots and counter-plots of 1378-82 undoubtedly helped lead to the consensus politics of later years that spelled the end of street battles.

²⁰² PAGOLO DI SER GUIDO, 273. The ominous list comes from Pagolo's description of the hunt for the *fiamminghi*, a group of northern European robbers who exploited the political unrest of June. Pagolo claims, contrary to other accounts including the *Anonimo*, that all five were caught, and notes that they were hanged in prominent spots throughout the city, "l'uno in su la Piazza de' Priori, l'altro in mercato,

feared and hated is clear from the gleeful pleasure that Pagolo takes in reporting that he got his just desserts in July: “At Vespers [around 7:30PM], ser Nuto was spotted, so those following the banner of the wool shearers ran over, grabbed him, killed him, dragged him into the piazza of the priors, and strung him up by the feet; blessed is he who was able to have a little bit of him, nothing more than a foot and half a leg were left of him.”²⁰³

Even after the *balìa* had finished doing its work, the streets and houses and shops of Florence bristled with tensions and smoldered with talk of conspiracies. As John Najemy has shown, the records of the communal advisory assemblies (*consulte*) for these days are full of rumors of heated discussions and secret rumblings—*colloquia*, *murmurationes*, and *discordie*—within the guilds, rumblings to which the likely and proffered solution appeared to be a full embrace of corporatist principles.²⁰⁴ But on 12 July, only days after he had called for all the guilds to be heard (*audiant omnes artes*), Niccolò di Bono Rinucci of the Twelve would also call for the Captain of the People to “pursue conspirators and those holding secret gatherings day and night,” just as Giovenco di messer Ugo della Stufa for the Sixteen had called on the same day for the rectors to “prosecute plots and conspiracies in whatever way they

l’altro a Santa Maria Novella, l’altro da Borgo Ognissanti, l’altro a Santo Spirito,” presumably to maximize the fear-inducing impact of the executions.

²⁰³ Ibid., “Poi in sul vespro fu insegnato Ser Nuto, corsevi il pennone de’ Cimatori e presonlo e uccisonlo e strascinaronlo in su la Piazza de’ Priori e appiccaronlo pe’ piedi, beato chi ne potè avere un poco, non vi rimase altro che un piede e mezza la gamba.”

²⁰⁴ “Audiant omnes artes,” 62-4.

think most expedient”²⁰⁵ It is impossible to say exactly who was conspiring and for what ends in these meetings (presumably distinct from those occurring within the guilds), but eight days later word of one such plot reached the priorate. Having only heard second-hand of Simoncino’s arrest, the Machiavelli chronicler reported for 20 July that the priors “had heard that, in Camaldoli and in other places, that is, San Piero Gattolino and Belletri, there were many sworn together to do a great evil, that is, to burn all the houses of the *popolani* and the houses of those who had destroyed Florence through the policy of proscription which they had created in the Parte palace.”²⁰⁶ Before long the planned riot erupted, and the crowd was joined, says Stefani, by “all the laborers of the minor guilds and most of the major guilds.”²⁰⁷ First, when the priors seemed reluctant to release Simoncino and his allies, they burned the houses of Luigi di messer Piero Guicciardini, the Standardbearer of Justice, and those of his kinsmen. Then they attacked the houses of ten other men,²⁰⁸ making a show of not robbing anything:

²⁰⁵ Quoted in Gherardi’s documentary appendix to ANONIMO, 513: “...de die et de nocte persequantur conspiratores e facientes adunatas... inquirant de tractatoribus et conspirationibus prout ipsis videbitur expediens...”

²⁰⁶ ANONIMO, 366: “ch’e nostri signiori avieno sentito che in camaldoli e inn’altre luogora, cioè in San Piero Gattolino e in Belletri erano istati molti giurati insieme di far un gran male, cioè d’ardere tutte le case de’ popolani e le case di coloro ch’avieno guasta Firenze per quello ammonire ch’avieno fatto nel Palagio della Parte...”

²⁰⁷ STEFANI, rubr. 795, 322: “...tutti i fattori di tutte l’Arti minori e molti delle maggiori...”

²⁰⁸ Stefani’s list: *ibid.*, 322-3: (1) messer Filippo Corsini, (2) Antonio di Niccolò di Cione Ridolfi, (3) messer Coppo di Lippo di Cione del Cane, (4) Michele di Vanni Castellani, (5) Simone di Rinieri Peruzzi, (6) Andrea di Segnino de’ Baldesi (7) Bernardo di Iacopo Beccanugi, (8) Alessandro and Bartolomeo degli Alessandri, (9) Domenico di Berto Ugolini, (10) ser Piero di ser Grifo, the notary of the Riformagioni; and Luigi Guicciardini.

And so that it could not be said that they went to commit robberies, they worked in this way: when they gathered to set a house on fire, they took whatever others dragged out, fine cloths, pearls, silverware, and beds and burned it all in the fire.²⁰⁹

The arsonists, it seems, were consciously and intentionally distinguishing their work of political violence from the robberies committed in June, which had created so much fear of retribution, and which to at least some extent had been the work of opportunists and even foreigners. An enraged ser Nofri declared that the arsons committed by the “*gente minuta* and the rabble” were done “through the working of Benedetto degli Alberti and other citizens” adding that

the last house burned in Florence by the Ghibellines and rabble, through the working of the criminal Benedetto Alberti, who had the help of the foolish and cocky Tommaso di Marco Strozzi and the others who followed them in rioting and house-burning, was that of [the writer Ser Nofri’s father] ser Piero di ser Grifo di ser Bruno who was the notary of the Riformagioni [i.e., the legislative notary] of the people and commune of Florence.²¹⁰

The accusation of a fanatic like ser Nofri must be taken with a grain of salt, but, as we will see below, the selection of houses for destruction

²⁰⁹ Ibid., “E perchè non si dicesse che andassero rubando, tennono uno modo che quando giugneano per mettere fuoco alla casa, pigliavano ciò che altri ne traevano, drappi, perle, ariento e letta, e in sul fuoco ardevano ogni cosa.”

²¹⁰ SER NOFRI, 57: “...dalla giente minuta e dal popolazzo di Firenze, per fattura di messer Benedetto degli Alberti e d’altri cittadini... l’ultimo casamento el quale fu arso in Firenze da’ ghibellini e dal popolazo, per fattura di messer Benedetto degli Alberti, il quale era reo uomo, coll’aiuto di Tommaso di Marco degli Strozzi, el quale fu poco savio e baldanzoso, e d’altri e quali costoro seguitavano, feciero fare romore e ardere le case di ser Piero di ser Grifo di ser Bruno, el quale era notaio delle Rinformagioni del popolo e comune di Firenze.”

does reveal the planning, at least, of the men who wished to go further in remaking the city and re-instating the proscribed than the *balia* had been able to.

The Knights of the Ciompi

The creation of more than 60 knights on the evening of 20 July in the Piazza della Signoria has inspired a variety of historical interpretations. Gene Brucker, noting that it was a group of “prominent citizens” who were knighted, has signaled the event, in an essay of conservative revisionism, as an example of how the Ciompi “went out of their way to resurrect antiquated ideals and symbols”;²¹¹ and Alessandro Stella, an open supporter of the revolutionary left, has seen in it a “ritual of inversion,” or reversal, in which those of the lowest social orders created a knighthood of “merchants, wool manufacturers, and bankers” to defend them.²¹² Yet while these modern observers, notwithstanding the enormous differences between their approaches, both found it striking that the Ciompi would have knighted men of higher social rank, at least one contemporary was struck by something

²¹¹ “The Ciompi Revolution,” 352-3.

²¹² *La révolte des Ciompi*, 68: “...il s’agit bien d’un rite d’inversion. Ce n’est ni l’empereur, ni la caste des chevaliers, ni le *popolo grasso*, mais les derniers dans l’échelle sociale, les *minuti*, les *pedites* qui nomment (par l’intermédiaire, bien sûr, d’un chevalier) des chevaliers. De plus, oh l’horreur!, des marchands, des lainiers, des banquiers auraient dû devenir les défenseurs de la piétaille (*minutaglia*).”

different: in his cantankerous yet comical description (written in the late fourteenth century) of the decline of the dignity of knighthood (from *cavalleria* to what he calls *cacaleria*), the *novelliere* Franco Sacchetti recalls how “not many years ago, craftsmen and minor guildsmen, down to the bakers, and even lower, wool carders, usurers, and shameful criminals” were all made knights.²¹³ Contemporary accounts of the knighting ceremony are not entirely harmonious, with the chronicler Stefani providing the most complete version: The crowd “grabbed certain citizens and knighted them by force,” and

because they were afraid of being robbed and having their houses burned down many of them agreed to be knighted in this way. And they acted shrewdly: they went into the piazza of the priors, where the Capitano del Popolo and the soldier Count Averardo di Lando were, and those who wished to be knighted in order not to have their houses burned, because they were members of the faction that used *ammonizione*, had friends in the piazza and they were saying, ‘Next, next, now this one, now that one!’ And they moved about. The people [*popolo*], longing for revolution [*novità*], ran here and there, leading them around. There were some whose houses were burned, and some who were elevated to the dignity of knighthood; and it was such that some whose houses had been burned were made knights and others were made knights who had their houses burned a little while later. It was *il più nuovo e strano viluppo che mai si facesse*.²¹⁴

²¹³ *Trecentonovelle*, ed. Antonio Lanza (Florence: Sansoni, 1984), nov. 153, 325: “...non sono molti anni, far cavalieri li meccanici, gli artieri, insino a’ fornai; ancora più giù, gli scardassieri, gli usurai e rubaldi barattieri.” In the traditional order of the guilds, the bakers’ guild (“fornai”) was lowest.

²¹⁴ STEFANI, rubr. 795, 323: “Ed eglino presero certi cittadini, e per forza li faceano cavalieri, come che in quello fare dei cavalieri molti se ne facessero per paura di non essere arsi e rubati. E teneano questa cautela: mandavano in sulla piazza de’ Priori, dove era il Capitano del popolo ed il conte Averardo di Lando che era soldato, e quegli che si volea fare cavaliere da sè per paura di non essere arso, perocch’era della setta di quelli ch’ammoniano, avea gli amici in sulla piazza, e dicea:

It was, in Brucker's translation, "the most incredible disorder that had ever occurred," but this removes the obvious sense of novelty (and, perhaps, even of political subversion) in *nuovo* and of knottiness in *viluppo*.²¹⁵ And, as we will see, these revolutionary grants of knighthood would provide a tangle of knots to be untied over the next two days and later that summer. Having offered a similar account, Alamanno Acciaiuoli also opined, "it was a hard thing to believe".²¹⁶ Unlike Stefani's nameless crowd, the Machiavelli chronicler provides some possible details about who initiated and undertook the knighting: "this group of the people [*popolo*] and the consuls and guildsmen took Salvestro di messer Alamanno, brought him onto the *ringhiera* [a raised platform in front of the palace], and made him a knight. And then he went to the houses of Giovanni Dini and Tommaso di Marco [Strozzi] and made them knights, together with Guccio di Dino Gucci and many other citizens."²¹⁷ Ser Nofri, in an account that must be read with suspicion due to its author's rabid

'All'altro, all'altro, al cotale, al cotale'. E moveansi. Lo popolo, vago di novità, correa qua e là, e menavano. E chi ardeano, e chi levavano a dignità di cavalleria; e a tale era arsa la casa sua, che in quello stante era fatto cavaliere; e tale fatto cavaliere, che ivi a poco gli era arsa la casa. E fu il più nuovo e strano viluppo che mai si facesse."

²¹⁵ Brucker translated only the final line, in *Florentine Politics*, 381.

²¹⁶ ACCIAIUOLI, 25-26: "Forte cosa era a crederlo."

²¹⁷ ANONIMO, 366: "E l'altro dì, Salvestro di messer Alamanno, la brigata del popolo e Capitudine e artefici sì presono Salvestro, e menoro'lo in sulla ringhiera e feciollo cavaliere. Ed egli andò a casa Giovanni Dini e Tommaso di Marco, e fecissi cavalieri, e Guccio Dino Gucci e molti altri cittadini." Anonimo incorrectly places this event on 21 July, and his assertion that Giovanni Dini and Tommaso Strozzi were knighted at home differs from other accounts, such as that of the SQUITTIATORE, 73, where it is noted that the Otto della Guerra (of which those two were members) were all knighted "in sulla porta di signori priori," that is, in the doorway of the palazzo. MONALDI, 518, similarly, notes that "Silvestro fece Cavaliere M. Tommaso di Marco degli Strozzi".

biases, adds that Benedetto Alberti and Tommaso Strozzi “made themselves knights *or* made each other knights [*si ferono cavalieri*],” if not meaning that to be taken literally then at least suggesting that they were complicit or somehow involved in the granting of knighthoods.²¹⁸ The chronicles differ on precisely how many men were knighted on 20 July—the Squittinatore (pp. 73-4), for instance, lists fewer than 60—but, taken together, around 70 different men are named as knights in all the available sources.²¹⁹ What was so *nuovo* and

²¹⁸ SER NOFRI, 57.

²¹⁹ Gaetano Salvemini reconstructed a list of those knighted in 1378 from a variety of (primarily chronicle) sources in his monograph on Florentine knighthood; it is now found in *Magnati e popolani in Firenze dal 1280 al 1295; seguito da La dignità cavalleresca nel comune di Firenze* (Turin: Einaudi, 1960), 467-9. For the sake of greater completeness, I have added those names found in either RASTRELLI, 152-3, or in the chronicle sources in SCARAMELLA, which are not found in Salvemini’s list. Those who affirmed their knighthood on 18 October 1378 are underlined; their names (derived from archival sources) are published in the documentary appendix of Alessandro Gherardi, ed., *Diario d’anonimo fiorentino dall’anno 1358 al 1389*, in Marco Tabarrini, ed., *Cronache dei Secoli XIII e XIV* [Florence: Cellini, 1876], 523). Three of them confirmed their knighthood through a *procurator* whose name is listed in double brackets after their names. Alphabetized by given name, the knights were: (1) Alessandro di Messer Riccardo de’ Bardi, (2) Alessandro di Niccolò Alessandri, (3) Andrea di Messer Francesco Salviati, (4) Andrea di Lippo Mangioni, (5) Antonio di messer Nicola degli Alberti, (6) Antonio di Michele Tanagli, (7) Arnaldo di Messer Coppo Pontigiani [Mannelli], (8) Bartolomeo di Lapo Bombeni, (9) Bartolomeo Petriboni, (10) Benedetto di Nerozzo degli Alberti, (11) Bernardo di Chiarissimo di Meo Cionacci, (12) Bettino di messer Covone Covoni, (13) Biagio di Bonaccio Guasconi, (14) Chimento, scardassiere^A; (15) Cristoforo di Anfrione degli Spini, (16) Donato di Iacopo Acciaiuoli, (17) Filippo di Rinaldo Rondinelli, (18) Filippo di ser Lippo Magalotti, (19) Forese di Giovanni Salviati, (20) Francesco di Neri degli Spini, (21) Francesco di Uberto degli Albizzi, (22) Fruosino di Francesco di Spinello, vaiaio; (23) Fuligno di Conte de’ Medici, (24) Gagliardo di Neri de’ Bonciani, (25) Gaspare di Francesco di Uberto degli Albizzi, (26) Gino di Bernardo Anselmi, (27) Giorgio di messer Francesco degli Scali, (28) Giovanni di Francisco Zati, (29) Giovanni di [messer] Francesco Rinuccini, (30) Giovanni di Bingieri Rucellai, (31) Giovanni di Cambio de’ Medici, (32) Giovanni di Mone, biadaiuolo; (33) Giovanni Dini, speziale; (34) Giovenco di messer Ugo della Stufa, (35) Gregorio di Pagnozzo Cardinali, (36) Guccio di Cino Bartolini, (37) Guccio di Dino Gucci, (38) Guerriante di Matteo Marignolli, (39) Guido [di Giovanni] de’ Machiavelli [[procurator: messer Alessandro di messer Riccardo Bardi]; (40) Guido di Salvestro, called “el Bandiera,” scardassiere; (41) Iacopo di Bernardo, biadaiuolo, (42) Iacopo di Piero Sacchetti [[procurator: Iacopo

strano about the ceremony to Stefani, as it was to Alamanno Acciaiuoli who used similar language,²²⁰ was that they destroyed the houses of some of the very same men that they knighted. But, for all the chroniclers' amazement, only two of the 70 or so knights (the standard-bearer Luigi Guicciardini and Alessandro Alessandri) had had their houses burned that day; similarly only a small group were proponents of *ammonizione* or of the previously targeted Parte faction (Biagio Guasconi, Simone Baroncelli, Francesco di Uberto degli Albizzi and his son Gaspare, Ramondino di Giovanni and Vanni di Iacopo

di Bartolomeo Bombenii]; (43) Lionardo di Tommaso Peruzzi, (44) Luca di Totto da Panzano^B, (45) Luigi di Lippo Aldobrandini, (46) Luigi di messer Piero Guicciardini, (47) Marco di Francesco Vigorosi, (48) Matteo di Federico Soldi, vinattiere; (49) Matteo di Iacopo Arrighi, (50) Meo [Bartolomeo di Lorenzo] del Grasso, fornaio; (51) Meo de' Cocchi [Bartolomeus Bartoli de Cocchis], (52) Nastagio di ser Francesco, (53) Niccolò di Alesso [di Borghino] Baldovinetti, (54) Nozzo di Vanni Manetti, (55) Palmieri di messer Arnaldo Altoviti, (56) Palmieri di messer Francesco degli Scali^C, (57) Piero di Bindo del Benino, (58) Ramondino di Giovanni Vecchietti, (59) Rinieri di Luigi Peruzzi, (60) Ruberto di Piero di Lippo Aldobrandini, (61) Salvestro di messer Alamanno de' Medici, (62) Simone Baroncelli, (63) Simone di Baldo della Tosa, (64) Simone di Rinieri Peruzzi, (65) Tommaso di Marco degli Strozzi, (66) Tommaso di Neri di Lippo del Palagio, (67) Vanni di Iacopo Vecchietti, (68) Vanni di Simone Quaratesi [or: da Quarata]; (69) Vieri [di Gherardo] del Poggio [Bardi] [[procurator: Benedetto di Nerozzo degli Alberti]]; (70) Vieri del Porcello, fornaio^D; and (71) Vieri di Cambio de' Medici. Notes: A = Named only in SCARAMELLA, p. 110 (*Cronaca seconda d'anonimo*) and almost certainly the Chimento di Noldino in ASF, *Arte della Lana*, 76, f. 5r; B = Knighted on 28 August 1378, see e.g. SCARAMELLA, 80 (*Cronaca prima d'anonimo*) (unlike the others here who were knighted throughout the day and night on 20 July 1378) and he is not included when I speak of the July knighthood; C = Listed by Salvemini, but possibly confusion with #26; D = Named only in SCARAMELLA, 110 (*Cronaca seconda d'anonimo*). On the knighthood ceremony and its significance, one may also consult the little cited work of Eugenio Branchi, "Della croce vermiglia in campo bianco, arme del popolo fiorentino, divenuta insegna dei cavalieri del popolo," in *Periodico di numismatica e sfragistica per la storia d'Italia* 4 (1870): 78-89.

²²⁰ ACCIAIUOLI, 25, says that "nuova cosa era a vedere," it was a *new* thing to see, someone whose house was burned being made a knight later that day.

Vecchietti, Andrea di Lippo Mangioni, and possibly Giovanni Rucellai).²²¹ Monaldi adds that Salice Cavalcanti, another supporter of the oligarchy, refused (*non accettò*) his knighthood.²²²

The bulk of remaining knighthoods did not surprise our chroniclers. Seven of the new knights had themselves been recent victims of *ammonizione*, and another five had just had close relatives proscribed.²²³ The grain dealer Iacopo di Bernardo, while not *ammonito*, was a thorn in the side of the Parte faction who had been denounced in a *tamburazione* (almost certainly written by a Parte lackey) as the descendant of Ghibellines who had supported the tyrant Castruccio Castracani;²²⁴ likewise, Vanni di Simone Quaratesi came from a family long opposed to the Guelf faction that had also been denounced to the Esecutore.²²⁵ The son of Alessio Baldovinetti, who had threatened to burn down the Parte's palace, was also knighted. The eight

²²¹ The composition of the leadership of the Parte has been established above. Andrea di Lippo Mangioni (4) is described in STEFANI, 731, as "a member of the Albizzi faction, very haughty" ("della setta degli Albizzi, molto fiero"); his Son Nicola and brother Cipriano would be major plotters against the guild government of 1378-82. While perhaps not a member of the inner core of the Parte faction, Simone Baroncelli was certainly considered a papal stalwart; in addition to the sources given by Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 230, n. 146, see also Bernard Guillemain, *La Cour pontificale d'Avignon, 1309-1376: Étude d'une société* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1966), 596.

²²² MONALDI, 519.

²²³ The seven *ammoniti* are nn. 7, 12, 27, 33, 51, 52, 54 in the list. The fathers of nn. 29 and 47, the brothers of 56 and 57 (i.e., Giorgio di messer Francesco Scali and Stefano di Bindo del Benino), as well as the cousin of 37 (i.e., Alessandro di Benedetto Gucci) were *ammoniti* as well.

²²⁴ ASF, *Esecutore*, 811, 137v.

²²⁵ For the denunciation, see ASF, *Esecutore* 811, ff. 174-5r; on the family's opposition to the Guelfs, see Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 30 and *passim*.

members of the Otto della guerra, charged with carrying out the war against the papacy, were also knighted, as well as three others who had had family members among the Otto dei preti or the Otto della guerra.²²⁶ Not including the Otto, six of those knighted had served on Salvestro de' Medici's balia, as had the father of one of them.²²⁷ Among the knights were also a number of other leaders of the popular and anti-oligarchic faction, men like Gino di Bernardo Anselmi, who had been active in the popular movement in the quarter of Santa Maria Novella as early as the 1350s, and Giovanni Rinuccini, the son of one of the richest men in Florence.²²⁸ The knight Tommaso del Palagio, whose family was a re-named *popolano* branch of the magnate Bardi, was a leader in the movement as well, as was the knight Filippo Rondinelli's cousin Andrea.²²⁹ The Aldobrandini, from which two of the knights came, were allies of the Ricci and remained strongly tied to the popular and anti-oligarchic faction; it was, for example, in the newly knighted Luigi di Lippo's house that

²²⁶ The Otto are nn. 65, 1, 37, 64, 32, 48, 33, and 3. Giovanni di Francesco, the cousin of 18, had previously served on the Otto della guerra. Bardo di Guglielmo, the cousin of 55, and Antonio di Forese, the cousin of 42, were among the Otto dei preti. With the exception of Simone Peruzzi, these men were all among the strongest supporters of the war; for example, Andrea Salviati is described by Marvin Becker, *Florence in Transition*, vol. 1 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), 222, as one of the patricians most in favor of the war against the papacy on the basis of his participation in communal assemblies.

²²⁷ On the balia were nn. 10, 17, 26, 34, 41, and 71; and the father of 22, Francesco di Spinello.

²²⁸ On Anselmi, Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 33 and 69; on Rinuccini, *ibid.*, 31 and 298; Rinuccini was also tied to the Alberti by marriage; see Susannah K. Foster [Baxendale], "The Ties that Bind: Kinship Association and Marriage in the Alberti Family, 1378-1428" (Doctoral Thesis, Cornell University, 1985), 261.

²²⁹ Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 298, n. 5, and 184, n. 138.

Salvestro and his faction conspired.²³⁰ The knight Piero di Bindo del Benino entered the office-holding ranks with other *gente nuova* in the 1340s and came from a family notoriously opposed to the Albizzi faction.²³¹ And the knight Bartolomeo di Lapo Bombeni, his ally, similarly came from a new family, with his father having served on the priorate under the Duke of Athens.²³² Many of the men who were knighted that day were bound to one another by a shared political ideology, but they were also connected by commercial and marriage ties²³³: Gagliardo di Neri de' Bonciani, for instance, had been a

²³⁰ On the Aldobrandini, see Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, especially 209 and 298, but *passim*. Luigi's alliance with Salvestro is noted in Becker, *Florence in Transition*, 135; he had also been a communal ambassador during the War of the Eight Saints, on which see Gherardi, *La guerra dei fiorentini con papa Gregorio XI*, p. 156.

²³¹ Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, 127 and 217; his account book has been published as *Il libro segreto della ragione di Piero Benini e compagni*, ed. Piero Ginori Conti (Florence: Olschki, 1937).

²³² See the entry on the Bombeni family in Lorenzo Cantini, *Saggi storici d'antichità toscane*, vol. 7, 112 (Florence: Albizziniana, 1797); Bartolomeo was a member of the Calimala guild and client of the Del Bene; on this see Hidetoshi Hoshino, *L'arte della lana in Firenze nel basso Medioevo: il commercio della lana e il mercato dei panni fiorentini nei secoli XIII-XV* (Florence: Olschki, 1980), 171.

²³³ Such ties are not, of course, always meaningful in understanding one's political affiliation or ideology, a good case in point being Biagio Guasconi (number 13), who was a leader in the Parte Guelfa faction; for a brief biographical sketch, see Giovanni da Prato, *Il Paradiso degli Alberti, ritrovi e ragionamenti del 1389*, ed. Aleksandr Nikolaevich Veselovskīi (Bologna: Romagnoli, 1867), at pp. 227-8; he was a member of the Arte della lana and served as consul on a number of occasions; see Raffaella Maria Zaccaria, "Documenti su Biagio Guasconi e la sua famiglia," in *Interpres* 11 (1991): 308-26, reprinted in *Studi sulla trasmissione archivistica: secoli XV-XVI* (Florence: Conte Editore, 2002), 111, and Hidetoshi Hoshino, *L'arte della lana in Firenze nel basso Medioevo*, 182. In this capacity he was involved in business with Cipriano di Duccio degli Alberti, and, in the mid-1370s, took part in an arbitration on behalf of Marco di Francesco Alberti; his son also married an Alberti; on this, see Foster [Baxendale], "The Ties that Bind," 149 and 433.

business associate of the Alberti,²³⁴ while the the newly knighted and recently proscribed Meo de' Cocchi had a daughter, Ginevra, married to another of the new knights, Francesco Spini.²³⁵ Fruosino di Francesco di Spinello had brothers married to both the knighted Tommaso Strozzi's daughter Bice and to Antonia Alberti, whose kin included two new knights.²³⁶ Although it cannot be proved on the basis of the existing sources, it would surprise no one if Monaldi's claim that "seventeen close associates [*diciasette compagni*]" of Tommaso Strozzi were among the first men knighted.²³⁷

Though we cannot know with certainty why many of the men were knighted or even precisely how or by whom,²³⁸ the image that emerges from a close examination of the sources is striking: although the knighting ceremony

²³⁴ See Richard C. Trexler, *The Spiritual Power: Republican Florence Under Interdict* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 86, n. 189.

²³⁵ Armando Saponi, "L'interesse del danaro a Firenze nel Trecento (Dal testamento di un usuraio)", in *Archivio storico italiano* VII.x.2 (1928): 161-186, at page 172; Monaldi calls Meo a "malvagio uomo e usuraio"; this is possibly the knighted usurer mentioned by Franco Sacchetti.

²³⁶ Philip Jacks with William Caferro, *The Spinelli of Florence: The Fortunes of a Renaissance Merchant Family* (University Park, PA.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 24. Another interesting case is that of Filippo Magalotti (number 18), who later married his daughter Selvaggia to Benedetto Alberti's son-in-law, whose drawing for the office of Standardbearer of Justice while he was still a "minor" (under 40 in that case) in 1387 precipitated Alberti's stunning fall from power, see Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, 78, and ASF, *Missive*, 20, f. 249; and Susannah F. Baxendale, "Alberti Kinship and Conspiracy in Late Medieval Florence," in *Florence and Beyond*, ed. David S. Peterson with Daniel Bornstein, p. 343.

²³⁷ MONALDI, 518.

²³⁸ While our sources say little about a number of the knights, it is easy to surmise their political sympathies in some cases: Guccio di Cino Bartolini (number 36), for example, was a non-elite member of the guild Cambio who was active in guild politics and would serve the 1378-82 guild government; see Saverio Lasorsa, *L'organizzazione dei cambiatori fiorentini nel medio evo* (Cerignola: Scienza e Diletto, 1905), 90, and the ONLINE TRATTE.

devolved into chaos, with some men being knighted by force and others offering themselves up for knighthood to save their houses from destruction, the core of the new class of knights were all representatives of a well-defined and now ascendant political movement, the popular and broad-based faction led by Benedetto Alberti, Tommaso Strozzi, Giorgio Scali, and Salvestro de' Medici. It is, I believe, entirely possible that Salvestro de' Medici and Tommaso Strozzi themselves co-orchestrated the knighting ceremony (or, almost certainly, the early stages of it) along with leaders of the *popolo minuto*, selecting for the new dignity their friends, allies, and fellow conspirators. The men who plotted with Salvestro de' Medici in June, who stripped from the Parte Guelfa its authority and targeted its leaders with physical and political violence, were knighted on the evening of 20 July 1378. However many Ciompi participated that night in some capacity, only two, carders both, were included in the raucous, moving procession of knights: Guido di Salvestro, called "el Bandiera," who had conspired with Simoncino at Ronco, and Chimento di Noldino; also knighted that evening, the baker (and later carpenter²³⁹) Meo del Grasso was classed along with them in the *popolo minuto* by contemporaries like Stefani. While the scholarship often refers to these knights as the "knights of the Ciompi," the woolshearer Pagolo di ser Guido notes that Salvestro was made a "knight of the *popolo minuto* and the guilds," as, presumably, were the others that day,²⁴⁰ and all the accounts are clear that the crowd was comprised of guildsmen and *popolo minuto* (not

²³⁹ See the copy of a later list of Florentines, divided by quarter, contained in ASF, *Manoscritti*, 171, f. 4r.

²⁴⁰ PAGOLO, 273: "...fecionlo Cavaliere del Popolo Minuto e dell'Arti..."

restricted only to Ciompi), presumably a mixture of major guildsmen with larger numbers of minor guildsmen and wool workers.

The Petitions of July

On the next day, fearing that the crowd would do more damage, the priors sent a group of intermediaries (Stefani, 325, calls them *uomini mezzani*) to meet with the leaders of the *popolo minuto* to discuss their demands, and from these discussions emerged three lengthy petitions.²⁴¹ An anonymous letter written in 1378, which betrays a close familiarity with the events of July, gives us a glimpse into how the petitions (or at least one of them) were written, and, crucially, who wrote them:

That night they sent for the Eight of War and for the Syndics of the Guilds, and they held a meeting there and together decided that a petition should be written; they would ask for all the things they wanted, and present it to the priors, who would approve it. And so they did this, with around twenty or thirty of them retiring to San Lorenzo with a majority of the Syndics of the guilds, and they began to make the petition and worked on it until past terce [after 8AM] .²⁴²

²⁴¹ The approved petitions are found in ASF, *PR*, 67, ff. 1-13v. The first petition (ff. 1-5v) was published as document IX (“Petizione del Popolo minuto, approvata nei Consigli”) and the second (ff. 6r-8v) as document VIII (“Petizione dei Sindaci delle Arti, approvata nei Consigli”) in Falletti-Fossati, *Ciompi*, 356-64. The first petition has also been published (with corrections) by Ottavio Banti, “Notarelle sul tumult dei Ciompi,” in *Scritti di storia, diplomatica, e epigrafia*, ed. Silvio P.P. Scalfiati (Pisa: Ospedaletto, 1995), 523-534. For the first, I use Banti’s text, for the second, Falletti-Fossati’s, for the unedited third, ASF, *PR*, 67, ff. 9r-13v.

²⁴² LETTERA, 142: “... la notte mandarono per gli otto della guerra e per i sindachi dell’arti; et quivi preser consiglio, et deliberossi in fra loro che si facesse una petitione, et domandassino quanto per loro si volessi, et che ella si porgesse a

The presence of the Eight of War and representatives of all the guilds, major and minor, reveals clearly that the revolutionary political program of the “Ciompi” belonged to a certain extent to the wider guild community (of which the Ciompi were not yet part) and to the pro-war party of Tommaso Strozzi and his allies; two of the petitions produced that night were presented “pro parte Populi minuti,” but the third was presented by the syndics of the twenty-one guilds. In his masterful essay “Neighbors and Comrades: The Revolutionaries of Florence, 1378,” Richard Trexler has demonstrated conclusively that first *minuto* petition “committed the *homines de populo minuto* to a non-revolutionary settlement of the issues,” that the syndics of the *popolo minuto* who offered it did not represent the more radical elements of the Ciompi, and that one third of them were already guildsmen; but he says nothing of the second petition, except to refer to it as “less important” in a footnote to his other essay on the Ciompi, “Follow the Flag.”²⁴³ Unlike the other two petitions, which predominantly addressed political and economic issues and only secondarily addressed what might be called personal or private provisions (punishing or rewarding named individuals), the second petition of the *popolo minuto* contains only personal or private provisions (see the chart below for the persons named in each petition). One article of the first petition of the *popolo minuto* makes clear that the knighthoods conferred on victims of arson, which had so startled Stefani and the other chroniclers, were

signori, che ella si vincerebbe. Et così feciono, et ritrassonsi in San Lorenzo circa 20 in 30 di questa brigata con alcuni sindachi dell’arti et la maggiore parte; et cominciorno a acconciare questa petizione e questo si penò a fare fin passato terza.”

²⁴³ *The Workers of Renaissance Florence*, 73-79, with the quotation at 73; and page 44, n. 56.

for the most part, if not performed through error or misplaced exuberance, regretted the next morning: “no one whose house was burned or who was robbed in the riots that recently occurred in the city of Florence is or should be understood to be a knight of the Florentine People,” excluding only Luigi Guicciardini.²⁴⁴ Guicciardini, with whom they were now “negotiating,” was, almost uniquely among the victims of their terror, not a chief supporter of the Parte Guelfa or the Albizzi faction. Among the other knights, two are singled out for further honors,²⁴⁵ each for having worked in many ways (*laboravit multipliciter*) for the *popolo minuto*. First, the carder Guido called “El Bandiera,” a “new knight made and created for the *popolo minuto* [*novus miles factus et creatus pro Popolo minuto*],” is to be awarded two thousand florins (to be taken from the sale of rebel property) within one month as a payment for his work on behalf of the *popolo minuto*; in his brief summary of the petition, Alamanno Acciaiuoli declares that Guido was promised the money because he was “uno dei primi che levò il rumore,” one of the instigators of the riot.²⁴⁶ Second, Salvestro de’ Medici “who, exposing himself to danger in a bold and manly way, worked for the free and popular government of the People and Commune of Florence and to honor and maintain the merchants and guildsmen of Florence,” is given all the proceeds from the rents (*pensiones et*

²⁴⁴ Banti, “Notarelle,” 532: “Item, quod nullus cui in tumultibus qui noviter fuerunt in civitate Florentie fuit combusta domus, vel qui fuit derobatus, intelligatur esse vel sit miles Populi florentini, salvo quod hec non preiudicent domino Luisio de Guicciardinis.”

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, and 527-8.

²⁴⁶ ACCIAIUOLI, 28.

redditus, totaling more than 70 florins per year) from Ponte Vecchio for life,²⁴⁷ says Acciaiuoli, “per sostentare sua cavalleria,” to maintain his knighthood.²⁴⁸ In the petition of the guild syndics, another three knights are rewarded: Giovanni di Mone, one of the leaders in the Eight of War, is praised for having “worked tired tirelessly with great labors and resourcefulness for the People and Commune of Florence” and is given 300 florins per year from the proceeds of the Mercato Vecchio; Giovanni Dini, the member of the Eight of War who had been proscribed in April, is declared “to be and to have always been a Guelf and faithful to the Guelf Party, and not a Ghibelline nor a suspected Ghibelline,” is restored fully to his rights, and is re-instituted as a member of the Eight; Giorgio Scali, likewise, is declared a perpetual Guelf and restored entirely, along with “all of his agnatic kin.”²⁴⁹ The lawyer Donato Aldighieri, who had been rebuked by the *balia* in his attempt to have his proscription overturned, was declared a Guelf and fully restored in the petition of the syndics of the guilds; while the similarly rejected ropemaker Maso di Neri was restored in the second petition of the *popolo minuto*.²⁵⁰ In fact, in that petition, nine other articles filling one and a half folios (11r-12r) are devoted to overturning ten remaining proscriptions. And two similar articles appear in the

²⁴⁷ Banti, *Notarelle*, 528: “...pro statu libero et populari Populi et Comunis Florentie, et pro honore et manutentione mercatorum et artificum civitatis Florentie laboravit quibusque periculis audaciter et viriliter se subiecit...”

²⁴⁸ ACCIAIUOLI, 28.

²⁴⁹ Falletti-Fossati, *Ciampi*, 361-2: “...cum maximis laboribus et solertia pro Populo et Comuni Florentie assidue laboravit...”; “...constat semper fuisse et esse guelfum et Parti Guelfe fidum, et non ghibellinum vel suspectum Parti Guelfe...”; “eius consortes et descendentes et agnati per lineam masculinam.”

²⁵⁰ For Donato, Falletti-Fossati, *Ciampi*, 363; for Maso, ASF, *PR*, 67, 11r.

first *minuto* petition, including one restoring the paver Andrea di Feo, “Andreas Fei lastraiuolus.”²⁵¹ This is striking, first, because Alammano Acciaiuoli, in his account of the *ammoniti* stirring up Simoncino and his allies, had stressed that the troublemakers included both those who had not yet been restored (*smuniti*) and those who had been restored by the *balia*, but who still suffered under a three year *divieto* blocking them from office because more than sixty of the commission’s members had not voted in their favor,²⁵² and secondly because, in Acciaiuoli’s account, when Simoncino was asked who was in charge of the conspiracy (see above), he named four individuals: “the spice merchant Giovanni Dini, the pavers Guglielmo and Andrea [di Feo], and the ropemaker Maso [di Neri].”

Taken together, the petitions name and reward some of the men who had conspired to orchestrate (or, at least, to encourage and facilitate) the revolt of July, and who used that revolt to achieve their ends: Salvestro de’ Medici, Giovanni Dini, Giovanni di Mone, Giorgio Scali, Andrea di Feo, Maso di Neri. Of the thirteen men who had conspired at Ronco, five—Filippo di Simone, Leoncino di Franchino, Cambio di Bartolo called “Galasso”, Lorenzo di Riccomanno, and the newly knighted Guido “Bandiera”—were appointed syndics of the *popolo minuto* and helped draft the petitions.²⁵³ We find

²⁵¹ Banti, “Notarelle,” 530.

²⁵² ACCIAIUOLI, 19: “...li quali molti di loro non n’erano ancora smuniti, e etiam quelli ch’erano smuniti e aveano il divieto di tre anni, quelli per essere più tosto smuniti perchè il numero delle sessanta fave scemassino, e perchè fusse levato loro il divieto de’ tre anni.”

²⁵³ Trexler has reconstructed a list of Roncans in *Workers of Renaissance Florence*, 69, and he lists the syndics at page 74; the names of the syndics in Latin as written in the petition are found in Banti, “Notarelle,” 529.

ourselves here at the center of a conspiratorial nexus. It is impossible to know with any certainty how this conspiratorial nexus was forged, but at least one tantalizing possibility is available to us: that the links among these revolutionary conspirators (whether Ciompi, guildsmen, or leaders of the popular faction) were hammered out and hardened in the also revolutionary war against the papacy. In 1968, Gene Brucker discovered that at least seven of the Ciompi leaders (including the Roncan Leoncino di Franchino) had served as *caporali* and others as foot soldiers in the communal army during the war; and he inferred, if only apophastically, that these men might have become revolutionaries because they were unhappy about “the termination of their military service and high salaries” at the war’s end.²⁵⁴ The more likely possibility, given the content of the petitions, is that these men who fought the war were supporters of it and thus would reasonably have allied with the pro-war faction of Salvestro de’ Medici, Giovanni Dini, *et al.*, especially since the ideology of that faction offered (at least in theory) the possibility of an expanded and non-elite office-holding class; and that they would have harbored strong animosity against the Parte Guelfa faction that opposed the war and worked tirelessly to restrict the office-holding class. Either way the prominent service of several key Ciompi in the war provides a clear context in which the ties between the Ciompi and the Eight of War could have been made. What is certain is that the writers of the petitions used them to finish the unfinished business of the *balìa*, and what will be clear below is that they also used them to finally and inexorably destroy the Parte faction. Since it is clear

²⁵⁴ “The Ciompi Revolution,” 328-9; “The evidence does not permit us to conclude that the revolution was primarily the work of disgruntled army veterans...,” he says.

that the men of the *popolo minuto* feared retribution for the crimes they had committed, an article in the first petition of the *popolo minuto* granting amnesty for those crimes is not surprising, but its wording is revealing—no rector or other official, it states, can or ought to punish “any crime, transgression, or offence, of whatever kind, howsoever or for whatsoever reason committed, done, said, or carried-out, even if only verbally, from the eighteenth day of June to the day on which this measure is approved [23 July]”²⁵⁵ Another article, this time in the petition of the guild syndics, states “that each and every person who, either in June or in the current month of July, had his house burned down or was robbed should be understood to be and is, along with all his sons, brothers, and kin, unable to hold any office of the commune of Florence of the Guelf Party for ten years beginning now.”²⁵⁶ Both articles clearly present the violence of June *and* of July as being part of a single, unbroken continuum; and they link the arsons that swept over the houses of the Parte leaders with the other property crimes committed in the city. They also link the crimes of violence and the thefts to the whole assault on the Parte: in eleven articles (at ff. 9v-11r) the second *minuto* petition sent Piero degli Albizzi, Bartolo “Mastino” Siminetti, Carlo Strozzi, the brothers Matteo

²⁵⁵ Banti, “Notarelle,” 525: “...de aliquo maleficio, excessu vel delicto, qualitercumque, quomodocumque, et quacumque de causa commissis, factis, dictis vel perpetratis, etiam verbo, a die decimo octavo mensis iunii proxim[e] preteriti usque in diem qua presens provisio firmata fuerit...”

²⁵⁶ Falletti-Fossati, *Ciampi*, 359: “quod omnes et singuli, quibus de mense iunii proxim[e] preteriti vel de presenti mense iulii in tumulto populi fuerunt combuste domus vel fuerunt derobati, et eorum filii, fratres et patruj, excepto Smeraldo Stroze de Strozis, intelligantur esse et sint, ex nunc usque ad decem annos proxime secuturos, privati et remoti ab omnibus quibuscumque officiis Comunis Florentie et Partis Guelfe...”

and Giovanni dello Scelto Tinghi, and four others into confinement at least thirty miles from Florence; stripped office-holding rights from them and eight other men including Migliore Guadagni, Piero Canigiani, and Tommaso Soderini; declared five men magnates including Niccolò Ridolfi, and called for three magnates (Niccolò Bardi, Bertacchino Frescobaldi, and Bettino Ricasoli) to be treated as and punished as magnates to the fullest possible extent.

An article of the guild syndics' petition had even called for the Guelf Party to hand over its *vexillum regale*, the lily-covered flag that Lapo da Castiglionchio had had made earlier in the year and that would have called the Guelf forces to action on the feast of John the Baptist;²⁵⁷ and even some of the most famous politico-economic measures of these petitions were, ultimately, a platform for announcing the defeat of the Parte Guelfa faction: the government, for example, decided to have the Parte pay for the new *popolo minuto* guildhouse because it had been "cives veri et propri guelfi" that had created the new guild.²⁵⁸

An article of the guild syndics' petition had even called for the Guelf Party to hand over its *vexillum regale*, the lily-covered flag that Lapo da Castiglionchio had had made earlier in the year and that would have called the Guelf forces to action on the feast of John the Baptist;²⁵⁹ and even some of the most famous politico-economic measures of these petitions were, ultimately, a platform for announcing the defeat of the Parte Guelfa faction: the

²⁵⁷ Falletti-Fossati, *Ciampi*, 364.

²⁵⁸ See Niccolò Rodolico, *Democrazia fiorentina*, 181; the measure is found in ASF, *Capitani della Parte Guelfa (Rosso)*, 5, ff. 77r-78r.

²⁵⁹ Falletti-Fossati, *Ciampi*, 364.

TABLE I

Personal provisions in Ciompi petitions, 1378

PRO PARTE SINDICORUM	PRO PARTE POPULI MINUTI (#1)	PRO PARTE POPULI MINUTI (#2)
<p><i>In favor of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Giovanni Dini -Giorgio di Francesco Scali -Donato di Ricco Aldighieri -Giovanni di Mone 	<p><i>In favor of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Guido di Silvestro "el Bandiera" -Salvestro di Alamanno de' Medici -Andrea di Feo -Niccolò di Ammanato Tecchini 	<p><i>In favor of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Maso di Neri -Giovanni di Luigi Mozzi -Francesco di Martino -Giraldo di Paolo di Girardo -Mazza di Andrea -Piero di Fastello Petriboni -Francesco and Alessandro, sons of Benedetto di Guccio -Zanobi di Guidotto -Bernardo di Piero della Rena -Guerriante di Biligiardo Bagnesi -Serotino di Silvestro Brancacci
<p><i>Against:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lapo da Castiglionchio 	<p><i>Against:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -ser Piero di ser Grifo delle Riformagioni 	<p><i>Against:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ludovico di Banco di ser Bartolo -Selvolo di Lippo di Cione -Priore and Pera, brothers of Pera Baldovinetti -Simone di messer Bindo degli Altoviti -Piero di Dato Canigiani -Tommaso di Guccio Soderini -Niccolò di Sandro de' Bardi -Bertacchino de' Frescobaldi -Bettino di messer Bindaccio Ricasoli -Antonio di Niccolò di Cione Ridolfi

TABLE I (Continued)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Anibaldo di Bernardo degli Strozzi -Corrado di Paolo degli Strozzi -Alessandro and Bartolomeo, sons of Niccolò Alessandri -the Serragli family -Migliore di Vieri Guadagni -Matteo and Giovanni dello Scelto Tinghi -Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi -Maso di Luce degli Albizzi -Bartolo "Mastino" di Giovanni Siminetti <i>cont.</i> -Niccolò di Geri Soderini and son -Manetto di ser Ricciardo -Carlo di Strozza Strozzi
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government, for example, decided to have the Parte pay for the new *popolo minuto* guildhouse because it had been "cives veri et propri guelfi" that had created the new guild.²⁶⁰ The petitions rewarded the leaders of the popular party, the supporters of the war against the papacy, and those who had been victims of proscription; the petitions punished the leaders of the oligarchy, the opponents of the war, and the leaders of the Parte Guelfa faction. If we compare, say, Stefani's lists (see notes 197 and 231) of the houses burned in June and July, excluding Luigi Guicciardini, with the Parte leaders identified in

²⁶⁰ See Niccolo Rodolico, *Democrazia fiorentina*, 181; the measure is found in ASF, *Capitani della Parte Guelfa (Rosso)*, 5, ff. 77r-78r.

his list (note 188) and my list of Captains in 1378 (note 182), we see nothing more than the obvious and oft-stated fact that the crowds destroyed the houses of the Parte leaders; if we compare the victims of arson with those punished in the three petitions, we see again what should not surprise us, that the petitions punished most of the June victims and some of the July victims. What *is* striking is that a core of those whose houses were burned in July had served on Salvestro de' Medici's *balia*, among them the Guelf leader who had replaced Giovanni Magalotti on the Eight of War, namely Simone Peruzzi.²⁶¹ It becomes clear, as I suggested above, that the July riots were in part the work of men disgruntled about the outcome of the *balia* because it had failed to re-instate all of the *ammoniti* and because it left many of them under the three-year *divieto*. And we can well imagine that, when voting blocks were forming, it was men like Simone Peruzzi, Andrea di Segnino Baldesi, and Bernardo di Iacopo Beccanugi, all staunch Guelfs and supporters of rigid and closed oligarchy, who undermined the efforts of the *balia*.

Though little-discussed, the pages²⁶² that Alamanno Acciaiuoli devotes to the creation of Michele di Lando's priorate—laden with eye-witness detail, overflowing with rage, amazement, and pathos—and with which he ends his account of the summer of 1378 are, without question, a miniature masterpiece of *Trecento* diary-writing. Upon receiving the petitions of the *popolo minuto* and the guilds, he explains, the priors summoned the advisory colleges and

²⁶¹ On Simone, see Salamone Morpugo, "La guerra degli Otto Santi e il tumulto dei Ciompi nelle ricordanze di Simone Peruzzi," *Miscellanea fiorentina di erudizione e storia* 2 (1892): 3-15.

²⁶² Beginning at p. 30, l. 17, in SCARAMELLA.

the Eight of War to the palace and immediately approved them (*furono vinte di subito*), all the while their voices being drowned out by the crowd outside. After

TABLE II
*Parte Guelfa leadership, petition and arson victims,
 and balia participation, 1378*

HOUSES BURNED IN JUNE	GL	P	B	HOUSES BURNED IN JULY	GL	P	B
Lapo da C.	X	X		F. Corsini			
C. Strozzi	X	X		A. Ridolfi	X	X	
B. Siminetti	X	X		C. Cione			
N. & T. Soderini	X	X		M. Castellani			
B. Buondelmonti	X			S. Peruzzi	X		X
R. Canigiani,	X	X		A. Baldesi	X		X
P. Albizzi et al.	X	X		B. Beccanugi	X		X
I. Pazzi et al.	X	X		A. & B. Alessandri		X	
V. Cavicciuli	X			D. Ugolini			
M. Guadagni	X	X		P. di Grifo		X	
				B. Serragli ²⁶³	X	X	

(In the chart, GL = Guelf Leaders, P = Petition victims, and B = Balia members)

having explained that he would go out to announce that the petitions had been passed and to guard the door, Guerriante Marignolli, one of the priors, left the palace and did not return. Seeing him leave, the crowd shouted, “They should

²⁶³ Serragli was not listed by Stefani, but appears in other lists, such as that in Pagolo di ser Guido, who to some extent conflates the two waves of arson.

all come down because we don't want them to be priors anymore" (*Scendano tutti, che noi non vogliamo siano più priori*). Quickly, Tommaso Strozzi entered the priors' audience hall, revealed that Guerriante had gone home, and explained the crowd's wishes; and Pierozzo di Piero Peri explained this to the colleges, saying:

"Messer Tommaso [Strozzi], on behalf of the people and the guilds, told us that they want us to go home, so give us your counsel." The colleges were weeping, some wringing their hands, some striking their faces; all were astounded and didn't know what to do. The Eight appeared [*si mostravano*] sad and distraught. The priors were dumbstruck. There was very great unrest [*romore*] outside; [with the crowd] saying they wanted the priors to go home and the Eight to remain in the palace, or else the city would go up in flames and they would burn their houses and those of the college members and of all their families and kin and would take their women and children and kill them all in their presence unless they left right away. They used all of these threats, as they had been instructed to do [*come era insegnato loro*]. As the priors waited to hear from the colleges and the Eight [of War], messer Benedetto Alberti went to the priors and told them, "The people and the guildsmen want two of them to come up and sit with you priors". The priors replied, let's hope for the best, and that they were happy to have them come. So messer Tommaso [Strozzi] and messer Benedetto [Alberti] went to negotiate whom they wanted to come and sit with the priors. Ultimately they did not want to come, saying in fact, "We could never trust these priors, since we offended them so much." And they said, "We want all of them to go home or else we'll burn down their houses and those of their families and kin. The Eight [of War] should remain in the palace and no one else."²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ ACCIAIUOLI, 31: "messer Tommaso per parte del popolo e dell'arti ha detto a noi, come e vogliono, che noi ce ne andiamo a casa nostra tutti, e però consigiate'. I collegi piangevano, chi torceva le mani, chi con esse si batteva il viso; e tutti sbalorditi non sapevano pigliare partito. Li otto si mostravano tristi e dolorosi. I priori erano smemorati. El romore di fuori era grandissimo, dicendo che al postutto vogliono che i priori se ne vadino alle loro case, e vogliono che li otto rimanghino in palazzo; altrimenti questa città andrà a fuoco e fiamma, e che arderanno le case loro, e de' collegi, e di tutti i loro parenti e consorti; che piglierebbono le loro donne e figliuoli, che gli ucciderebbono tutti in loro

After long deliberations, an armed throng (*buona parte del popolo... e bene armati*) followed Niccolò di Tendi da Carlona, who along with his brother Benedetto would be one of the leaders of the guild government of 1378-82, into the palace. The priors went home and Michele di Lando—"he was wearing shoes without socks [*era in iscarpette senza calze*]," Acciaiuoli adds with either mockery or amusement—was proclaimed Standardbearer of Justice and *signore* of Florence by acclamation of the crowd. It is clear from Acciaiuoli's account that Salvestro de' Medici, Benedetto Alberti, and Tommaso Strozzi had already created a rapport with the leaders of the crowd, and that the crowd intended to re-make the government (just as they had made their petitions) with their help and that of the Eight of War. "Before the priors had left the palace," Acciaiuoli adds,

the Eight of War, who had arranged everything to achieve their ends [*condotte le cose al loro volere*], believed they would remain in the palace and create a new political order [*riformare la terra*] and hand-pick the new priors; there were entirely true and convincing signs that this is what they wanted. They had already sent someone to tell messer Giorgio degli Scali that he had been named prior. However, when the people heard them name messer Giorgio, they said that they didn't agree, and wanted to be the *signori* themselves. Since they said this, Salvestro de' Medici and messer Benedetto degli Alberti sent word to messer

presenza, se di subito non ne uscissino. Tutte queste minacce usavano, come era insegnato loro. Intanto che i priori attendeano i consigli da loro collegi e dalli otto, messer Benedetto delli Alberti venne alla signoria e disse loro: 'Il popolo e l'arti vogliono, che due di loro venghino quassù a sedere con voi priori'. Fu risposto pe' signori che erano contenti che venissino con buona ventura. Allora andò messer Tommaso degli Strozzi e detto messer Benedetto, a trattare che due di loro, chi eglino volevano, venissino a sedere su co' priori. E poi nell'ultimo non voleano anzi dicevano: 'Noi non ci potremo mai fidare di questi priori, tanta offesa abbiamo fatto loro'. E dicevano: 'Noi vogliamo del tutto se ne vadino a casa loro, altrimenti noi arderemo loro e i loro consorti e parenti. Rimanghino li otto in palazzo e non altri.'

Giorgio not to come. ... After the priors were picked by hand, the Eight of War thought that they had been badly tricked because they had been sure that they would re-make the government [*riformare la città*].²⁶⁵

Given his animosity toward Salvestro de' Medici, we must be wary of accepting Acciaiuoli's conclusions, but the facts in his account add up all too well with the other evidence. Salvestro de' Medici and the other leaders of his party had plotted with leaders in the minor guilds and the *popolo minuto*, first in June and then July; when it became clear that (from their point of view) the unrest on the street had grown too dangerous and the demands of the people too great, these leaders reached a compromise with the working classes which, they obviously hoped, would accept a limited share in the government, but leave the actual business of governing to them. The resistance to Giorgio Scali's selection as a prior shows that these hopes had been overly optimistic.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 33: "Innanzi, che i priori uscissino di palazzo, li otto della guerra, li quali aveano condotte le cose al loro volere, credendosi eglino rimanere in palazzo, e riformare la terra, e rifare li priori a mano, e di questo se ne vide segnali assai veri e efficaci, che così voleano. E già aveano mandato a dire a messer Giorgio delli Scali e a significarli, come era chiamato priore. Il perchè, quando il popolo udì nominare messer Giorgio, dissono, che non lo volevano, ma che volevano essere i signori eglino. Pel qual dire messer Salvestro dei Medici e messer Benedetto degli Alberti mandarono a dire a messer Giorgio, che non venisse. ... Poi fatto i priori a mano, li otto della guerra si tennono fortemente ingannati; perchè si credevano' certi di avere a riformare la città eglino, come abbiamo tocco di sopra."

The Plots of August 1378

Near the end of August, a group of wool workers and their allies (including many who had revolted in July), coming primarily from the outlying working-class districts of the Oltrarno, conspired along with the Luca da Panzano against the new regime. In almost every major respect they followed a plan that had already been laid out in the earlier events of the summer; they elected a group of syndics calling them the *Otto Santi del Popolo di Dio*, the Eight Saints of the People of God, just as the Eight of War had been called the *Otto Santi*; they knighted Luca da Panzano, just as the leaders of the popular party had been knighted; and, on 27 August in the piazza of the Benedictine house at San Marco, they gathered *en masse* to write a petition spelling out their demands, just as three petitions had been written and forwarded to the priors in July. The best witness for the events of late August is, undoubtedly, the chronicler called the Squittinatore, or Scrutiner, whom Richard Trexler has identified as the notary Bernardo Carcherelli in his essay "Herald of the Ciompi." Though Trexler has, incredibly, said of Bernardo that, despite his vocal Guelfism, "his revolutionary credentials are impeccable,"²⁶⁶ the Squittinatore was in fact a reactionary who supported the Parte's policy of proscription, derided the leaders of the popular faction, and supported the endless conspiracies launched against the popular government of 1378-82.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁶ *The Workers of Renaissance Florence*, 28.

²⁶⁷ SQUITTIATORE, at 86, calls the leaders of the guild government "ghibellines" and "enemies of the Parte Guelfa," he supports the "noble" and "guelf" conspirators against the regime, for example at 93 and later, and so on.

Regardless of his politics, Bernardo was present at San Marco when the petitions were drawn up and gives us a clear picture of their demands:

The decided to make a petition in this way; they got a notary who could write it up, and dictated to him: because the syndics had failed, none can hold office for ten years; that the Eight of War, who have been getting fifteen florins a month for their salary and produce nothing for it, should not have more than five florins per month; and those who deserve it, and those who failed should be sent into confinement, and the *Consorteria*²⁶⁸ that was made should be invalidated; that messer Salvestro should not have [the proceeds from] Ponte Vecchio; that messer Giovanni di Mone should not have [the proceeds from] Mercato Vecchio; that no knight should hold any office; that for the next two years no poor man from the new guilds should be imprisoned for a debt of less than fifty florins; that messer Luca da Panzano, who was a *grande*, should be made *popolano*; and that Betto di Ciardo should have ten florins per month and arms for himself and one friend.²⁶⁹

Other than the article protecting poor guildsmen from imprisonment for debts, this petition adds no substantive political or economic demands to the petitions of July; instead it seeks to unmake many of the personal ones. Whereas the

²⁶⁸ Presumably the *Conserteria della Libertà*, a large commission that developed out of and extended the power of the earlier and temporary *balia*.

²⁶⁹ SQUITTIATORE, 80: "Deliberaro di fare una pitizione per questo modo: e s'ì tolsono un notaio sofficiente a ciò fare, e dissoro così: per lo fallo ch'e' sindachi aveano fatto, niuno potesse avere uficio per di qui a x anni; e che gli otto della guerra non avessono di salare altro che fiorini 5 d'oro il mese, che n'avevano xv il mese, per loro salare, e non n'usciva nulla; e chi fosse degno, o ch'avesse fallato, fosse confinato; e che la consorteria ch'era fatta non valesse; e che messere Salvestro non avesse il Ponte Vecchio; e che messere Giovanni di Mone non avesse Mercato; e che niuno cavaliere non potesse avere niuno uficio; e che niuno povero dell'arti minute non potesse essere preso per niuno debito, da fiorini L in giuso, per di qui ad anni due che verranno; e che messere Luca di Totto da Panzano fosse fatto di popolo, ch'era grande; e che Betto di Ciardo avesse fiorini x il mese e l'arme per se e per compagno."

July petitions had rewarded Salvestro de' Medici, Giovanni di Mone, the Eight of War, and the new knights, this petition punishes all of them. The enemies of the August petition-writers seem to be the men who, from their point of view, had co-opted the July revolts or possibly betrayed them and were now profiting from doing so. It is not clear if they knew the full list of those who had been knighted in July, but if they did, their petition would have excluded from office-holding nothing less than the entire inner core of the popular faction and its leaders, like Salvestro, Giovanni, Benedetto Alberti, and Tommaso Strozzi. Perhaps even more strikingly the petition-writers chose to reward a man whose credentials were perhaps even more reactionary than the chronicler Bernardo's, namely the aristocrat and Guelf extremist Luca di Totto da Panzano, who delivered the petition on behalf of the crowd and was thereupon made a knight of the people. "Upon being made a knight," Bernardo reports,

[Luca] said to a certain part of the people: "Let's go get the flag [*confalone*] of the Parte Guelfa!" Then many people rose up and went with him to the [palace of the] Parte Guelfa to seize the flag. They did not find it; and some people were happy that they didn't find it and some were very sad. This man [Luca] was looking to run through the city with the flag of the Parte Guelfa and to shout, "Long live the Guelfs and death to the Ghibellines!" because he was a Guelf, and he and his family had always been guelfs, and he was one of the leaders of the Parte Guelfa.²⁷⁰

²⁷⁰ SQUITTIATORE, 80: "Fatto che fu cavaliere, ed e' disse a certa parte di popolo: 'Andiamo per lo confalone della Parte guelfa.' Allora si si mosse molta gente con lui e andaronne alla Parte guelfa, per torre il confalone di Parte guelfa. Non vi si trovò; e molta gente, chi ne fu lieta e chi dolente, che non vi si trovò il confalone. Costui guardava di correre per la terra, con questo confalone della Parte guelfa, e per gridare: "Vivano i guelfi e muoiano i ghibellini," perchè gli era guelfo, egli e suoi istati sempre mai, e capo di parte guelfa.

This *confalone* of the Parte is, of course, the very *vexillum regale* that Lapo had had made and that the petition-writers of July had wanted the Parte to surrender. It is entirely possible that the whole late-August movement had begun as an ill-conceived attempt on Luca's part to emulate the conspiratorial endeavors of the popular faction in June and July. Just as Salvestro's men, working either directly or indirectly on his behalf, had plotted with the Roncans and incited their friends and colleagues to action, so Luca had met in secret with a group of Ciompi in a place called the Canto della Cuculia in the working-class district of Camaldoli around 25 August. Not all of the crowd in late August was happy that Luca wanted to find the Guelf flag, though—as Bernardo noted, some were happy and others sad when his mission failed—and, as Trexler has noted, the Eight themselves later turned on Luca when it became clear that they would lose some of their following if they were allied to the strident Guelf.²⁷¹ At the very moment when the new crowd of Ciompi were massing at San Marco and drawing up their petitions, having chosen as their representative a self-proclaimed champion of the faction they had only recently overthrown, the government announced the confinement of twenty-seven leaders of that faction (Appendix 2), nearly all of whom had previously been singled out for punishment in the second petition of the *popolo minuto* and many of whose houses had been destroyed. It is hard to draw too strong a conclusion from this act, especially since a preliminary list of *confinati* had been established between 25-27 August (Appendix 2a), when the new Ciompi movement was still significantly smaller and essentially confined to Camaldoli; but the government likely already knew of embryonic plots to re-take the city

²⁷¹ *Workers of Renaissance Florence*, "Follow the Flag," 51.

and may well have understood the swelling worker discontent as the conspiratorially-motivated vanguard of a Guelf counter-offensive. And in response to the petition and election of the new Eight Saints, the notary Bernardo tells us that the old Eight Saints and the standard-bearer Michele di Lando *conspired* together to disband the twenty-fourth (or Ciompi) guild: “questo trattato,” he says (p. 81), “ordinorono gli otto della guerra e col confaloniere di giostizia.”²⁷² And, indeed, by 1 September, the government had disbanded the guild and defeated the forces of the Eight Saints with a brilliant, public show of force and guild unity.

In the communal debates on the issue of how to deal with the Eight and their followers, men like the proscribed lawyer Donato di Ricco Aldighieri, who had been rebuked by the *balia* and only re-instituted as a Guelf by petition in July, argued “that the leaders of those who caused the revolts must be swiftly punished”. As did Benedetto Alberti, who also wanted men dispatched to strategic locations in order to resist the illicit meetings and conspiracies (*adunationes vel coniurationes*) to come, a call that would echo repeatedly over the next forty months.²⁷³ By 20 September nearly fifty Ciompi, among them the omnipresent Guido called ‘Bandiera’, were indeed condemned by the new regime, but only one complete sentence from the court of the Capitano del Popolo has survived. On 17 December 1379 a sentence was announced

²⁷² SQUITTIATORE, 81. Although *trattato* had a number of meanings, among them treaty and plan, “trattato ordinorono” closely mirrors the official language of political conspiracy, “tractatum ordinaverunt” regularly being used synonymously with “conspirationem fecerunt.”

²⁷³ ASF, CP, 17, f. 18rv: Donato: “...quod celeriter capita illorum qui fecerunt novitates puniantur...”; Benedetto: “et quod celeriter fiat iusticia de captis culpabilium... quod gentes teneantur in locis opportunis ita quod resistatur ne fiant adunationes vel coniurationes....”

“contra Pierum Ciri scardazerium” for his involvement in a plot (discussed in the next chapter) to capture the town of Figline and wrest it from Florentine control. In the course of that later sentence, the Capitano excerpted the entire sentence that had been passed against Piero *in contumacia* more than a year earlier for his role in the events of late August. Piero, the sentence claims, gathered together with messer Luca da Panzano, several other Ciompi leaders like Luca di Melana and Meo del Grasso, and more than two hundred others in a field near the convent of the Convertite in the Oltrarno. There, it says, “they conspired to disturb and to harm the free and popular government of the city and also to depose the priors and deprive them of their rule and governance” by electing eight men “like chiefs and overseers and almost like lords of the whole city of Florence, naming and calling them openly and in public ‘the Eight Saints of the Balia of the People of God’.”²⁷⁴ The Eight Saints and their followers along with Piero “swore, touching the Holy Gospels with their hands, that they would be united in life and death as a single body and will, and that they would all conspire together and unanimously undertake a sworn conspiracy against the syndics of the guilds then in office and against the officials of the government [*regimina*] of the city of Florence.”²⁷⁵ Even the

²⁷⁴ The sentence has been transcribed in the documentary appendix of Rodolico, *Democrazia fiorentina*, and the original is in ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, ff. 39r-44r. I quote from Rodolico’s text, 442: “tractatum habuerunt de turbando et molestando liberum et popularem statum dicte civitatis... ac etiam de deponendo et privando de regimine et gubernatione dicte civitatis dominos Priores... in maiores et superstites et quasi dominos totius civitatis Florentie et ipsos cognominaverunt appellaverunt publice et palam ‘li otto Santi de la Balia del popolo de Dio’.”

²⁷⁵ Ibid., “...iuraverunt... unus alteri et alter alteri corporaliter manu tactis scripturis ad Sancta Dei Evangelia esse ad mortem et vitam ad invicem et unum et idem corpus et unum et idem velle et sic se ad invicem tenere et tractare et omnes unanimiter fecerent coniurationem conspiracy contra syndicos Artium tunc existentes et contra alia regimina civitatis Florentie...”

mass meeting at San Marco is described in the Capitano's sentence as a conspiracy: "they held an illicit meeting and conspired," it says, "with many others, five thousand or more in number."²⁷⁶ Remarkably, the sentence also contains the words of Simone d'Andrea called Morello, who was one of the Eight Saints, and who addressed the priors themselves, saying, "We are here on behalf of our lords and ourselves, that is, for the Eight Saints of the Balia of the People of God and their followers, and we want you to swear an oath, touching the Holy Gospels of God with your hands, that you will approve and vote for and pass each and every one of our petitions and that you will not act against the government of the Eight and their followers," an oath which the priors "not being powerful enough to avoid it," accepted by touching the gospels and swearing.²⁷⁷ Here we find the language of guild, conspiracy, and mass political movement conflated, exposing the political anxieties at the core of Florentine political culture. Whose oath-bound bodies were legal? Whose Eight Saints? Whose balia? Whose public assemblies? Whose petitions? At the moment that the priors accepted the petitions because they were not strong (*valentes*) enough to resist, who were the lords of Florence and who

²⁷⁶ Ibid., "fecerunt coadunationem et conspirationem insimul cum quampluribus aliis numero quinque milium et ultra..."

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 444: Nos venimus ex parte nostrorum dominorum et nostra, videlicet ex parte Octo Sanctorum Baylie populi Dei et eorum sequacium et pro nostra et pro ipsorum parte volumus omnino quod vos omnes iuretis in manibus nostris ad sancta Dei Evangelia corporaliter manu tactis scripturis quod vos admittetis et facietis vinci et obtineri omnes et singulas nostras petitiones et quod non eritis contra statum dictorum Octo et eorum sequacium." The priors agreed, "non valentes evitari dictum iuramentum..."

were the conspirators? Was it the new Eight, as the Capitano's sentence states, or the old Eight, as the Squittinatore had said?

After the Tumult

In January 1379, the wool napper Bartolomeo del Bello, called "Zoccolo," who had conspired with Simoncino at Ronco, presented a petition to the priors in which he asked them to annul his condemnation for having participated in the conspiracy uncovered in the Capitano's investigation, but, crucially, not for having taken part in the events of 31 August. It was argued that he was innocent and had, in fact, been an "enemy, opponent, and adversary" (*inimicus et contradictor et adversarius*) of the August plotters (*illorum qui predicta ordinaverunt et tractaverunt*) on that day; and also that his condemnation "was brought about more by the enemies of the present regime [*emulos presentis status*] than by his enemies." Trexler has suggested that Zoccolo was "intimating that he had been sentenced for what he had done in June and July, and if that were to be pursued, the regime itself could be accused." While such a reading may be somewhat hyperbolic, it is clear that Zoccolo was *stating* that those who had accused him—people within the late August plot—were enemies of the regime, whereas his activities earlier in the summer had been ones of which the current regime would likely have approved; and it is also clear that Trexler was more than intimating that the events of June and July had been encouraged and likely orchestrated by the leaders of that regime, whereas those of late August had been those of their enemies, a fact he derived from his prosopographical investigation into the

neighborhood solidarities of the Ciompi, which revealed that the syndics of the *popolo minuto* had largely come from north of the Arno (the Citrarno), whereas the *Popolo di Dio* was almost exclusively an Oltrarnan group.²⁷⁸ What is obscured by Trexler's overly neat contrast between Citrarnan moderates and Oltrarnan radicals is that the inner core of Roncans linked to the popular faction included a mix of Citrarnans (among them Zoccolo, Bandiera, and Calasso) and Oltrarnans, and that some of that group participated in both the more moderate and the more radical stages of the summer.

When, in Alamanno Acciaiuoli's account, the *proposto* of the priors asked the recently-captured Simoncino what he and his friends wanted, he spoke for the workers, for the "scardassieri, pettinatori, vergheggiatori, tintori, conciatori, cardaiuoli, pettinagnoli, lavatori, e altri," who were subject to the wool guild, who were "martyred" by the guild's police official for minor offenses (*per ogni piccola cosa ci martoria*), and who were underpaid by the big woolen-cloth producers (*maestri lanaiuoli*); and on their behalf he said that they wanted their own consuls (*consoli per loro*) and their own guild through which they could enter the city's ruling group (*avere parte nel reggimento della città*).²⁷⁹ And their struggle for incorporation into guilds and representation had been underway, as we have seen, already for at least thirty-five years. Hoping to find in the Ciompi entirely self-motivated revolutionaries, some historians have extolled the conspirators of August who after 31 August 1378 threw in their lot with the exiled leaders of the Guelf faction—a faction that relentlessly

²⁷⁸ "Sed predicta condempnatio procurata fuit contra ipsum Bartolomeum potius per emulos presentis status quam sue persone," quoted (from ASF, PR, 67, f. 141r) in *Workers of Renaissance Florence*, 111, where the passage quoted from Trexler also appears.

²⁷⁹ ACCIAIUOLI, 21.

tried to limit the size of the *reggimento*—and opposed those men who had created the largest and most democratic *reggimento* in Florentine history. Implicated in conspiracies with elite and non-elite alike and dragged into a factional struggle, the men of June and July who achieved representation for the Ciompi; and it was the men of August who lost it. From whatever direction one views these events, one thing is clear: in the summer of 1378, revolutionary politics meant conspiratorial politics.

Students of the Ciompi have clearly shown that the Ciompi and the *popolo minuto* used the events of the summer of 1378 to present, and struggle for, their own political agenda, an agenda they shared to a large extent with much of the unrepresented and underrepresented population of the minor guilds, an agenda that emerged from the unrealized corporatist ideals of the guild republic. Others have shown that they did so in the face of systemic economic and political oppression, that they found their friends and allies in their neighborhoods and shops, and their political vocabulary in solidarities not forgotten over more than forty years. What had not been told, though, is the complete story of what transpired (and was conspired) in the summer of 1378 and what role the Ciompi played was in those conspiratorial events. When, in a public assembly in September of 1378, a speaker praised Salvestro de' Medici as “author of the present regime,”²⁸⁰ he could not have been more right. The tumultuous changes wrought in the summer were the product of a secret plan set in motion by Salvestro and his allies, one that involved and men of the lower guilds and of the working classes. It was they who did the

²⁸⁰ Quoted and translated in Brucker, “The Medici in the Fourteenth Century”, 20.

work of destroying the Parte Guelfa faction. Yet by mid-July the conspiracy had run off-course. The *balia* and other legal measures that had been meant to legitimate and conclude the plot failed to please all the plotters. What was once a single plot now likely became a group of interconnected conspiracies, some more and some less coherent. More importantly, the men of the minor guilds had demanded a greater role in the coming government while the working classes had realized that there was power in numbers and, thus, came to involve the June plotters and their allies in their own revolution. Only in August did the Ciompi truly emerge free of conspiratorial links with the war party and the popular faction, but now they were in league with an aristocrat and ardent Guelf; and when they did emerge, their demands sought nothing less than the punishment of the men who had first incited their brothers to action in June and July. Consequently, they were defined as conspirators and political criminals by the very men who had themselves conspired to *mutare lo stato* of Florence and who, by summer's end, had succeeded.

In understanding what actually happened in the summer of 1378, one last fact may be revealing: on 28 August 1378 the names for a new priorate were drawn, including the comber Bartolo di Iacopo Costa as Standardbearer of Justice and the carder Giovanni di Domenico del Tria as prior from quarter of Santa Maria Novella. On 1 September, the new priors took office and, on their first day, ordered all of the city's forces to assemble under their neighborhood standards in the piazza. "Upon seeing this beautiful crowd with their banners," says the Machiavelli chronicler, the forces of the *popolo minuto* turned back from the palace and went home, their revolutionary moment

having come to an end.²⁸¹ On the next morning, the two woolworker-priors were replaced because their guild had been disbanded; Bartolo was replaced by a cloth-dealer named Francesco di Chele and Giovanni by messer Giorgio di Francesco Scali, whose selection at the hands of the June plotters had, it seems, only been briefly delayed.

²⁸¹ ANONIMO, 380: "Onde veggendo il popolo minuto questa bella giente, co'gonfaloni... tutti si partirono."

CHAPTER 3:

CONSPIRACIES AGAINST THE GUILD GOVERNMENT, 1379

In his *Trecentonovelle*, Franco Sacchetti tells a story about a great feast held by Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, at which a certain Messer Valore de' Buondelmonti showed up uninvited, carrying with him a long nail. When Piero greeted him, Messer Valore put the nail on the fireplace where all could see it, saying,

I see that you are at the top of the wheel and cannot move at all unless you fall down headfirst. For this reason, I have brought the nail that you see on the fireplace, so you can hammer the wheel stuck with it. And if you don't, since it turns as it does, you will start to fall and possibly wind up at the bottom.²⁸²

To this, Piero replied that he was not even half way to the top of the wheel and that, even if he were, he would not nail the wheel stuck because "it would do a great injustice to those at the bottom, in the middle, and on the sides who want it to turn in order to improve their condition."²⁸³ Pleased with Piero's response, Messer Valore sat down to enjoy the meal. And at the end of the dinner, when Messer Valore was leaving, Piero stopped him again and said,

²⁸² Franco Sacchetti, *Il Trecentonovelle*, ed. Emilio Faccioli (Turin: Einaudi, 1970), p. 575: "...io veggio troppo bene che tu se' nel colmo della rota e non ti puoi muovere, che tu non scenda e capolevi. Per questa cagione io t'ho recato quello aguto che tu vedi a quel camino, acciò che tu conficchi la rota; e se ciò non fai, volgendosi com'ella fa, e' ti converrà cominciare a scendere, e forse venire al di sotto."

²⁸³ *Ibid.*: "sarebbe fare grandissima ingiustizia a quelli che sono di sotto e nel mezzo e da lato, che vogliono ch'ella volga, per migliorare stato."

Take your nail, because I cannot fasten the wheel where you said; and since Caesar and Alexander and many others could not fix the wheel, I, who am only a little man, cannot; and even if I could I would not want to, so the world does not perish.²⁸⁴

Feeling that he had made his point, Messer Valore gave Piero this valediction:

“You are Peter and upon this rock is built wisdom; God be with you.”²⁸⁵

Nothing, then, is more certain than the turning of the wheel of fortune, says Sacchetti, “and how many kings, and how many lords, and how many factions of people and communes have experienced it!”²⁸⁶ Although he discusses numerous examples, from antiquity and the present day, of men brought up high and thrown down low by fortune, Sacchetti does not reveal the fate of Piero degli Albizzi in his story, allowing his readers to supply that information for themselves.²⁸⁷ As we have seen in the previous chapter, Piero di Filippo

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 576: “Togliete l’aguto vostro, ché io nol potrei conficcare dove dite; però che Cesare e Alessandro e molti altri nol poterono conficcare, non che io che sono piccolo uomo: e potendolo fare non voglio, acciò che ‘l mondo non perisca.”

²⁸⁵ Ibid.: “*Et tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram* è edificata la sapienzia; e fatti con Dio.”

²⁸⁶ Ibid.: “e quanti re, e quanti signori, e quante sètte de’ populi e de’ comuni l’hanno già provato!”

²⁸⁷ Gino di Neri Capponi, a near contemporary of Sacchetti, would tell a similar story in his *Ricordi*, making explicit what the novelliere had left implicit; for the text, see Gianfranco Folena, ed., “Ricordi politici e familiari di Gino di Neri Capponi”, in *Miscellanea di studi offerta a Armando Balduino e Bianca Bianchi* (Padua, 1962), pp. 37-38: “Ed a vostro essempro, io ho veduto de’ mia dì la nostra città essere retta da uomini maturi; e quando uscivo dall’abbaco, circa MCCCLXIII, gridarsi pe’ fanciugli dello abbaco, quando uscivano: “Vivano le berrette!”, che tanto voleva dire “Viva portatura di uomini degni e da bene,” e: “Muoino le foggette!”, che tanto voleva dire “Muoino li artefici ed uomini di vile condizione.” E nel MCCCLXXVIII si rivolse tale detto, e dicevasi: “Vivano le foggette!” e “Muoino le berrette!”: che tanto voleva dire che al principio di detto tempo Piero di Filippo degli Albizi essere il maggiore Cittadino di Firenze e grande con la Chiesa, e nella città. Uno suo amico il presentò una scatola di treggea, drentovi uno aguto grande e bene fatto. Fu giudicato da molti che seco avea a mangiare, che quello voleva dire che conficcassi la ruota: e finalmente,

was expelled from Florence during the Ciompi tumult in 1378. In 1379, Piero would be beheaded, the nail finally placed in his wheel of fortune, as was Franco Sacchetti's own brother. The fortunes of these men were tied together in 1379, like the fortune of Florence itself, in the nexus of conspiracy and repression that defined so much of Florentine political life.

The momentous year 1378—the year of the conclusion of the war against the papacy, of the Ciompi tumult, and of the installation of the new government of the guilds—ended on March 24 [1379] in Florence. In less than two weeks, the new year would bring the first in the series of mixed elite-Ciompi conspiracies that, over the course of that terrible year, would come to define and ultimately doom Florence's final and most ambitious guild government²⁸⁸ and to transform the practice of political conspiracy in the city. I restrict my analysis in this chapter to a relatively brief period of time (one year) in order to illuminate the details of conspiracy and its repression in a pre-modern city. I will show how and why Florence found itself under siege in 1379, beset by waves of conspiracy orchestrated by elite exiles abroad, disgruntled Ciompi in the city, and even a foreign prince. I will examine the

avendo lo stato mutazione, gli fu insieme con altri cittadini tagliata la testa. Venne su messere Tommaso di Marco Strozzi e messer Giorgio Scali: ed in capo a mesi quaranta a messer Giorgio fu tagliata la testa, messer Tommaso fu sbandito egli e' sua discendenti, messer Benedetto degli Alberti mandato a' confini. Venne su poi uno stato di mercatanti [e] artefici, e non vinceva partito, per chi aveva a rendere le fave si diceva, se egli andava per lanaiuolo: "Vadia a fare e' panni", e se egli andava per speciale: "Vadia a pestare el pepe". Ed in pochi dì fu fatto de' grandi la famiglia degli Alberti, che erano mercatanti, e di popolo la famiglia da Ricasoli e più altri, che erano gentili uomini."

²⁸⁸ The guild government of 1378-82 is the subject of a now century-old monograph, Niccolò Rodolico, *La democrazia fiorentina nel suo tramonto* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1905), and is discussed briefly in Gene Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton, 1977), pp. 46-59.

guild government's response to these conspiracies, focusing on its most crucial elements: the internal debates on security that raged both in government assemblies and in the piazzas, the vast diplomatic effort undertaken to monitor and prosecute conspirators in other cities, and the capture and punishment of conspirators at home, including the executions of several prominent Florentines like Piero degli Albizzi. I will also examine the attitudes of the conspirators themselves, whose voices have been captured in their diaries, public statements, and confessions.

The chronicler called the *Anonimo fiorentino* recorded the disturbances (*romori*) on the streets of Florence that preceded Luca da Panzano's failed plot in the days before Christmas in 1378²⁸⁹ with terseness and seeming lack of concern: "And today, on the 20th of December, there was a disturbance (*si levò un romore*) in Florence, at sundown, and it was nothing"; "And today, on the 22nd of December, at Terce, there was a disturbance in Florence, and it was nothing."²⁹⁰ But the leaders of the government were, at the same time, constantly aware of growing threats to the stability of their regime, and the *pratica* of 20 December 1378 showed, early on, the extent to which a general fear of conspiracy gripped the guild government as well as the wide spectrum of opinions among the government's leaders about how to combat the possibility of such plots. The leaders of the government came from the major

²⁸⁹ On Luca di Totto da Panzano, a regular plotter against the government, see my discussion in chapter 2 at pp. 152 and following, and later in this chapter.

²⁹⁰ ANONIMO, p. 389: "E oggi, a' dì xx di dicembre si levò un romore in Firenze, a' dì 20, alle 24 ore di dì, e non fu nulla. E oggi, a' dì xxii di dicembre in sulla terza, sì si levò u' romore in Firenze, e non fu nulla."

guilds and from the class of *scioperati* (rentiers),²⁹¹ including messer Giorgio di messer Francesco Scali, messer Donato del Ricco Aldighieri, messer Tommaso di Marco degli Strozzi, messer Salvestro di messer Alamanno de' Medici, and messer Benedetto di Nerozzo degli Alberti; and also from the lower guilds, including Benedetto di Tendi da Carlona (slipper-maker), Niccolo di Tendi da Carlona, Simone di Biagio (armorers), Feo di Piero (armorers), Lorenzo di Donato (dyer), Salvestro di Giovanni (dyer), and Feozzo di Casino (shearer).²⁹² At the *pratiche*, or advisory assemblies, these men and others came together to share opinions, forge political alliances within the regime, and urge the priors to act. At the *pratica* of 20 December, for example, Piero Strada, a *lanaiuolo* (wool manufacturer) from the quarter of Santo Spirito²⁹³

²⁹¹ On the *scioperati*, see Lauro Martines, *The Social World of the Florentine Humanists, 1390-1460* (Princeton: Princeton, 1963), p. 35.

²⁹² These men are listed in STEFANI, rubr. 814, p. 344, and confirmed in ASF, CP, 16-9. Stefani describes these men as the supporters of a strong guild reaction to the plots of early April 1379 (discussed at pages 170-76 below), and as the leaders of the regime: "Li capi di questi si erano delle maggiori Arti e scioperati: messer Giorgio di messer Francesco Scali, messer Donato del Ricco, giudice, messer Tommaso di Marco degli Strozzi, messer Salvestro di messer Alamanno de' Medici, messer Benedetto di Nerozzo degli Alberti. Con costoro si ristringevano degli altri dall'altre famiglie; ma questi erano il bilico delle 16 Arti. Chelli che più erano capi, e guidavano gli altri, erano questi: Benedetto [...] da Carlona, Niccolò di [...] da Carlona, Simone di Biagio, corazzaio, Feo di [...], corazzaio, Lorenzo di Donato, tintore, Salvestro di Giovanni, tintore, Feozzo di Casino, cimatore, e questi si tiravano dietro altri capi; ma pure questi erano il bilico delle 16 Arti." The lacunae are in Rodolico's text. The actual composition of the leadership group in the government changed, as evidenced in the CP, but this is roughly accurate through 1379.

²⁹³ Piero di Bartolo Strada had served as Gonfalonier for the Sferza district in Santo Spirito in 1378, as noted in Alamanno Acciaioli's chronicle [SCARAMELLA, p. 39] and in the ONLINE TRATTE, where his occupation is given as "lanifex"; but he did not otherwise hold communal office during the Guild Regime's tenure.

and a regular participant in civic assemblies after the summer of 1378, called for a show of force and unity on the part of “all the people of the commune” in order to suppress *murmurationes*, or rumblings.²⁹⁴ In this call, Piero combined both the revolutionary optimism about popular action that characterized the guild government and its more pessimistic (or realistic) and growing siege mentality. And, indeed, this combination was not new for Piero. As early as October 1378, when Florence was wrapped in an atmosphere of dangerous excitement (both political and prophetic), he had been calling for the swift punishment of “sowers of scandal and of prophecies,” while also extolling the corporatist principles of inclusion, representation, and consultation.²⁹⁵ Tommaso Strozzi, always the voice of extremism, called for a diligent investigation against “obstructionists and people who speak against the regime or say anything to bring about its ruin,” adding that such people should be decapitated.²⁹⁶ At another *pratica* soon after, the wool-shearer Feozzo di Casino called for spies to be sent to “opportune locations”²⁹⁷ and Tommaso

²⁹⁴ ASF, *CP*, 16, 51r: “Quod ad tollendum murmurationes ... omnes gentes communis ... teneantur in civitate et faciant unam monstram.” In addition, he called for the Otto to act and the capitadini to act against exbanniti and “maleloqui”, etc.

²⁹⁵ ASF, *CP*, 16, 33r: “...quod puniantur isti seminatores scandalorum et divinationum...”; ASF, *CP*, 16, 64v: “quod respondeatur capitudinibus quod sint simul cum veteribus et novis consulibus et aliquibus sapientibus artificibus quelibet ars per se, et ita separatim per scripturam referant sua consilia cras...”

²⁹⁶ ASF, *CP*, 16, f. 51v: “Dominus Thomas de Stroçis quod diligenter inquiratur contra oblocutores et dicentes contra statum vel pretendentes aliquid in causam ruine. ... Et quod [qui] sine fundamento audeat talia dicere cuiuscumque conditionis existat decapitetur preveniendo usque ad ultimum qui talia verba dixerit.”

²⁹⁷ ASF, *CP*, 16, f. 59r: “Et mittantur exploratores ad locos oportunos.” Brucker calls this woolshearer Feo Casini in *Civic World*, p. 53; he is called “Feoçius cimator” in the *CP*.

Strozzi's friend and fellow extremist Giorgio Scali called for the rectors (the foreign magistrates) to go looking throughout the city, armed with shields and large swords if necessary, searching for plotters; and for word to be spread through the city "that no one should dare to overthrow the government [*facere novitates*]." ²⁹⁸ The mix of attitudes expressed in these *pratiche* was not new, ²⁹⁹ and it would persist into the new year, the events of which would justify even the most extreme fear of conspiracy.

The Good Friday Plot

On the Wednesday of Holy Week, 6 April 1379, ³⁰⁰ Leoncino di Francino, a minor guildsman from the parish of San Pier Gattolino in the

²⁹⁸ ASF, *CP*, 16, f. 59v: "Et quod rectores vadant scrutando per civitatem et si opportuerit faciant ... portare cippum et mannariam.... Et banna mittantur per civitatem quod nemo audeat facere novitates." According to the *Dizionario della Crusca* (Venice: Alberti, 1512), s.v. "mannaia," the weapon called for by Giorgio is a "coltello grande, con due manichi, che l'adopra il maestro di giustizia a tagliar la testa." By contrast, on the same day, the generally more even-tempered Salvestro de' Medici said, "quod executori duplicetur familia et deputentur sibi quatuor cives presentis status, et inquiretur ne procedat novitas de culpabilibus et puniantur, et provideatur quod quilibet habeat partem suam ita quod civitas sit unita." Piero Strada, seconding Salvestro's suggestion, also stressed unity ("et quod provideatur circa unionem civium..."), a theme very common in the *CP* of this period.

²⁹⁹ See, for example, ASF, *CP*, 16, ff. 18-20.

³⁰⁰ I have reconstructed the events leading up to the discovery of the Venerdì Santo plot on the basis of five major condemnations of conspirators and participants by the Capitano del Popolo Cante de' Gabrielli of Gubbio, in which they are described in a piecemeal and often redundant way: (1) ASF, *Capitano* 1197 bis, 9r-12v, which contains the sentences against "Antonium Nicolai alias vocatum Falsia" (of the popolo of San Pier Maggiore), "Palmerium Luche" (San Lorenzo), and "Bernardum Bernardi" (San Pier Maggiore), all "homines seditiosos et proditores sue patrie,"; (2) ASF, *Capitano* 1197 bis, 99v-101r, which contains the sentence against "Leoncinum

Oltrarno, attended mass at the cathedral of Santa Reparata and then met up with Guerriante Marignolli, a former ally of Piero degli Albizzi and strong supporter of the Parte Guelfa's policy of proscription (*ammonizione*), who had been nearby in the Mercato Nuovo.³⁰¹ The men were acquaintances and had achieved a certain level of prominence together in the previous summer:

Leoncino had served on the priorate presided over by Michele di Lando and was called upon to personally demand the standard of the Ciompi when they refused to turn it over to the priors in August³⁰²; and Guerriante had served on

Francini piçichangnolum" (San Pier Gattolino), "hominem et proditorem sue civitatis"; (3) ASF, *Capitano* 1197 bis, 130r-132r, which contains the sentence against "Andream Sali vocatum Amaçça el vero"(Sant' Ambrogio), "hominem seditiosum et predictorem sue civitatis"; (4) ASF, *Capitano* 1197 bis, 141r-142r, which contains the sentence against "Nicolaum Tomasii alias vocatum Nuta" (San Jacopo tra' fossi), "hominem predictorem"; and (5) ASF, *Capitano*, 1197 bis, 142v-144v, which contains the sentences against "Dominum Pagnum Leonardi de Stroççis" (Santa Maria degli Ughi), "Guerriantem Marignolli" and his sons "Bartolomeum et Matheum" (San Lorenzo), "Bandinum Campoli de Pançano" (Sant'Apollinare), "Iacobinum Nelli" (San Lorenzo), "Antonium Recche" (San Pier Maggiore), "Bernardum vocatum Fusaio et Roschum, fratres et filios Simonis" (Sant'Ambrogio), "Nannem Laurentii alias vocatum Golfus" (San Pier Maggiore), "Ser Riccardum Bernardi" (San Lorenzo), and "Andream Grassi" (San Lorenzo), all "homines proditores sue civitatis".

³⁰¹ ASF, *Capitano*, 1197 bis, ff. 99v-101r, contains the 9 May 1379 sentence against "Leoncinum Francini piçichangnolum populi Sancti Petri Gactolini de Florentia hominem proditorem sue civitatis"; the details of the meeting are at f. 100r. On Leoncino's profession, see the following note. See STEFANI, rubr. 775, p.308, for Guerriante as a leader of the Parte Guelfa and chief supporter of the use of *ammonizioni*. Throughout the 70s, according to the ONLINE TRATTE, Guerriante had served in higher office a number of times: as a prior in 1370, and as one of the Dodici Buonomini in 1373.

³⁰² Beginning 23 July 1378, a Leoncino di Franc(h)ino, representing the popolo minuto and the quarter of Santo Spirito, is said to have served as prior. The ONLINE TRATTE gives his name as Leoncino (di) Franchino *pectinator*, as does STEFANI, rubr. 796, p. 326; the ANONIMO, p.369, gives only "Lioncino di Francino" as prior, but the editor Alessandro Gherardi attests (p.369, n.2) that the *Priorista* manuscript reads "Leoncinus Francini *pectinator* pro Popolo minuto, pro quarterio Sancti Spiritus," and on p.395 the ANONIMO has a "Lioncino di Francino del popo' di San Piero Gattolino" being condemned for conspiracy; the *Cronaca* of Alamanno

the priorate that was supplanted by Michele di Lando's and was knighted by the Ciompi one day before being forced out of office.³⁰³ Though from very different backgrounds, Leoncino and Guerriante found common cause in their sense of disenfranchisement and hatred of the popular government currently ruling Florence. "Leoncino, you know how we're treated," Guerriante said, "so I've decided to overthrow the government of the city [*fare mudare stato a questa citade*]," and he explained that he and fellow conspirators wanted to be treated well and to again have access to public office. The plot itself was explained simply: the plotters would cause a tumult on the night of Holy Thursday, and cry "Viva la Parte Guelfa," which would cause others to join in the revolt. Leoncino agreed to help and his fate was sealed.³⁰⁴ Guerriante was

Acciaiuoli has "Lioncino di Franchino, *scardassiere*" [in SCARAMELLA, p.33]; and the chronicle of the Squittinatore has a "Lioncino, *pettinatore*, da San Piero Gattolino" on the priorate and a "Lioncino da San Piero Gattolino" being beheaded in May of 1379 [also in SCARAMELLA, p.76 and p.93]. The Capitano's sentence is, therefore, likely in error in calling Leoncino a pizzicagnolo, and the condemned Leoncino is the same person (usually called a *pettinatore*, and almost certainly involved in the cloth industry) who served as a prior in 1378. For Leoncino's demand of the Ciompi standard, see STEFANI, rubr.804, p.334. Leoncino also had also previously served as a *caporale* in the Florentine forces during the War of the Eight Saints; on which, see Gene Brucker, "The Ciompi Revolution" in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), pp.328-9.

³⁰³ STEFANI, rubr.794, p.320; and rubr.795, p.324. Alamanno Acciaiuoli noted in his *Cronaca* [in SCARAMELLA, p.16] that Guerriante and his fellow priors were thought to be "uomini pacifichi e quieti" and, therefore, reassured the city. Guerriante's departure from the palazzo is wittily recounted by STEFANI, rubr.795, p.325: "due di loro, ch'erano il dì dinanzi fatti cavalieri del popolo, e fatti altri cavalieri, eglino si beneficiarono d'arme... messer Guerriante di Matteo Marignolli ch'era de' priori, che fu sì buono guerrieri, che a parole fu il primo, se ne uscì fuori." For Guerriante's brief tenure as prior, see also the *Ricordanza* of Messer Luigi Guicciardini [in SCARAMELLA, p.49], who had been Gonfaloniere di Giustizia and the other of the two knights discussed in the Stefani quotation.

³⁰⁴ The conversation is recorded in ASF, *Capitano*, 1197bis, 100r: "...Guerriante dixit dicto Leoncino vedi Leoncino tu sai commo nui [*noi*] semo tractate,

not alone in planning this revolt. Messer Pagno di Lionardo degli Strozzi, the prior of the church of San Lorenzo, and he had earlier laid out all the details: the tumult would spread like a chain reaction from San Lorenzo and Sant’Ambrogio to the churches of San Giorgio, Santo Spirito, Santa Reparata, Santa Maria Novella, and Santa Croce. The ringing bells of the churches and cried-out slogans would alert the conspirators that the time had come and incite like-minded non-conspirators to come to their aid. All of the city would be out that night for Good Friday sermons and would be witness to (or participants in) the events that, in one night of violence, would wipe away the guild government.

A similar, and more revealing, conversation had occurred a few days earlier in a tavern in piazza San Lorenzo, where Jacobino di Nello was drinking with his neighbor Palmerio di Luca. “Palmerio, we are a large group [*gran brigata*] and have resolved together to cause a tumult [*levare questa terra a remore*] on Thursday night and we want to bring back those who were chased out [*cacciati*],” explained Jaobino, “and I want you to join us in the group.” When Palmerio questioned how and whether this was possible,

io [*h*]o deliberato se porro de fare mudare stato a questa citade e de fare che io e gli altri che serremo de quello volere ch’essero io siamo bene tractati e abiamo degli offitii de che io voglio che tu te desponi de essere conmecho perche averemo grande seguito, et tunc dictus Leoncinus dixit dicto Guerianti e perche modo agi tu ententione de fare questo, et tunc dictus Gueriante dicto Leoncino nui [*no*] semo molti che çì avemo promesso e sieme avemo ordinato de fare levare questa terra arremore domane de nocte e cridaremo viva la pa[r]te guelfa e con questo cridare correremo la terra e porremo fare cio che vorremo perchesso cierto cha acquesta voce della parte guelfa çì trarra multe persone in aiuto de che io voglio che tu si con nui [*no*] de brigata e prochaccia se poi avere compangni. Et tunc dictus Leoncinus ... dixit supradicto Guerianti io so[*no*] apparechiato de essere acço che serri tu e gli altri chesserrenno teco e perchaçaro de avere delli compangni e serro affare quello che farrete voi.”

Jacobino reassured him and laid out the details of the plan: “we’ve planned to ring the bell of San Lorenzo with a hammer, and we will raise the banner of the Parte Guelfa and that of the Angel and cry out ‘Viva la Parte Guelfa!’,” adding, “when you hear the bells, I want you to be ready to take up arms with us.”

Palmerio replied, “I don’t see how this can possibly come to be done, but nonetheless I am ready to be with you in everything you’ll do.”³⁰⁵

Conversations like these, revealed in the confessions of the conspirators, make very clear the motivations for the conspiracy and its hoped-for results.

Men from the lower ranks of society, with crude nicknames like “Falsia” (dishonesty) and “Amazza el vero” (truth killer),³⁰⁶ and men from the elite, like messer Pagno and Guerriante, were united in their hatred of the guild government. The elite saw themselves as excluded from office-holding and power and the Ciompi from a share in a government that they had helped

³⁰⁵ The conversation is recorded in ASF, *Capitano* 1197 bis, 9r-12v, the sentences against “Antonium Nicolai populi Sancti Petri Maioris alias vocatum Falsia, Palmerium Luche populi Sancti Laurentii, et Bernardum Bernardi dicti populi Sancti Petri Maioris homines seditiosos et proditores sue patrie”, at f. 10v: “...dictus Jacobinus dixit eidem Palmerio vedi Palmerio noie simo una gran brigata che avemo deliberato insieme de levare questa terra a remore giovedì a nocte e volemo fare tornare in Fiorenza quelgli che sonn[o] chaciati de che io volgio che tu sie de brigata cum noie et tunc dictus Palmerius dixit dicto Jacobino per che modo farimmo noie che questo vengna fatto io non so vedere che podesse maii venire facto et dictus Jacobinus dixit non dubitare de questo perche sarimmo tanti che non po falare che non vengna facto e ... seimo persone tucti ricchi perche porrimo menare lacosa a vestro muodo e avemo ordinato defare sonare la campana de san lorenzo a martello e levaremo la bandiera de parte Ghelfa e quella del angiolo e grideremo viva la parte Ghelfa e per questo muodo ce avemo aviçado devenciare e daver nostra intençone de che io volgio che sie aparechiato quando udirai lecampene che traghi con letue arme con noii et tunc dictus Palmerius dixit io non so vedere comme questo possa venire facto ma niente demeno io so[no] apparechiato dessere con voii ad ongni cosa che farete voii.”

³⁰⁶ For a discussion of Ciompi nicknames, see Robert Paris, “Les ‘Ciompi’: cardeurs, foulons, bâtards?,” *Médiévales: langue, textes, histoire* 30, (1996): 109-115.

make.³⁰⁷ The conspirators wanted their revolt, sanctified (as in so many previous conspiracies) by the day of its outbreak, to reverse the revolution that installed the government of the guilds, bringing back the *cacciati* and purging the city (and, of course, the electoral purses) of the men that had expelled them. Such a revolution was averted when a young priest at San Lorenzo betrayed the plotters to agents of the government and the Capitano del Popolo was called upon to mete out justice.

This Capitano, Cante de' Gabrielli of Gubbio,³⁰⁸ more so than almost any other single person, undertook the repression of conspiracy in 1379 and, as a result, he loomed large in the politico-legal consciousness of the Florentines. Gubbio regularly provided Florence with its foreign officials and the noble Gabrielli family had been doing so for at least a century. From 1345 to 1425, ten Capitani (some serving multiple terms) were from Gubbio and six of them were Gabrielli.³⁰⁹ With the exception of a few trials in the court of the Esecutore, all of the political conspirators against the guild government in

³⁰⁷ As we saw in the previous chapter, the Ciompi were excluded from any role in government by the *parlamento* of 1 September 1378; and the electoral policies of the guild government pleased neither the *popolo minuto* nor the elite, which was accustomed to regular office-holding; on this, see John M. Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus in Florentine Electoral Politics, 1280-1400* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina, 1982), pp. 249-53.

³⁰⁸ Cante shared his name with the Podestà who condemned Dante in 1302; the latter is discussed in detail by Randolph Starn, *Contrary Commonwealth: The Theme of Exile in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Berkeley: University of California, 1982), pp. 60-85.

³⁰⁹ The four Gabrielli were: Necciulus Lelli de Gabriellibus de Eugubio (served in 1345), Cante, Franciscus Neccioli de G. (1385-6), Franciscus di Nemolo de G. (1393-4, 1395-6), Johannes de G. (1400), and Baldus Antonii Lodovici de G. (1412-3). Cante served from 7 March 1379 to 7 March 1380 and from 8 September 1381 to 7 September 1382; when his tenure was extended it was not without serious debate, see ASF, CP, 21, f. 98.

1379 came to justice before messer Cante, even though the statutes of 1355 gave as much (if not more power) to the Podestà in these matters.³¹⁰ Of course, having been created during the government of the so-called *Primo Popolo*, the office of Capitano was particularly associated with popular regimes (as the names of the office, Capitano *del Popolo* and Capitaneus et *Defensor Artium*, suggest). Cante would become essential to the security of the government,³¹¹ but his sentences for the Good Friday conspiracy caused controversy. While most of the city applauded the Capitano's condemnations of these conspirators and, indeed, considered him a "good rector" at the time, the execution of Lioncino was despised by some Florentines (presumably those most sympathetic to the Ciompi) who thought that Cante did not prosecute the *maggiori* "as much as they would have wished" and seemed harsher towards the *popolo minuto*.³¹² The beheaded Leoncino certainly paid a much greater price than Pagno Strozzi, for example, who had been let go.

³¹⁰ Some of the statutes regarding conspiracy are discussed in chapter 4 below, at pp. 247-8.

³¹¹ As the priors freely admit in a grateful letter to the Gubbines in ASF, *Missive*, 18, 99v.

³¹² STEFANI, rubr. 814, pp. 343-4: "[the Capitano] fu tenuto infino a questo tempo buono rettore da ogni gente in Firenze; ma per la morte del detto Lioncino, fu un poco abominato dall'una delle parti di Firenze, chè parve loro non procedesse contra li maggiori, come avrebbono voluto, e molto più pareva loro feroce sopra li minuti."

The Plot of Giannozzo Sacchetti

While the Good Friday plot was nefarious, the plots against the guild government that would be uncovered in the second half of 1379 were far more dangerous and reveal the extent to which Florentine politics were entangled in the politics of the entire peninsula. In the winter of 1378, a diplomatic and commercial dispute over the small island of Tenedos, which served as a maritime gateway to Constantinople and several important Black Sea ports, escalated into a war between the city-states of Venice and Genoa, long-standing rivals for control of a thriving trade in the northeastern Mediterranean.³¹³ When the war erupted, the Genoese quickly negotiated a secret treaty with the Venetians' most hated enemy, Louis, the king of Hungary, who two decades earlier had ravaged Venice's holdings in Dalmatia and successfully challenged Venetian dominance in the Adriatic. Despite some diplomatic overtures from the Venetians, Francesco, the Carrara lord of Padua, also allied himself with the Genoese. In June, King Louis dispatched his nephew Stephen with an army of more than five thousand men to the Veneto and Francesco da Carrara's armies pushed into the Trevisano, setting up camps from which they raided towns near the lagoon while Genoese fleets were readied to sail for the northern Adriatic in the spring. By May, the Genoese along with their Paduan allies had seized the port of Chioggia, at the

³¹³ On the War of Chioggia, see the now classic account of Frederic C. Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1973), pp. 189-96; as well as the lucid and detailed account (from a different perspective) of Benjamin G. Kohl, *Padua under the Carrara, 1318-1405* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1998), pp. 205-22; and Richard J. Goy, *Chioggia and the Villages of the Venetian Lagoon: Studies in Urban History* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1985), pp. 34-9.

bottom of the lagoon, after a bloody battle, and King Louis's armies had control of Treviso. Near the end of summer, Louis dispatched a second nephew, Charles of Durazzo, with an even larger army, to set up a camp outside Treviso, from which he could pursue his uncle's short- and long-term goals: to negotiate the most favorable terms of peace with the Venetians, and to forcibly depose Joanna, the queen of Naples, who had been implicated in the 1345 assassination of Andrew, the duke of Calabria, King Louis's brother and Queen Joanna's consort. There, at Charles of Durazzo's camp, nearly one hundred and forty miles from home, a band of exiles would plot the overthrow of the government of Florence.

As recently as the previous April, the leader of the conspirators, Giannozzo Sacchetti, had been in jail in Florence. And, according to a story recounted by the chronicler Stefani, the circumstances of his release reflected and revealed his unsavory character. "Coming to Florence one day," Stefani recalls,

Giannozzo was arrested for debt and put in the Stinche, that is, in jail, and he was kneeling there day and night and did this so much that his creditors agreed to let him out. Someone else who was in prison, a foreigner, either because he was afraid they would be taken away or to hide his things, had his jewels with him. Hearing Giannozzo and considering him a good person, he entrusted him with these jewels. But Giannozzo sold them and used them for his own affairs, and because of this the foreigner was not able to get out of prison. Giannozzo went away to Lombardy with the money.³¹⁴

³¹⁴ STEFANI, rubr. 821, p.347: "Un di vegnendo in Firenze fu preso per debito, e messo nelle Stinche, cioè nella prigione, e quivi stava ginocchione dì e notte, e tanto fece ch'egli pure se ne uscì per concordia de' creditori. Uno ch'era in prigione, forestiere, o per paura non gli fosse tolto, o per per occultare le cose, avea suoi gioegli; udendo costui, stimandolo di buona vita, si li accomandò questi gioelli; costui si gli vendè, e fecene sue faccende, e costui per lo suo medesimo non potea uscire di

The truth of this story—related for the express purpose of proving Gianozzo’s “hypocrisy”—cannot be verified, but its imputation of false piety would have been very bitter for Gianozzo. In his last years, Gianozzo had become a close associate and spiritual follower of Catherine of Siena, already reputed to be “santa,” who, one year earlier, had lived in Florence at the house of his friend and co-conspirator, Piero Canigiani.³¹⁵ Word of Gianozzo’s plot came to the priors from the Florentine special ambassadors to Charles of Durazzo: Tommaso Strozzi, Donato Barbadori, and the soap-maker Marco di Benvenuto. The guild government’s recently formed political police force, the Otto di Guardia, captured Gianozzo and Bonifazio Peruzzi,

prigione. Gianozzo se ne andò in Lombardia con quelli danari. Questa così piccola cattivanzuola avemo fatto menzione per provare la ipocresia sua.”

³¹⁵ Some of Gianozzo’s religious poetry (in a Catherinian mode) may be found in *Delle rime di M. Franco, Gianozzo, M. Jacopo Sacchetti*, ed. Filippo Maria Mignanti (Rome: Pallotta, 1856), pp. 43-60. St. Catherine was run out of Florence in 1378 and her closeness to the Parte Guelfa faction caused some to call her an “ipocrita e mala femmina,” STEFANI, rubr. 773, p.306. The extensive role played by Catherine of Siena in Italian (and, particularly, Tuscan) politics in the 1370s is discussed in F. Thomas Luongo, *The Sainly Politics of Catherine of Siena* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006). Catherine journeyed to Padua on a peace mission at the same time that the Florentine Guelf exiles plotted there, and this would not be the first time she associated with plotters; see her angry letter of September 1377 in Antonio Volpato, ed., “Le Lettere di Santa Caterina da Siena,” in *Santa Caterina da Siena: Opera Omnia*, ed. Fausto Sbaiffoni (Pistoia: Provincia Romana dei Frati Predicatori, 2002), letter 122: “Gran vergogna si fanno i cittadini di Siena, di credere o immaginare che noi stiamo per fare i trattati nelle terre de’ Salimbeni, o in veruno altro luogo del mondo.” The Salimbene were a magnate clan that had long challenged the authority of Siena’s government; they have been subjects of much historical analysis; see, for example, Alessandro Carniani, *I Salimbeni, quasi una signoria: Tentativi di affermazione politica nella Siena del Trecento* (Siena: Protagon, 1995). The letter, Catherine’s mission to the Salimbeni, and the charge of plotting (*fare i trattati*) are discussed in depth in Luongo, *Sainly Politics*, pp. 182-3.

one of his co-conspirators, on 12 October.³¹⁶ Under torture, Giannozzo confessed and implicated others, including Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi and Piero Canigiani, in the plot.³¹⁷ In a large *pratica* later that day, Franco Sacchetti, who would later gain fame as a poet, statesman, and *novelliere*, called for the condemnation of his own brother: “That the Capitano ought to do justice against Giannozzo and the others who, having sinned against the fatherland, deserve the death penalty.”³¹⁸ Three days later, messer Cante had Giannozzo beheaded and Bonifazio Peruzzi was fined 2000 florins. The plot itself, as described in the sentences, was simple but alluded to the larger network of conspirators and their allies seeking to overthrow the government of the

³¹⁶ ANONIMO, p. 402, and STEFANI, rubr. 821, p.347, describe the events. On the role of the Otto at this time as a political force, see G. Antonelli, “La magistratura degli Otto di Guardia a Firenze,” *ASI* 113 (1954), especially pp. 3-6.

³¹⁷ These men were condemned in ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, 103r-107v: Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi, Donato di Giacomo Strada, Guido di Francesco della Foresta, Piero di Dato Canigiani, and Antonio di Angelo da Uzzano. The date of the sentence is 20 October 1379. This Benedetto is the son of Simone Peruzzi who was famously denounced by his father in his account book; see *I libri di commercio dei Peruzzi*, ed. Armando Saponi (Milan: Fratelli Treves, 1934), p. 522. He is condemned in ASF, *Capitano*, 99v-101r. The volume ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, first cited here, contains the sentences of the Capitano del Popolo for 10 September 1379 to 15 February 1379 [1380], and it includes the sentences of most of that year’s chief conspirators (excluding those sentenced by the Esecutore).

³¹⁸ ASF, *CP*, 18, 22r: “In consilio maximo: Franchus Sacchettis dixit quod capitaneus faciat iustitiam contra omnes et contra Giannozum qui cum in patriam peccaverit mortis supplicio dignus est” (12 October 1379). It should be noted that messer Iacopo Sacchetti (see p. 203 below), executed in December of 1379 was not in the immediate family of Franco and Giannozzo; he was the son of Messer Piero Sacchetti and Margherita di Scolaio da Castiglionchio. Franco and Giannozzo were natural brothers, both the sons of Bencio and Maria Sacchetti, but Giannozzo’s will (along with all later additions and codicils, the last made in the Capitano’s palace), transcribed in Ettore Li Gotti, “Un caso di coscienza: Giannozzo contra Franco Sacchetti,” in *Leonardo* 9 (1938): 261-271, shows that Franco and Giannozzo had had a financial dispute and were likely estranged.

guilds: Benedetto Peruzzi met with Giannozzo in the “campo Trevisano,” where Charles of Durazzo’s forces were encamped, and Benedetto said:

Giannozzo, I’m supposed to tell you that we have the best news in the world, that you will definitely see the exiles re-enter Florence no matter who will be against it. And they will reclaim the state [*reaveranno lo stato*] and be greater in Florence than they ever were. And so you can be sure of it, I with some others of these banished citizens and rebels have arranged to lead up to four hundred *lancie* and with them we will come to Florence and see how to enter into and recover our state. And so that this can be done better, we need two thousand florins so that we can maintain these *lancie* better.³¹⁹

Benedetto then asked Giannozzo to go back to Florence and ask his friends for support in order to raise the 2000 florins and undertake the plot against the government. In order to ensure the success of the plot, Giannozzo would take back to Florence a set of letters (officially believed to be fake) from Charles of Durazzo in which he pledged to support the plot and the Guelf cause. In this way a great plot would be set in motion.

This was not the first time that the guild government had become aware of trouble brewing in Padua and at the camp of Charles of Durazzo; they had

³¹⁹ Benedetto’s speech is recorded in ASF *Capitano* 1198, 103v: “o Giannoço io te so dire che ce sono le migliori novelle del mondo che per certo tu vedrai chelli usciti di fiorença rentreranno en fiorença a despecto de chi non vora; et reaveranno lo stato et serranno magiori en fiorença che mai fossoro. Et perche tu ne si certo io con piu altri de quisti exbanditi et rebelli avemo ordinate de conducere fine et numero de iiiii^c lancie et con epse venneremo versso fiorença, et vederemo modo intrare dentro et recuverare lo nostro stato. Et accio che questo ce vengna meglio facto elle de bisogno che nui abbiamo do milia fiorini accio che possiamo meglio sostenere queste lancie.” In the earlier condemnation in ASF *Capitano* 1198, 100r, the conversation is slightly different.

known for months, after all, that Lapo da Castiglionchio was there and it is unlikely that any conspirator was more hated or feared by the guild government or its supporters in 1379 than Lapo, the famous canonist and strident Guelf, whom the chronicler Stefani memorably described as “always acting against the commune.”³²⁰ Already by the late-1370s, Lapo’s career in Florentine public life had been long and tumultuous,³²¹ but his final years were spent in secret, orchestrating the plot with Charles of Durazzo. During the first years of the War of the Eight Saints, Lapo presented himself as a reluctant supporter of the Florentine campaign against the Papacy: he endorsed the war itself, spoke in favor of having priests violate the papal interdict, served as an

³²⁰ STEFANI, rubr. 821, p347: “...messer Lapo da Castiglionchio, ribello di Comune di Firenze, il quale sempre contra al Comune, si dice, facea.” The chronicler Sozomeno of Pistoia [Sozomenus Pistoriensis presbyter], *Chronicon universale*, ed. Guido Zaccagnini [*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores XVI*, part 1] (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, 1907-8), p. 1112, even gave special “blame” to Lapo for the events that brought about the guild government, “...maxime causa D. Lapi de Castiglionchio et aliorum qui monendo cives tyranizabant.”

³²¹ The best accounts of this career are Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society*, passim; and the essays recently collected in *Antica possessione con belli costumi: Due giornate di studio su Lapo da Castiglionchio il vecchio*, ed. Franek Sznura (Florence: Aska, 2005), especially those of Lorenzo Tanzini, “Lapo da Castiglionchio dal regime della Parte Guelfa al Tumulto dei Ciompi,” pp. 62-79, and Fabrizio Ricciardelli, “L’esclusione politica a Firenze e Lapo da Castiglionchio,” pp. 46-61, though neither of these works covers his secret activities after 1378. For Lapo’s work as a Florentine ambassador, see Robert Davidsohn, “Tre orazioni di Lapo da Castiglionchio ambasciatore fiorentino a Papa Urbano V e alla curia di Avignone,” *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Series 5, 20 (1897): 225-85. Aside from his political role, Lapo was a canonist of note, his *Allegationes* printed into the sixteenth century [for example, *Allegationes iuris utriusque monarcae Domini Lapi de Castiglionchio, patritii Florentini* (Venice: Franciscus Zilettus, 1571)]; a friend of lawyers like Baldus, see chapter 4 at p. 239; and of humanists, see the letter to him in *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati*, volume 1, ed. Francesco Novati (Rome: Forzani, 1891), letter 17, p.100-103.

ambassador for the regime to the curia of Gregory XI, but also counseled that the anti-papal league be abolished in order to facilitate peace.³²² By late 1377, though, his oldest and fiercest sympathies, perhaps no longer constrained by overwhelming popular support for the war, were again unleashed: he led the Parte Guelfa's campaign of mass proscriptions (*ammonizioni*) against the leaders of the war party, and later supported a coup to restore the Albizzi oligarchy to power. Chance played a role in the downfall of Lapo in May of 1378, as it had for Piero degli Albizzi, when the name of Salvestro de' Medici (a strong supporter of the war and a stronger enemy of Lapo and the Parte Guelfa) was drawn for the office of Gonfaloniere di Giustizia, precipitating a political crisis and the revolt of the Ciompi. In an extraordinary enactment of 24 June 1378, in which the Ordinamenti di Giustizia (first promulgated in 1293-5) were re-promulgated and reinforced and in which the Parte Guelfa's recent *ammonizioni* were reversed, the government (acting through a *balià*, or temporary plenipotentiary commission, of 81 citizens) declared that Lapo "is understood to be and is a rebel of the commune of Florence" and that all his heirs and male descendants "are understood to be and are in turn magnates and numbered among the magnates and potentates of the city of Florence."³²³

³²² For the endorsement of the conflict, ASF, *CP*, 15, f. 14r; on violating the interdict, ASF, *CP*, 15, f. 44r; for the papal mission, ASF, *PR*, 65, ff. 43r-44r; on abolishing the anti-papal league, ASF, *CP*, 15, ff. 66r-66v.

³²³ ASF, *CR*, 19b, f. 187r ("...intelligatur esse et sit rebellis communis Florentie...") and 187v ("intelligentur esse et sint deinceps magnates et de numero magnatum et potentum civitatis Florentie..."). Lapo's punishment was the harshest mandated by the *balià*. For partial transcriptions of some of the important legislation of 24-7 June, see the documentary appendix of Carlo Falletti-Fossati, *Il tumulto dei Ciompi: Studio storico-sociale* (Siena: Dell'Ancora, 1882), pp. 335-45. As a result of being declared a rebel, Lapo's property was confiscated; on this see P. J. Jones,

Rebels of the commune were subject to capital punishment if seized by the government, but Lapo had already left Florence. Two days earlier, he had fled the city disguised as a friar and his houses had been the first ones looted, burned, and dismantled at the hands of a group of minor guildsmen and Ciompi.³²⁴ According to Stefani, it was rumored that when he heard his house was in flames, Lapo said, “Now wait until San Giovanni, Piero di Filippo, now you have San Giovanni,” implying that Piero degli Albizzi and his faction would return to power, or at least take revenge, on the approaching feast of John the Baptist (24 June).³²⁵ This did not happen and, not quite a month later, the Ciompi regime called upon the Capitani di Parte Guelfa—drawn now almost entirely from the minor guilds—to expel Lapo and have his name inscribed in their book of enemies, the so-called *Libro del chiodo*, as a traitor to the very Parte he had once ruthlessly controlled for his own political ends.³²⁶

“Florentine Families and Florentine Diaries in the Fourteenth Century,” *Papers of the British School in Rome* 24 (1956), pp.193-6.

³²⁴ This event is widely recorded in contemporary accounts, including STEFANI, rubr. 792, p. 319, and the ANONIMO, p. 359; as well as in the *Cronaca* of Alamanno Acciaiuoli [in SCARAMELLA, at p. 15]; the *Cronaca* of Ser Nofri di ser Piero delle Riformagioni [also in SCARAMELLA, p.55]; the *Cronaca seconda d’Anonimo* [SCARAMELLA, p.107], which supplies these details, “gli arsono iij ca’, e j d’uno consorto; disfeciono la maggior parte a mano”; and the *Cronaca terza d’Anonimo* [SCARAMELLA, p.129]. I also discuss these burnings in chapter 2, around p. 87.

³²⁵ STEFANI, rubr. 792, p. 319: “...ed egli s’era fuggito in Santa Croce, ove per una parola che disse, secondo si dice, ch’egli quando udì che il fuoco era a casa sua disse: “Ora aspetta San Giovanni, Piero di Filippo, ora hai Santo Giovanni.”

³²⁶ ASF, PR, 67, f. 5v (21-2 July 1378). The condemnation was only entered into the *Libro del Chiodo* on 9 May 1379 because the notary tasked with doing so had refused and the counsel of two jurists loyal to the government (Donato Barbadori and Giovanni di Ruggero de’ Ricci) was required. On this condemnation, see Francesca Klein, “La condanna di Lapo da Castiglionchio e il Libro del Chiodo,” in *Antica*

In 1379, the guild government became aware that Lapo had left his confinement and was plotting in Padua. On 11 June, the Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati wrote on behalf of the priors to Francesco Carrara, the lord of Padua, asking for extradition and explaining the many crimes of Lapo against Florence, calling him a “subverter of his fatherland and assiduous rioter against our government.”³²⁷ The Paduans would not extradite Lapo, so Salutati wrote again on 1 September, telling Francesco that enemies of Florence were flocking to Padua and now asking for Padua to punish Lapo. On October 14, Salutati wrote again noting that the priors had discovered that the outlaw Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi was now in Padua with Lapo and asking Francesco to punish him as well. As late as 3 December, Salutati was still diligently writing to Padua, asking for Lapo to be punished, but all of Salutati’s efforts were in vain.³²⁸ Days later, the government allowed the Ufficiali della Torre (the committee entrusted, from at least the late 1340s, with public and confiscated property) to seize and sell “the goods that once belonged to Messer Lapo da Castiglionchio, rebel of the Comune, for the price

possessione, pp. 143-153. The condemnation itself is reproduced and edited in *Il libro del chiodo*, ed. Francesca Klein (Florence: Polistampa, 2004), at pp.159-60 [and 334-35]: “Dominus Lopus de Chastiglionchio de civitate Florentie fuit expulsus tamquam devastator et violator partis guelfe et baracterius et parti guelfe suspectus et proditor (p.159/334)”. The guildsmen-Capitani listed are: “Augustinum Martini lanaiuolum, Bettum Bardi tiratorem, Dominum Francescum de Rinuccinis, Vannem Mannuccii galgarium, Nicolaum Cambini lanaiuolum, Guccium domini Guccii lanaiuolum, Alesandrum Iacobi Guiduccii cimatore, Tomasum Francisci fascharium, et Franciscum Tieri tavernarium (p.159/334)”.

³²⁷ ASF, *Missive*, 18, f. 22rv: “...quod dominum Lapum de Castiglionchio subversorem patrie et contra statum nostrum assiduum crassatorem ab incolatu civitatis Padue dignaremini prohibere....”

³²⁸ The three letters at ASF, *Missive* 18, 60v, 73r-73v, and 191r.

of two hundred and eighty-five florins”.³²⁹ The priors knew that Lapo was in Padua, that he was leading a conspiracy of Parte Guelfa partisans abroad just as he had led them in Florence until 1378, that other conspirators like Benedetto Peruzzi were flocking there to plot with him, and, most importantly, that Lapo and his party had forged an alliance with Charles of Durazzo. By December of 1379, the Florentines knew they had to deal with Lapo and his co-conspirators, but for the moment they could do nothing but wait.

The Attack at Figline

In the early days of the guild government, men who had been expelled from the city and men who chose to leave gathered together in cities around Florence (like Pisa and Siena) and in more distant havens (like Padua) where they knew they could safely plot. Friends found each other, conspirators found followers, and plots were organized.³³⁰ In his famous diary, Buonaccorso Pitti described this activity and the reasons he joined with others to overthrow the government of his city. As a young man in 1375, he had formed a friendship and loose partnership with Matteo dello Scelto Tinghi, whom he calls a

³²⁹ ASF, *PR*, 68, ff. 131v-132v, here 131v: “...bona olim domini Lapi da Castiglionchio rebellis dicti communis pro pretio florenorum ducentorum octuagintaquinque...”.

³³⁰ This process is described, particularly for Siennese exiles in a later period, by Christine Shaw in *The Politics of Exile in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2000), pp. 172-202.

“merchant and great gambler”.³³¹ They travelled together to Genoa, Pavia, Nice, and Avignon, where they were arrested as Florentine spies and kept in jail for a week.³³² Their partnership continued into the next year and took them to Venice, Zagreb, and finally to Buda, where Buonaccorso became seriously ill and Matteo left him to recover or die.³³³ “He went on his way,” complained Buonaccorso, “and I remained and underwent great hardship because I was badly taken care of.”³³⁴ Their travels had ended and they would not (as far as Buonaccorso’s diary tells us) collaborate again until brought together in a great conspiracy. The Ciompi tumult erupted two years after Buonaccorso’s illness and, at the time, in August 1378, he was serving as an armed militiaman in the gonfalone of Nicchio (in the quartiere of Santo Spirito, in the Oltrarno) where he killed a vociferous stoneworker in the piazza. Immediately after relating this event in his diary, he abruptly and nonchalantly describes his reaction to the regime that followed. “I returned home,” he says

and, seeing that many Guelf citizens and some of the best were being expelled, banished, and confined, I decided not to stay there. I went to Pisa and went to the house of Matteo dello Scelto, who had been confined there. A few months later, we heard that in Florence many Guelf citizens wanted to cause a

³³¹ *Cronica di Buonaccorso Pitti*, ed. Alberto Bacchi della Lega (Bologna: Romagnoli, 1905), p. 36; “...merchatante e grande giuchatore...”

³³² Richard C. Trexler, *The Spiritual Power: Republican Florence Under Interdict* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), pp. 38-9, places this incident in the context of the Gregory XI’s revenge against Florentine merchants at the papal court in Avignon during the war.

³³³ Pitti, *Cronica*, pp. 37-9.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39: “Andò a suo camino e io rimasi e feci grande stento per l’essere male ghovernato.”

tumult [*romoregiare la terra*] with the help of a band of banished men who were going to come from Siena, the leader of whom was Messer Luca di Totto da Panzano. As a result, Giovanni dello Scelto Tinghi and Bernardo di Lippo [Cione del Cane], who were among the leaders, organized a group of about 200 banished and confined men and their friends. I went with that group and, as had been planned, we arrived one night at the gate of San Pier Gattolino; Messer Luca with his company was supposed to reach San Miniato late the same night so as to sound the alarm bell at dawn, which was the signal for the conspirators in Florence to arm themselves and open the gate of San Giorgio to us.³³⁵

But Luca da Panzano never reached San Miniato because the plot had been discovered and the Difensore del Contado was sent to break up his band. Buonaccorso's recollection, probably recorded years after the events, of his reason for leaving Florence is especially telling: he simply left, he says, because many of the Guelfs and the best men (*molti cittadini Ghuelfi e de' migliori*) had been expelled; and Pitti's self-imposed exile makes sense because this was the political faction with which he identified. Even though he himself had not been banished, his side had lost and needed to return home in force, so he joined them. He also tells us that he and Matteo Tinghi heard about a plot (*occorse che noi sentimo*). Buonaccorso, and more so Matteo,

³³⁵ Ibid., pp. 44-6: "Io mi tornai a chasa; e vedendo essere chaciati e sbanditi e confinati molti cittadini Ghuelfi e de' migliori, diliberai nonnistarci. Andamene a Pisa e tornami in casa Matteo de lo Scielto che era confinato ; e stato là alquanti mesi, occorse che noi sentimo che a Firenze molti cittadini Ghuelfi doveano romoregiare la terra colì' aiuto di molti sbanditi che veniano da Siena, de' quali era capo messer Lucha di Totto da Panzane. Il perché da Pisa si mosse circha di cc. tra sbanditi e confinati e altri loro amici, che Giovanni de lo Scielto e Bernardo di Lippo, che furono de' chapi, richiesono. Colla quale brighata io venni e arivamo la notte innanzi di a la porta a San Piero Ghattolino, come era stato ordinato; e messer Lucha colla sua compagnia dovea quella notte in sul di essere a Santo Miniato a Monte, e schiarato il di, dovea fare sonare le champane di San Miniato a stormo, e allora il trattato che era ordine [sic] in Firenze si dovea scoprire e pigliare l'arme e venirci aprire la porta di San Giorgio."

were part of a network through which information from Florence could be readily passed. Among the self-identified “Guelfs” and “best men” in “exile,” it is clear that word of plots spread like wildfire, and men like Buonaccorso and Matteo joined without (seemingly) giving it much thought at all.

Buonaccorso Pitti and the the Tinghi brothers also conspired with Florentine exiles around Siena, where a major contingent of plotters were present in the early days of the guild government, as is clear in the chronicle of the wealthy notary ser Nofri di ser Piero delle Riformagioni. More than any other single source, this chronicle expresses the viewpoint of the conspirator against the guild government; and, speaking of himself in the third person, ser Nofri actually describes a conspiracy that he organized:

In December of 1379, Nofri di ser Piero delle Riformagioni, seeing that Nanni di Piero Anselmi was in Siena, joined up with him. Nanni said to ser Nofri, “Try to capture one of the walled towns belonging to Florence; it will only take the smallest uprising [*romore*] for the Guelfs to take back their government [*riavranno loro stato*].” Then the two parted.

Many times in November and then December of the same year, ser Nofri met together with Piero Canigiani, Donato di Iacopo Strada, Buonaccorso Pitti, Bese Magalotti, Niccola d’Andrea di Lippo Mangioni, Giovanni dello Scelto Tinghi, Tommasino da Panzano, Ugolino and Toccio Gherardini, and many others in the house near Siena where ser Nofri was staying. And there they decided that ser Nofri should try to capture a good town.

In the same year, after vespers on the Saturday before St. Lucy’s Day [13 December], ser Nofri left Siena through the gate of San Francesco together with Bese Magalotti, Donato di Iacopo Strada, Giovanni dello Scielto, Iacopo del Boccaccio Brunelleschi, Ugolino di Noldo, Tonio Gherardini, and many other guildsmen and Ciompi from Florence and their friends and companions. According to the orders given by ser Nofri and his cousin Fazio di ser Mino, they were going to Figline. Ser Nofri had sent ahead Gualtieri della Magna, one of his staff, and at least twenty-six soldiers [*fanti*] to the house of Piero del Vita, where they were staying. At night, they were supposed to enter

Figline castle and Fazio was supposed to open the gate. As it happened, it rained through the night and many of the men got lost in the woods, so they didn't arrive at Figline until well after sunrise. And because the podestà at Figline, who was a belt-maker, had the gout and had not yet awakened, and because ser Dino di ser Scarfagna had kept watch throughout the night, the gate was not open. And Fazio, because of the time and because he had been up all night waiting, had gone to bed. For those reasons, the gates of Figline were not opened until terce and ser Nofri and his companions turned back, thinking that the whole plot had been uncovered.

When news of this reached Florence, the Florentines were very afraid.³³⁶

³³⁶ *Cronaca di Ser Nofri di ser Piero delle Riformagioni*, in SCARAMELLA, pp. 64-5: "Nel ditto anno 1379, del mese di Novembre, ser Nofri di ser Piero delle Riformagioni, vegniendo Nanni di Piero Anselmi a Siena, si ritrovò co' lui e furono insieme. Disse il ditto Nanni a ser Nofri: "Ingegnati di pigliare qualche castello di quelli di Firenze; però che non fia sì piccolo romore, che e guelfi riavranno loro stato." E così stato, si partirono l'uno dall'altro. Nel detto anno, molte volte, del detto mese di Novembre, e poi del mese di Dicembre, ser Nofri fu con Piero Canigiani, con Donato di Iacopo Strada, con Buonaccorso Pitti, con Bese Magalotti, con Niccola d'Andrea di Lippo Mangioni, con Giovanni dello Scelto Tinghi, Tommasino da Panzano, Ugolino e Toccio Gherardini, e più altri insieme, nella casa dove abitava il detto ser Nofri, appresso a Siena, e quivi si prese partito che el detto ser Nofri s'ingegnasse di pigliare qualche buono castello. ... Nel detto anno, il sabato innanzi a santa Lucia, di Dicembre, dopo vespro, il detto ser Nofri si partì da Siena, cioè di fuor della Porta di San Francesco, insieme con Bese Magalotti, Donato di Iacopo Strada, Giovanni dello Scielto, Iacopo del Boccaccio Brunelleschi, Ugolino di Noldo, e Tonio Gherardini, molti altri tra artefici e ciompi da Firenze, e loro amistà e compagnia; e andarono per torre Feghine secondo l'ordine avea dato ser Nofri, con Fazio di ser Mino, suo cugino. E avea mandato, il detto ser Nofri, Gualtieri della Magna, famiglio del detto ser Nofri, e bene xxvj fanti ad albergo in Feghine, i quali albergarono in casa Piero del Vita; e la notte doveano entrare in Feghine, e Fazio dovea aprire. E in effetto, perchè tutta la notte piovè e smarironsi molti de' detti per le boscora, non giunsono a Feghine che era levato il sole' di buon pezzo. E perchè il podestà che era a Feghine era gottosa, che era un correggiaio, e non s'era risentito la mattina, e ser Dino di der Scarfagna avea la notte vegghiato, non s'era aperto la porta. E il detto Fazio, perchè era quell'otta, e tutta notte avea vegghiato ad aspettare, s'era ito a letto. E pertanto non s'apersono le porte di Feghine ch'era terza, e i detti ser Nofri e suoi compagni ritornarono adietro, pensando che ogni cosa fusse scoperto. Et essendo le novella a Firenze stettono a gran paura." Figline, in the Valdarno, had been in Florentine hands for more than a century; see, for example, the cheerful words of Matteo Palmieri, *Vita civile* (Florence: Sansoni, 1982), p.130: "gli abitatori del castello di Feghine ... si dierono nelle braccia de' Fiorentini... onde benignamente ricevuti furono da' Fiorentini per veri cittadini accettati". For the earlier history of Figline, see Chris J. Wickham, "Figline Valdarno in the Twelfth Century," *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome*

Ser Nofri and his friends in Siena, many in self-imposed exile, were surrounded by friends and associates from every rank of society (including members of the elite like Piero Canigiani, but also Ciompi); they had associates (like Piero del Vita) who could provide them with crucial assets (like houses in which to lodge conspirators), they were able to attract or buy the services of followers and soldiers (the twenty-six *fanti*), they were well aware of the security situation in Florence, they associated themselves with the Guelfs who were out of power, and they took part in seditious actions with a remarkable nonchalance. The chronicle reveals a striking network of men all around Siena who wanted to overthrow the government of Florence, who met in farm houses to plot and dream of seizing Florentine towns. Ser Nofri himself was a partisan of the Parte Guelfa faction and had been personally injured by the government of Florence: earlier in the chronicle, he calls the leaders of the guild regime “strong Ghibellines, suspected by the Guelf Party”³³⁷ and described the torture he personally endured at the hands of messer Giorgio Scali after being apprehended.³³⁸ Ser Nofri also tells how he and his father had wanted to visit Charles of Durazzo at the end of July 1379 at his camp,³³⁹ where other Parte Guelfa exiles were known to be gathering and plotting, but

108 (1996): 7-93. Ser Nofri was influential in Figline, see Brucker, “Ciompi Revolution,” p. 332, n. 2, which may explain why he was particularly valuable in this plot.

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 59: “...il forte ghibellini sospetti a parte guelfa...”

³³⁸ Ibid., p. 61: “La notte il detto messer Giorgio collò molto villanamente il detto ser Nofri, e per modo, che più volte tramorti in sulla colla, e stette con la febbre più dì.”

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 62.

the aborted siege of Figline was the height of his conspiratorial activities. The full extent of ser Nofri's plot is seen in a 2 January 1379 [80] condemnation by the Capitano del Popolo against twenty-one "traitors and rebels of the commune of Florence and men of bad condition, life, and renown"; indeed, the Capitano's sentence parallels ser Nofri's account: these men, it reads,

with the intention of overthrowing the present, peaceful, Guelf, and popular government [*statum*] of the city of Florence, and of causing a rebellion at Figline Valdarno di Sopra in the *contado* of Florence, and of holding the said town against the commune of Florence and of making war against the commune, gathered together in November and December in Siena in the houses where messer Luca [da Panzano], Ugolino [Gherardini], and Iacopo [Brunelleschi] were staying, and they also joined together in the house where ser Piero [delle Riformagioni] was staying outside the gate of Siena, and in these places they held conversations many times about overthrowing the government.³⁴⁰

³⁴⁰ The condemnation, located at ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, ff. 47r-49v, is against: "Lanfranchum domini Luce de Pançano ... Tomasinum Antonii de Pançano... Ugolinum Noldi de Gherardinis ... Iacopum Bocacci de Brunalleschis ... Toctium Antonii de Gherardinis... Besem Guidonis de Magalottis... Gherardinum Pieri de Vellutis... Iohannem Scelti alias Nannem ... Donatum Iacopi Strade ... Ser Pierum ser Grifi... Ser Nofrium, Ser Brunum, Leonardum et Francischum vocatum Checcho, filios dicti ser Pieri... Iustum Luce vocatum Peçotto... Iohannem Putii vocatum Schieggia petinatorem ... Sandrum Fedutii vocatum el Ghianda petinatorem ... Bartolum Contesse... Michaellem Laurentii vocatum Buratta de Meleto, Fulinum Bindi de Sancta Maria in Castello et Nerium vocatum el Pelegra de Albola comitatus Florentie, homines proditores et rebelles communis Florentie male conditionis vite et fame..."; and, the quotation: "...animo et intenctione subvertendi presentem statum pacificum guelfum et popularem civitatis Florentie et animo et intenctione rebellandi castrum Fighini vallis arni superioris comitatus Florentie et dictum castrum rebellatum tenendi contra communem Florentie et guerram faciendi contra dictum communem de presenti anno et mense novembris proxime preteriti coadunaverunt se in civitate Senarum in domibus habitationis domini Luce Ugolini et Iacopi in dicta inquisitione confinatis et anno et mense predictis coadunaverunt et congregaverunt se in domo habitationis supradicti ser Pieri posita extra portam civitatis Senarum in dicta inquisitione confinata et in dictis locis pluries colloquium et tractatum habuerunt de subvertendo presentem statum pacificum guelfum et popularem civitatis Florentie hoc modo videlicet."

The content of these conversations is recorded in the sentence as well, and they and most of the sentence match ser Nofri's account,³⁴¹ even if he somewhat overstated his own role in planning the attack. The conspiracy to take Figline sheds light on several crucial aspects of the conspiracies of 1379: they were plotted by networks of exiles, voluntary and involuntary, in the cities around Florence, they were carried out as much in the *contado* as in the city (as in the Good Friday plot), and they had the character of small military campaigns. At the very same time that ser Nofri and his friends were plotting to take Figline, a much larger plot was being planned by a larger network of exiles hoping to bring an army to Florence and the Guelf faction back home.

The Great Conspiracy of December 1379

On 29 October 1379, the name of Marchionne di Coppo Stefani was drawn for the priorate of November-December, and his tenure in office allowed him to record the political events of those crucial months in great detail.³⁴² His chronicle, along with an abundance of surviving archival documentation,

³⁴¹ For example, *ibid.*: “noi procuriamo de tollere qualche castello del contado de Fiorença et avuto el detto castello noi faremo guerra contro Fiorença et troveremo per certo che en Fiorença se levara romore et cui pora esser che noie ce rentreremo et posto che questo non fosse noi averimo omne pacto the vorimo dal comune di Fiorença.”

³⁴² On Stefani generally, see Enrico Sestan, “Bonaiuti Baldassarre, detto Marchionne,” in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 15 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1972), pp. 105-112; and Amedeo De Vincentiis, “Scrittura storica e politica cittadina: la cronaca fiorentina di Marchionne di Coppo Stefani,” *Rivista storica italiana* 108 (1996):230-97.

allows for a detailed examination of the extraordinary plot that doomed the guild government to ruling a city under siege, unleashed the worst impulses of the city's leaders, and revealed the frighteningly vast size and scope of the pan-Italian criminal network arrayed against them. News of the plot first came to the priors from an unlikely source: the Englishman John Hawkwood, who had already established himself as the premier mercenary captain in the Romagna.³⁴³ On 10 December 1379, Hawkwood sent word to the priors of a conspiracy under way in Florence or the surrounding territory that was, to quote Stefani, "sì grande che grandissima novità genererebbe," so great that it would unleash the greatest revolution. Hawkwood, behaving like the worst kind of businessman, offered to reveal the details of this plot for a fee and proposed a variable scale of payment: for 50,000 florins, he would reveal the details of the plot and the names of the plotters (though, in that case, he also asked for the power to spare six of them from punishment); or for 20,000 florins, the details of the plot alone, without any names. Either way, he asked that the money be brought to him at Bagnacavallo, his base of operations in the Romagna, which he had received along with Cotignola as a surety for back pay from Pope Gregory XI.³⁴⁴ The priors decided to deal with Hawkwood and,

³⁴³ On Hawkwood, see now the detailed biography by William Caferro, *John Hawkwood: An English Mercenary in Fourteenth-Century Italy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2006); there has recently been great interest in the mercenary with popular biographies written in English and Italian: Frances Stonor Saunders, *Hawkwood: Diabolical Englishman* (London: Faber, 2004) and Duccio Balestracci, *Le armi, i cavalli, l'oro: Giovanni Acuto e i condottieri nell'Italia del Trecento* (Rome: Laterza, 2003). Hawkwood achieved his position of pre-eminence during the War of the Eight Saints; on this, Caferro, *John Hawkwood*, pp. 175-225.

³⁴⁴ STEFANI, rubr. 829, pp. 352-3. See also Caferro, *John Hawkwood*, pp. 217-8. On Bagnacavallo, see Luigi Balduzzi, "Bagnacavallo e Giovanni Acuto," *Atti e memorie della regia deputazione di storia patria per le provincie di Romagna*, ser. 3, 2 (1885):72-4. Whatever correspondence the Priors sent to Hawkwood in this matter

through their agent Guccio di Dino Gucci, negotiated a reduced price of 12,000 florins. There at Bagnacavallo, “in the darkness, by the glow of embers, without a lamp,”³⁴⁵ Guccio met with Hawkwood and a secret informer who revealed the details of the plot: a group of Florentine exiles and “molti Ciompi” were in Bologna, where they had gathered arms and fashioned banners and flags,³⁴⁶ and planned to re-take Florence along with a force under the control of Giannotto del Protopiudice da Salerno, the “siniscalco” or seneschal of Charles of Durazzo, and two of his commanders named Simone dal Poggio and Giovanni Poccia of Perugia, who were now moving through the Romagna. One week later, though, the plotters themselves would be revealed.

The nature of the plot and the involvement of Charles of Durazzo did not, of course, come as a surprise to the leaders of the guild government. Charles’s role in the plot of Giannozzo Sacchetti was suspected, and monitoring the location and activities of the Florentine exiles had become a major preoccupation of the priors’ diplomatic efforts, as we saw in the case of

does not seem to be extant, but see ASF, *Missive*, 18, f. 89r, for slightly earlier negotiations with Hawkwood and his condottiere Lutio Sparverio conducted by Spinello di Luca Alberti, the trusted treasurer of the commune, called by Franco Sacchetti “il buon Spinello,” in *Il libro delle rime*, ed. by Franca Brambilla Ageno (Firenze: Olschki, 1990), p. 288.

³⁴⁵ STEFANI, rubr. 828, p. 353: “...al buio, al fuoco di bracia, senza lume...”

³⁴⁶ The description of the banners in Stefani, rubr. 828, p. 352, is striking: “Molte bandiere e pennoncelli erano fatti in Bologna all’arme del popolo di Firenze, e di sopra, a modo d’una banda, era l’arme della Parte guelfa, e di sotto avea uno braccio con una spada ignuda rotta.” The details of the description are partially confirmed in ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, at f. 57r, where the flag (*banderia falsa*) is said to have depicted two arms, one “tenebat bilancias” and the other “tenebat unam spadam fractam,” and a meaning is given: “Conquello nobele segno che de sopra porto, faro vendetta che me fatto torto,” carrying this noble flag above me I will take vengeance on whoever wronged me.

Lapo da Castiglionchio.³⁴⁷ As late as 21 November, King Louis of Hungary had assured the priors that Charles was not harboring exiles or helping them plot against the government of Florence,³⁴⁸ but the priors now knew with certainty otherwise and would soon know the full extent of Charles's involvement. As the forces of Charles of Durazzo moved into Tuscany in the late summer, the leaders of the guild government had to make peace with him, citing both the needs of security and of maintaining traditional alliances, but the time for pacification was now over.³⁴⁹ On 17 December 1379, Tommaso Strozzi and Giovanni Dini presented to the priors a letter from Antonio, one of the Counts of Monte Bruscoli, which was received "with great fury" in the priorate. It described a nefarious plot hatched in Bologna and set to be carried out on the night of 19 December.³⁵⁰ The plan, which called for the simultaneous outbreak of armed violence in eight places within the city of Florence, for the murder of

³⁴⁷ In the period between 29 April and 21 November 1379 (in ASF, *Missive*, 18), for example, at least three letters were sent to Charles of Durazzo (at 22v, 33v, and 82r), two to the King of Hungary (75v and 81v), and five to the Paduans (22r, 60v, 73r, 90v, and 91r) at least partially for this purpose.

³⁴⁸ A rare copy, in Salutati's hand, of the letter from "Lodovicus dei gratia Rex Hungarie, Polonie, Dalmatie, etc.," is found in ASF, *Missive*, 18, f. 95r.

³⁴⁹ See, for example, the discussions in the *pratiche* of late July and early August in ASF, *CP*, 19. The speech of Salvestro de' Medici, "quod fiat concordia cum Domino Karolo per modum honestum, et quod nulla gens eidem detur" (33v), was representative of the most pacifist positions, while others like Benedetto Alberti demanded that Charles stop associating with conspirators ("repellat a se emulos et suspectos", f. 20r).

³⁵⁰ Count Antonio was honored and paid well for unveiling this conspiracy, see ASF, *PR*, ff. 196v-197v, a *provisio* "Pro Comite Antonio de Brusculo"; about seven months earlier, a 23 May 1379 *provisio* "pro revelantibus tractatus," had offered payment to those who might reveal plots against the government, see ASF, *PR*, 35r-36v; and this measure had been called for as early as December of 1378 by Salvestro de' Medici; see ASF, *CP* 16, 59r. The account here follows that in STEFANI, rubr. 829; the quote "in gran furia" at p. 353.

Tommaso Strozzi and Giorgio Scali and of others who had been *ammoniti* by the Parte Guelfa, the display of Guelf banners, and cries of “Viva il Popolo e Parte Guelfa!” was said to be supported by “many great citizens, both noble and *popolani*.”³⁵¹ Alarmed by the report, the priors summoned the Otto di Guardia and directed them to apprehend one Bruno di Giovanni of the parish of San Niccolò, who was named in the letter and was said to possess one of the Guelf banners intended for use in the planned eruption of political violence. After the Otto arrested Bruno and found the banner, word spread through the city that the conspiracy had been discovered and many, fearing arrest, fled. On the night of 18 December, the Otto apprehended Lorenzo di Giovanni, who was called “Nencio Ciccho,” in the act of fleeing. Before long, he revealed the names of his co-conspirators (including many men exiled and confined by the government) and acknowledged the role of Charles of Durazzo and his seneschal Giannotto in the conspiracy.³⁵² By the next evening, the commune had entrusted an armed guard to four faithful citizens (two representing the *Arti maggiori* and two representing the *Arti minori*) and they were stationed in the Piazza della Signoria.³⁵³ The palace was furnished with food and arms, notes the chronicler Stefani, just as it had been in July of 1378, to prevent the priors from being expelled. Meanwhile the forces of the Otto, the Priors, and the foreign rectors³⁵⁴ were dispatched into the city and to

³⁵¹ STEFANI, rubr. 829, p. 354: “...molte grandi cittadini nobili e popolani...”

³⁵² STEFANI, rubr. 829, pp. 354-5.

³⁵³ The representatives of the *Arti maggiori* were Tommaso Strozzi and Benedetto Alberti; those of the *Arti minori* were Lorenzo di Donato and Benedetto da Corlona.

nearby places to apprehend the conspirators—Mariano di Lando degli Albizzi, for example, was arrested at Rovezzano, while messer Iacopo Sacchetti was found hiding in a mound of grain in the Badia. By the night's end, the Capitano had gained custody of, among others, Cipriano di Lippo Mangioni, Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti, messer Iacopo Sachetti, and Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, while the Esecutore, Gianino of Ascoli, had seized the brothers Donato and Bartolommeo de' Barbadori.³⁵⁵ That day, Salutati wrote a letter to be sent to the rulers of Perugia, who were counted among Florence's strongest allies, and, as a postscript after the concluding date, tersely added the news that the "extraordinarily large and dangerous" conspiracy in Florence had been suppressed "by the grace of God."³⁵⁶ A few days later, Salutati also wrote to the Bolognese (a new ally) defending the repression of the plot, thanking them for their assistance, and warning that Charles of Durazzo was also plotting against them.³⁵⁷ In order to understand the nature and scope of

³⁵⁴ The precise size of the Otto's force is unknown, but, in 1378/9, the Capitano del Popolo (not including the four judges and nine notaries in his *familia*) regularly had 100 men at his disposal (80 soldiers, 17 shieldbearers, and 3 knights); the Podestà had 73, the Esecutore 33, the Difensore del contado 102, and the Priors themselves had 100 *fanti* who could be called upon; the total combined "police force" of the city likely exceeded 500 men; this data is provided and analyzed in Halina Manikowska, "Polizia e servizi d'ordine a Firenze nella seconda metà del XIV secolo," *Ricerche storiche* 16 (1986), pp. 17-38, especially table 3 at p. 31. Not surprisingly given the centrality of the Capitano to the popular government, the size of his force increased significantly in 1378 (from 60 total soldiers), while those of the other rectors remained at previous levels.

³⁵⁵ STEFANI, rubr. 830, pp. 355-6.

³⁵⁶ ASF, *Missive*, 18, f. 91v: "Tractatus qui hic erat, per dei gratiam taliter est oppressus, quod quamvis magnus et periculosus fuerit..."

³⁵⁷ ASF, *Missive*, 18, ff. 93r-94r. "Vos," the chancellor wrote to the lords of Bologna on 24 December, "emulos nostros, imo parentis patrie proditores, ne possent in Tusciam accedere, vetuistis. Vos conjunctionis conscios vel suspectos per

this plot, we can examine the condemnations of some of these men and the circumstances that brought them to conspire against the Florentine government.

Cipriano di Lippo Mangioni's clan had been in financial decline since at least 1350, while the fortunes of some wealthy artisans and "new men" had risen to overshadow it. In the April 1378 *prestanze* assessment for Cipriano's district (Lion Bianco in the quarter of Santa Maria Novella), for example, Cipriano was assessed only a fraction (3 fl., 1 s.) of what successful blacksmiths like Niccolò di Tieri (19 fl., 14 s.) or tanners like Bencivenni Gratini (10 fl., 17 s.) were.³⁵⁸ Whatever his financial situation, Cipriano had regularly held major public office in the city—he served as prior in 1363, 1368, and 1375; as one of the Buonomini in 1363 and 1366; as gonfaloniere of his district in 1367 and 1370; and, most importantly, he was one of the leaders of the Parte Guelfa faction and primary proponents of *ammonizione*.³⁵⁹ For this reason, he was confined to Milan in August 1378 by the Ciompi

magistratus vestros fecistis examinandos cum diligentia detineri. Vos gentium vestrarum subsidia ad consolationem nostri populi destinatis," at f. 94r.

³⁵⁸ For the economic conditions in Lion Bianco in 1378, see Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, pp. 22-3, and especially n. 91 on p. 23, where Brucker provides the comparative assessments of these men and others in the district.

³⁵⁹ Office-holding data from the ONLINE TRATTE; Cipriano's service on the Priorate is also noted in STEFANI, pp. 262, 273, and 292; and for his role in the Parte and as an instigator of the program of *ammonizione* in the quarter of Santa Maria Novella, see the list in STEFANI, rubr. 790, p. 318: "S. Maria Novella: Buondelmonti tutti, Acciaiuoli alcuni, Altoviti tutti, alcuni degli Ardinghelli, Ramondino Vecchietti di Giovanni, messer Albizo Rucellai e quasi tutti, messer Pazzino degli Strozzi, Andrea, e Cipriano di Lippo Mangioni, Andrea di Signini." Otherwise, little is known of Cipriano. For example, Raymond de Roover, "The Story of the Alberti Company of Florence, 1302-1348, as Revealed in Its Account Books," *Business History Review* 32 (1958): 26, shows that he was employed by the company of Carroccio di Lapo degli Alberti in 1348, as were other members of his family.

government.³⁶⁰ His condemnation³⁶¹ explains that, at some point, he left his confinement in Milan and travelled to Bologna, where he stayed in the hotel (*hospitium*) of Felice di Amanato and had a meeting with Niccolò di Iacopo Bordoni, another Florentine Guelf and exile. Niccolò, admiring the “faith and love” that Cipriano had for the Florentine exiles, explained the plot to re-enter Florence by force— “In order to return to Florence, we have given the order to have more than two hundred *lances* [i.e., 600 men and horses] assembled and paid for, and to have another group of friends; and with our force and the other to give the order that we will return to Florence either peacefully or at war”— and he requested that, when the time came, Cipriano use all of his power to further their plot. Cipriano agreed. “And the said Ciprianus,” declares the condemnation, switching from the vernacular of their conversation back to Latin, “kept the aforesaid things secret and revealed them to no one so that they might be better carried out to the grave damage and injury of the Parte Guelfa and of the peaceful and popular government of the guilds and guildsmen of the city of Florence against the law, statutes, and ordinances of the said city.” And for this, Cipriano was sentenced to death.

³⁶⁰ See the list compiled by the Squittinatore, in SCARAMELLA, p. 78, where Cipriano is confined “a Melano”; as well as the Second Anonymous chronicler [in SCARAMELLA, p. 118] and the account of Nanni Bonifazii [SCARAMELLA, p.153].

³⁶¹ The condemnation is in ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, f. 65rv: “...dictus Ciprianus [Lipoççi] reverteretur a civitate Mediolani ubi steterat ad confinia transivit per civitatem Bononie et dum esset in hospitio Felicis Amanati, ad ipsum accessit Nicolaus Bordonis de Florentia... Cui Nicolaus dixit Cipriano...per retornare a Fiorença avemo dato ordene de avere oltra doy cento lance a nostre spese e avere altra gente damicitia e con la nostra e con laltra dare ordene en breve che o per pace o per guerra torniamo a Fiorença... et predicta dictus Ciprianus in secreto tenuit et nemini revelavit ad hoc ut predicta habilius executionem demandarentur in grave dampnum et prejudicium partis guelfe et pacifici et popularis status artium et artificum civitatis Florentie contra formam iuris statutorum ordinamentorum dicte civitatis.”

Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti (sometimes called Mastino) had, likewise, regularly held communal office: he was prior in 1364, 1371, and 1375; among the Buonomini in both 1367 and 1371, and gonfaloniere of his district (Vipera in Santa Maria Novella) in 1361 and 1372.³⁶² And, like Cipriano Mangioni, he was strongly associated with the Parte and the policy of *ammonizione*.³⁶³ Before 1370, though, he had been a Ricci partisan and, for several decades, partner in a Ricci banking firm (with Tedaldino di Roggerio and Guicciozzo di Ardingo Ricci). In 1370, Bartolo was near bankruptcy and was saved by a loan from Carlo degli Strozzi and Michele Castellani, two of the leaders of the Albizzi faction. Thereafter, Bartolo was on the side of the Albizzi and, according to Stefani, when he was on the priorate in March of 1371, coerced his colleagues into passing a law that further strengthened the hand of the Parte Guelfa.³⁶⁴ In June of 1378, his was the third house burned down by the Ciompi mob (after Lapo da Castiglionchio's and Carlo degli Strozzi's) and, in August, the Ciompi government confined him to Mantua.³⁶⁵ As in Cipriano's case, Bartolo left his confinement and journeyed to Bologna, where, again at the hotel of Felice di Amanato, he met with one Niccolò di Brunetto, who

³⁶² Office-holding data from ONLINE TRATTE; Bartolo's service as Prior is also noted in STEFANI, pp. 264, 279, and 298.

³⁶³ See, for example, STEFANI, rubr. 790, p. 317.

³⁶⁴ On the partnership with the Ricci, see Brucker, *Florentine Politics*, p. 127; on the change of allegiance and pressuring of the other priors, see STEFANI, rubr. 730, pp. 279-80, and Becker, *Florence in Transition*, vol. 1, p. 134. The *Cronaca* of Alamanno Acciaiuoli calls the law passed by Bartolo "fortissima in favore di Parte guelfa" and notes that it was overturned by the Ciompi balia, in SCARAMELLA, p. 16.

³⁶⁵ STEFANI, rubr. 792, p. 319; rubr. 795, p. 312 ("confinat[o] da 30 miglia in là") and rubr. 799, p. 328 ("a Mantova"); as well as most of the chroniclers in SCARAMELLA, pp. 37, 78, and 153.

explained the plan and asked for cooperation, for which he too was sentenced to death.³⁶⁶

It is harder to make sense of messer Iacopo Sacchetti's involvement in the plot. Unlike Cipriano and Bartolo (or, of course, Piero degli Albizzi), messer Iacopo was not a central member of the Parte Guelfa faction. Indeed, Iacopo's support for the taxation of clergy in the War of the Eight Saints—evidenced by his memorable statement, in a *consulta* of 1377, that the priests should be squeezed “to the dregs” for money before any recourse be had to the purses of citizens³⁶⁷—was likely one of the main reasons he was knighted by the Ciompi.³⁶⁸ Soon after the conferral of that honor, though, according to the chronicler called the Squittinatore, he (along with one Fino di Taddeo di Fino) was arrested and confessed to speaking against the government.³⁶⁹ According to Stefani, he was confined to Todi at the end of the summer, although another source claims that, on 19 October 1378, alongside men like Giorgio Scali and Tommaso Strozzi, he attended a feast and took an oath to uphold the knighthood of the *popolo* as well as the “peaceful and good government” ruling Florence.³⁷⁰ Nevertheless, by the time of his condemnation³⁷¹ in late

³⁶⁶ Condemnation at ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, ff. 64v-65r.

³⁶⁷ Quoted by Gherardi in his introduction to the text of the ANONIMO, p. 232: “Quod usque ad feces premanatur clerici pro pecunia, et postea recurratur ad bursas civium.”

³⁶⁸ STEFANI, rubr. 795, p. 324.

³⁶⁹ SCARAMELLA, p. 79]: “...fu preso Fino di Taddeo di Fino, per certe parole che doveva avere detto contro lo stato. E messere Iacopo Sacchetti fu ancora preso, e confessorono che quello ch'aveano detto era il vero.” The Squittinatore also notes that they were imprisoned and that it was widely thought they would lose their lives.

December, he is described as having being confined at Fabriano, in the Marche, where he met Matteo dello Scelto Tinghi in the market. Matteo came bearing the “good news” of a plot, this time said to have been organized by none other than Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi,³⁷² to re-enter Florence by force with more than two hundred lances. Benedetto had also asked, says Matteo, that all who wished to participate sign and seal a document attesting to their desire to carry out Benedetto’s plot. “Then the said Messer Iacobus produced the said writing and sealed it with his seal and gave it to the said Mattheus.” For this messer Iacopo was condemned to death.

³⁷⁰ The best account of this ceremony is in the Squittinatore’s account, in SCARAMELLA, pp. 85-7. “[E] chi voleva essere, andasse a giurare, nelle mani di signori, la cavalleria. Sì che accettaro xxj di volere mantenerla per lo popolo” (p. 85); “giurando d’essere sempre mantenitori del pacefico e buono stato che regie” (p. 86).

³⁷¹ ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, f. 64rv: “...dum [dominus Jacobus de Sacchettis] esset in terra Fabriani ad confinia in mercato dicte terre cui undique sunt vie publice, ibidem supervenit Matheus Scielti de Florentia et dixit dicto domino Jacobo io te so dire bone novelle che Benedetto de Symone Peruççi [h]a ordinate per potere reintrare in Fiorenza, e insieme con lialtri usciti de condurre per fine e in ducento lance e con queste lance e con altra gente [64v] che se crede avere per certo venire verso Fiorença, e rientrare per certo e perche le cose abbino effecto el modo e [è] dato che tucti questi che volliono tenere questo ordinamento facciano una scripta de loro mano con loro sigello perche si mostri e sappiasi quelli, che sonno acti e pero io te prego da parte de Benedetto et de quelli altri usciti che tu volli fare questa scripta chio to dicta con lo sigello et trovarai che de corto andare reentraremo in Fiorença et se non ce poremmo reentrare noy faremo tanta guerra che averemo omne pacto che voremo dai Fiorentini, Et dictus dictus [sic] dominus Jacobus respondit, io sono aparechiato ma io te prego, che dicha a Benedetto che tenga si facto modo ch[]io non perda la gratia del Comune de Fiorenza, se questa cosa non venisse facta, Et damme ongni [ogni] modo vole fare questa scripta et tunc dictus Mattheus respondit tu ay a scrivere, che come tu se[] contento de ongni cosa che fa Benedetto de Peruççi per reintrare en Fiorença, esso con lialtri usciti tunc dictus dominus Iacobus fecit dictam scriptam et suo sigillo sigillavit et tradidit dicto Matheo, Et predicta nemini revelavit ut effectum haberent in grave dampnum, et preiudicium partis guelfe et popularis status artium et artificum civitatis Florentie.”

³⁷² Benedetto had, as we saw above, already been condemned for a conspiracy against the regime, see ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, ff. 99v-102v, for the details.

Likely due to his political power and influence in the Parte Guelfa, the best political histories of this period have stressed the role of Piero degli Albizzi in the December plot.³⁷³ His condemnation, though, does not entirely bear that out.³⁷⁴ The sentence states that Piero left his confinement in Venice and was staying at a villa in the *contado* of Bologna when he was met by Bernardo di Lippo di Cione del Cane. As in the other condemnations, Bernardo informed Piero of the “good news [*bone novelle*]” that a plan is underway to assemble and fund more than two hundred lances to bring the exiles back to Florence. Piero’s reply, far from showing his involvement in the planning, reveals only a cautious (or, perhaps, diplomatic) acceptance of the plot: “Ah, with what you’ve told me you have placed before me a difficult choice, that if I reveal it to our lords, I will be a traitor to you and put you in danger, and if I don’t reveal it I am in danger of having my head cut off. However, I pray that you are disposed to do it in such a way that you can do it cautiously enough that you don’t endanger yourself and me, and I promise to remain faithful and, at the right time and place, do everything in my power.” We must, of course, keep in mind that these sentences are based on confessions extracted through torture, crafted by the confessors, influenced by the questions asked by the judges of the Capitano, and modulated by the conventions of the legal process. We cannot take them at face value. Even so,

³⁷³ See, for example, Najemy, *History of Florence*, p. 171, and Brucker, *Civic World*, p. 56.

³⁷⁴ ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, ff. 63v-64r: “...et tunc dictus Pierus respondit oime che may [*m’aj*] dicto che tu mai [*m’aj*] messo ad un grande partito che si io lo revelo a li nostri signori, io sero traditore a voy e tutti vefaro pericolare, et se non rivelo et faciasse per altri sto a pericolo che non me sia talliato el capo e pero te prego per noi che sete desposti a fare cosi che lo feciate si cautamente, che non pericolate voi e me, e io ve promecto de tenere credença e a luoco e a tempo faro iusta el mio podere.”

Piero's confession is strikingly different than those of his co-conspirators. If anyone is identified as the leader of the conspiracy, it is Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi, not Piero degli Albizzi; and, indeed, of all the participants in this web of plotting—Cipriano Mangioni and Niccolò Bordoni, Bartolo Siminetti and Niccolò di Brunetto, messer Iacopo Sacchetti and Matteo Tinghi, Piero degli Albizzi and Bernardo di Lippo di Cione—none seems less committed or less willing to commit than Piero. Nonetheless, he had relocated to Bologna (at the heart of the plot) and gave the plot his support and, as a result, was sentenced to death.

The condemnations of these men would engender controversy and chaos in Florence, but no condemnation was more controversial than that of Donato Barbadori, Florence's leading diplomat in the period (discussed in detail at the start of Chapter 4). When, shortly after the arrests, it became clear that the Capitano and other rectors were reluctant to condemn the prisoners to death, representatives of the Capitadini of the Guilds, the Parte Guelfa, the Mercanzia, and the Dieci della Libertà held a *pratica* aimed at convincing them to do so. "If the rectors don't want to do justice," cried Alessandro di Benedetto Gucci, echoing the sentiments of many, "let it be entrusted to citizens and guildsmen who do."³⁷⁵ By the end of the riotous session, at which armed guildsmen demanded capital punishment for the conspirators, Alessandro's call was answered and the Capitadini gave four citizens "power [*balià*], together with the rectors, to carry out justice," and, their hands tied by the "will of the people," the rectors resigned themselves to sentencing the prisoners to

³⁷⁵ ASF, CP, 18, f. 55v (53v in ink): "Quod rectores nollent facere iusticiam, fiat commissio civibus et artificibus qui faciant."

death.³⁷⁶ Amid commotion in the piazza, Giovanni di Piero Anselmi and Filippo di Biagio degli Strozzi were beheaded first as the people cried “Next, Next! [*Agli altri, agli altri*].” Piero degli Albizzi, Cipriano Mangioni, Bartolo Siminetti, and Iacopo Sachetti were then executed in the same way, but only after the Capitano again expressed reservations about the sentence. When it came time for his execution, Donato Barbadori proclaimed his innocence and recounted the services that he had performed for Florence to keep her a free republic, but his words, recorded sympathetically by Stefani, were to no avail. And, before the week was over, the Capitano and other rectors had executed another nine Florentine conspirators.³⁷⁷ Among the executed was “Nencio Cicco”. Stefani, prior at the time, records that the Ciompi plotter, upon hearing his condemnation and seeing the evidence against him, protested and defiantly proclaimed, “I am happy to die for the Parte Guelfa!”³⁷⁸ Clearly angered by Nencio’s words, Stefani lashed out at the conspirators—“These men, who were trying to overthrow the government, were not more Guelf than the others, but, under the cover of the Parte Guelfa, they wanted to start a tumult in order to do evil”—and defended the Guelfness of his government.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁶ These events are described in STEFANI, rubr. 833, pp. 356-7; the quote is at p. 357: “balia insieme con gli Rettori a fare dare esecuzione alla giustizia...”

³⁷⁷ STEFANI, rubr. 834-9.

³⁷⁸ STEFANI, rubr. 839, pp. 360: “...io sono contento morire per Parte guelfa...”

³⁷⁹ STEFANI, rubr. 839, pp. 360: “Questi, che cercavano di sovvertire lo stato, non erano però più Guelfi che gli altri, perchè sotto titolo di Parte guelfa romorreggiare volessero; ma per fare male...” And, defending the Guelf character of the regime’s electoral policies, he continued: “...e [the conspirators] abbominavano la città, che si reggea a Parte ghibellina; e diceano male, perocchè sotto titolo di parte guelfa e per li Guelfi si reggea la città, ma degli smoniti guelfi, e forse de’ Ghibellini smoniti ve n’erano nelle borse, ed alcuni ne veniano agli ufici tratti; ma era piccola cosa a rispetto de i Guelfi, che non erano negli ufici veduti infino a quello dì, de’ 20 l’uno”.

Even with the conspirators eliminated, the government and its most vociferous supporters would not rest. “Let there be pure and undiluted justice,” demanded the lower guildsman Giovanni di Filippo, “it alone is the medicine for this city’s sickness,” and the others present in the council echoed his words.³⁸⁰ “In order to save the government,” argued Feozzo di Casino, newly elected as one of the Twelve, in a later *pratica*, “let justice be done, yielding to no one.”³⁸¹ Calls for the confiscation of the property of the condemned and for the penalization of their wives and children were heard among the chief representatives of the regime, who also sought a rigged, hand-picked (*a mano*) election for the priorate of January-February 1379 [80] in order to ensure that no disloyal priors were chosen.³⁸² The priorate was always invested with enormous “emergency” powers,³⁸³ and an action like this would have subverted the very principles upon which the guild government saw it itself as based. Cooler heads prevailed in the council of 26 December, when representatives of the guilds suggested that all the guilds should be consulted before subverting the electoral process, and again days later when a large majority (17 of 23) of the guilds voted to maintain the procedures already in

³⁸⁰ ASF, *CP*, 18, f. 51v: Johannes Filippi farsettaius dixit quod iustitia fiat pura et mera que sola est medicina infirmitatis istius civitatis.”

³⁸¹ ASF, *CP*, 18, f. 63r: “Et quod pro status conservatione justitia fiat non parcendo alicui.”

³⁸² On this, see Brucker, *Civic World*, p. 56.

³⁸³ See, for example, Gregorio Dati’s (significantly later) discussion, in *Istoria di Firenze di Goro Dati dall’ anno MCCCLXXX all’ anno MCCCCV* (Florence: Manni, 1735), p. 137: “L’Uficio, e balia, e autorità, e Potenza de’ detti Signori è grande senza misura, ciò, che vogliono, possono, mentre che dura il loro Uficio, ma non aoperano questa potenza, se non in certi casi necessary, e stremi, e di rado...”

place and rejected the calls for an *a mano* election.³⁸⁴ The new priors were then drawn by lot, according to the law. We see here the conflict between the elite political style, represented by leaders of the government like Tommaso Strozzi, and the popular political ideology of the guilds, embraced by the majority of the guildsmen. The nature of this conflict, which had been playing out in Florence for more than a century, reveals the fatal contradiction at the core of this government: it had been formed and secured with a factional purge, it was defended by its leaders with a fanaticism (and sometimes a disrespect for the rule of law) born out of paranoia, but, at the micro-level, the men and women who formed the core of its partisans were committed to the ideals of inclusion, representation, and broad-based consultation.

Early in February of 1379 [80], more than a month after the dramatic events of December but only shortly after the full convictions, Salutati crafted the most eloquent defense of the repression of the conspiracy in a letter to the pope that contrasted the moderation of the city's response—only a few of the conspirators were killed, their property was confiscated legally and temperately—given the astonishing evil of the plans—to destroy the guilds, to invade and plunder the city—of the “unholy citizens, cruel men, and bellicose people” who were once, of course, among Florence's chief supporters of the Church.³⁸⁵ The Albizzi, for example, had long been among the cadre of elite

³⁸⁴ See also Brucker, *Civic World*, pp. 56-7, who rightly sees the leadership's proposals as a sign of fear and lost faith in guild government, and Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*, pp. 256-8, who rightly sees this as a triumph of the “rank and file” of the guild community over the radicalism of its elite leadership and of their continued belief in the principles of popular government.

³⁸⁵ The defense is in ASF, *Missive*, 18, ff. 108v-109v, though the section has been crossed out, perhaps after the fall of guild government. The quote, at f. 109r, “nefandi cives, viri crudeles, et homines truculenti.” See the comments in Najemy,

families favored by the church in politics and for benefices: Piero degli Albizzi was himself the uncle of Piero Corsini, cardinal of Florence, and his relatives continued to support and be supported by the church during the War of the Eight Saints despite communal sanctions.³⁸⁶ Piero himself was the leader of the group opposed to the war and in favor of rapprochement with the pope; now the Florentines had killed him and needed to explain their actions. And even in the midst of its conspiracy mania, the government continued to try to make inroads with elites who supported their regime; for example, by making *popolani* several magnates from some of the city's most "noble" lineages (like the Bardi and Frescobaldi) in mid-February.³⁸⁷ Clearly the leaders of the government were trying to shore up the defenses of the city, making older alliances firmer and forging new ones.

Somewhat earlier, in January of 1379 [80], Stefani writes, "the Capitano del Popolo, messer Cante, on the basis of the confession of Piero di Filippo or of others, conducted an investigation against many persons that he condemned according to the customs and laws of Florence."³⁸⁸ The plotters arrested and already executed were only the proverbial tip of the iceberg—the December plot was vast and vastly complex. Due to its size (nearly fifty

History of Florence, p. 168, on the centrality of the guilds in Florence's self-image as presented in this letter.

³⁸⁶ See Richard C. Trexler, *The Spiritual Power*, p. 112; and Alison W. Lewin, *Negotiating Survival*, p. 40, where the quid-pro-quo of Piero's sister's son's being made cardinal and his earlier support for Urban V's anti-Visconti war is discussed.

³⁸⁷ ASF, PR, 68, ff.237v-238v; the list, at f. 238r, includes men like Bindo di messer Iacopo Bardi and Leonardo di Niccolò Frescobaldi.

³⁸⁸ STEFANI, rubr. 845, p. 365: "...il Capitano del Popolo, messer Cante, o per confessione che avesse da Piero di Filippo, o d'altrui, come'è detto, fece inquisizione di molti, li quali, servate le consuetudini e leggi del Comune, condannò."

persons condemned) and comprehensiveness (including significant numbers of both elite and Ciompi conspirators), this condemnation will allow an examination of the types of people who plotted against the guild regime and their motivations. A complete transcription of the list of condemned is included in *Appendix 1*. Writing about the earliest days of the Ciompi tumult in the Spring of 1378, the almost always reliable chronicler Stefani describes the events that occurred during the week of Salvestro de' Medici becoming "proposto" (that is, charged with presenting business to the other priors). Afraid of what Salvestro had planned, the leaders of the Parte Guelfa swung into action:

the Captains gathered together right away at the palace of the Parte and quickly called on all the leaders of the families of the *grandi* who liked their policies, and nearly all of them came armed with hauberks and knives, some even had swords hidden at their side. They also called on all the heads of the *popolani* families who supported and favored their policies. And present at this gathering were the men who were the cornerstone of the whole thing: messer Lapo da Castiglionchio, Carlo degli Strozzi and his sons, Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, Niccolò Soderini, and Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti, who is called Mastino. They were the strength of the whole endeavor. And it is also true that one of the Parte's other champions was not among them, namely Stoldo di messer Bindo Altoviti, who was away on a peace mission to Rome.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁹ STEFANI, rubr. 790, pp. 317-8: "...i capitani subito furono al palagio della parte ragunati, e feciono richiesti subito, e quasi tutti i capi delle famiglie de' Grandi, a cui piaceano le materie che essi teneano alla Parte, e tutti quasi con panziere e coltella, e chi stocchi celatamente allato. E furvi richiesti tutti i capi delle famiglie popolane, le quali faceano alla materia adiuto e favore, e quivi furono questi, li quali erano il bilico di tutta la materia: messer Lapo da Castiglionchio, Carlo degli Strozzi con gli figliuoli, Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, Niccolò Soderini, Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti, detto Mastino: questi erano il fermo di tutta la faccenda. È vero che appresso di loro non era uno, ch'era l'altro campione: ciò era Stoldo di messer Bindo Altoviti, il quale era in ambasciata per la pace a Roma."

Stefani then lists, dividing them among the quarters of the city, all of major supporters of the Parte Guelfa. The list includes more than forty named individuals and a handful of families, including “all” of the Albizzi, Altoviti, and Buondelmonti, and “some” of the Acciaiuoli and Ardinghelli.³⁹⁰ Stefani’s list provides us with a snapshot (probably impressionistic) of the faction of the Parte Guelfa and its leadership at the moment before its fall from power, and it allows us to say something about that faction and its role in later conspiracies. In Table III, I show the pattern of office holding among all the individuals Stefani names in the twenty years between 1370 and 1389.³⁹¹ For our

³⁹⁰ STEFANI, rubr. 790, pp. 318. This is the list of men, using Stefani’s spellings: Bonaiuto di ser Belcaro Serragli, Giovanni di Bartolo Bigliotti, Antonio di Niccolò di Cione Ridolfi, Bortolommeo di Niccolò di Cione Ridolfi, Guerrieri di Tribaldo de’ Rossi, Piero di Dato Canigiani, Ristoro di Piero di Dato Canigiani, Uberto di Schiatta Ridolfi, Messer Filippo Giammori e Giovanni di Piero Bandini de’ Baroncelli, Michele e messer Lotto di Vanni Castellani, Simone di Ranieri Peruzzi, Benedetto di Simone di Ranieri Peruzzi e *consorti tutti*, Adoardo de’ Pulci, Bonaccorso di Lapo, Giovanni de’ Bonaccorsi, Guerriante Bagnesi, Bardo di Tingo Mancini, Bese Magalotti, Salice Cavalcanti, Guccio di Cino Bartolini, Iacopo di Gian Gherardini, *Buondelmonti tutti, Acciaiuoli alcuni, Altoviti tutti, alcuni degli Ardinghelli*, Ramondino Vecchietti di Giovanni, messer Albizo Rucellai e *quasi tutti*, Messer Pazzino degli Strozzi, Andrea e Cipriano di Lippo Mangioni, Andrea di Signino, Biagio di Bonaccio Guasconi e *consorti, Brunelleschi tutti i figliuoli di Boccaccio*, Iacopo di Messer Francesco de’ Pazzi, *gli Albizzi tutti*, Migliore Guadagni, Vieri di Messer Pepo de’ Cavicciuli, Pigello di messer Talano. I have put all non-precise names in italics. Among the non-precise names, expressions like “Altoviti alcuni” do not allow for any quantitative analysis, whereas ones like “Altoviti tutti” will allow for some (even keeping in mind that “tutti” might not be meant literally). “Andrea di Signino” is a reference to Andrea di Signino Baldesi. I have not been able to identify all of Carlo Strozzi’s sons. An examination of the data in the ONLINE TRATTE suggests that Azzolino, Lorenzo, Michele, and Strozza di Carlo degli Strozzi were those sons. Boccaccio Brunelleschi had at least two sons, Attaviano and Jacopo. On the basis of archival and other evidence, I believe the “Pigello di messer Talano” in STEFANI is an error and refers instead to Pigello and Talano di messer Luigi degli Adimari, described in ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, 55r, as “Pigellum [et] Talanum, fratres et filios quondam Domini Loigii de Adimaribus populi Sancte Marie Nepotecose de Florentia”.

³⁹¹ The data in the chart is based on the ONLINE TRATTE and STEFANI.

purposes, only the years 1370 to 1378 are relevant. In those nine years, the 41 named individual supporters of the Parte were drawn for the priorate 47 times and as Standardbearer of Justice ten times, and served 30 and eight times.³⁹² Only twelve of the men never held any of the offices called the “tre maggiori” (i.e., the Priors [P in the chart] or Standardbearer of Justice [GG], the Twelve Good Men [D], and the Sixteen Standard Bearers [S]); among the 29 remaining office-holders, all but one were drawn as prior at least once. Seven of the 29 were drawn for the priorate at least three times, and nine of them served twice (Niccolò Soderini, Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti, Uberto di Schiatta Ridolfi, Simone di Ranieri Peruzzi, Guerriante Bagnesi, Iacopo di Gian Gherardini, Andrea di Signino Baldesi, Biagio di Bonaccio Guasconi, and Migliore Guadagni), and Bonaiuto di ser Belcaro Serragli even served three times. In addition, nearly all of the 29 office-holders also regularly served among the Twelve or Sixteen. Moreover, *Table III* only takes into account those individuals specifically named by Stefani, not the families that supported the Parte *en masse*. If one were to add “all” of the Albizzi, Altoviti, and Buondelmonti, and “some” of the Acciaiuoli and Ardinghelli, the number of priors who came from that group in the nine-year period, would increase by at

³⁹² One must keep in mind that some of the families of these men had been regularly providing priors since the 1280s. For example, the Strozzi served 62 times from the origin of the priorate to 1369. By contrast, though, the Serragli were priors only twice before 1370.

TABLE III (part 1)

Office-holding among the leaders of the Parte Guelfa, 1370-89

	1370	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89
1	Lapo da Castiglionchio																			
2	Carlo degli Strozzi	P					P,S,D	P,D	P											
3	Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi				D,S				D											
4	Niccolò Soderini		GG	S		P	P,D,S	D	P											
5	Barolo di Giovanni Sinneri		D, P	S		P	P,S													
6	Stoldo di messer Bindo Alroviti				P		D,S	D					S					D		
7	Bonaiuto di ser Belcaro Serragli		D,P		S	GG	P		P											
8	Giovanni di Bartolo Bigliotti								P											
9	Antonio di ² Niccolò di Cione Ridolfi	D			D		P													
10	Bortolommeo di ² Niccolò di Cione Ridolfi		P	S,D			S	P												
11	Guerrieri di Tribaldo de ² Rossi																			
12	Piero di Dato Canigiani	S	D				P,S,D	GG,D												
13	Ristoro di Piero di Dato Canigiani																			
14	Uberto di Schiatta Ridolfi	S		P	D		GG	S												
15	Messer Filippo Giammori de ² Baroncelli				S		GG,S													
16	Giovanni di Piero Bandini de ² Baroncelli														GG				D	
17	Michele di Vanni Castellani			GG																
18	Lotho di Vanni Castellani														GG					
19	Simone di Ranieri Peruzzi	P			S	P	S	P,D												
20	Benedetto di Simone di Ranieri Peruzzi																			
21	Adardo de ² Pulci																			

least 15 for a total of 45, and by as many as 24 for a total of 54.³⁹³ *Table III* also shows that in 1376-8 the leaders of the Parte faction were more likely to be excluded from office after being drawn; indeed, in that period 12 of their drawings were cancelled by the general *divieto*, three of the men had their name slips destroyed, and two were declared ineligible for office as newly-made magnates. Nonetheless, it is not surprising that Piero degli Albizzi's associates and the adherents of the Parte Guelfa would have been strongly active in politics in the years before the Ciompi tumult. It is also not surprising that this group would have been almost entirely excluded from office holding in the period of the guild government, nor that their officeholding in the six-year period 1383-1389 would be greatly reduced (with only nine Priors from the group) when compared to the period 1370-78. What is striking, though, is the extent to which the group described by Stefani overlaps with the group of elite conspirators that plotted against the guild government. Of the 48 men condemned by the Capitano in the massive legal action of 30 January 1379 [80], seven were also listed by Stefani among the leaders or supporters of the Parte: Lapo da Castiglionchio, Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi, Adoardo de' Pulci, Giovanni di Bartolo Bigliotti, Pigello and Talano degli Adimari, and Bartolomeo di Niccolò Ridolfi. In addition, two Albizzi were condemned: messer Alberto di Pepo degli Albizzi and Mariano di Lando degli Albizzi. And Giovanni, the son of Guerrieri di Tribaldo Rossi, who appears among the Parte

³⁹³ In the twenty year period, members of the Albizzi family served on the Priorate seven (7) times and the Altoviti eight (8) times, for a total of 15, which may be added to the previous total; as magnates, the Buondelmonti could not serve as Priors. Members of the Ardinghelli served four (4) times and the Acciaiuoli five (5) times.

supporters, was also condemned. Among the 19 elite Florentines condemned on that day,³⁹⁴ 37% were named by Stefani as Parte adherents. Including the two Albizzi and Guerrieri Rossi's son, 10 of the 19 condemned elites are found in Stefani's list. By 30 January 1379 [80], moreover, several men listed by Stefani had already been condemned for plotting against the guild government: Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti, and Cipriano di Lippo Mangioni had been beheaded in December, as we have seen.³⁹⁵ Thirteen of the nineteen elite conspirators of December (or nearly 70%) were, then, among Stefani's Parte leaders. Stefani also provides two lists of the men made *grandi*, declared rebels, banished, exiled, and confined by the commune during the summer of 1378; 14 of these men he also listed as being of the Parte faction.³⁹⁶ Stefani also provides lists of the houses burned

³⁹⁴ That is, excluding Giannotto's lieutenant messer Giovanni Poccia de' Coppoli of Perugia (as a non-Florentine) and all of the non-elite (mainly Ciompi) plotters, discussed below.

³⁹⁵ Among the men named as leaders of the Parte faction, Carlo Strozzi, Niccolò Soderini and Stoldo di Bindo Altoviti were not executed in December 1379 or condemned in January 1379 [80]. Carlo Strozzi had been exiled for five years and confined to Genoa in the summer of 1378, see STEFANI, rubr. 795, p. 321 and rubr. 799, p. 328. Both of the others were *popolani* made *grandi* by the guild government in 1379, see STEFANI, rubr. 843, p. 363.

³⁹⁶ The first list, at STEFANI, rubr. 795, p. 321, contains the names of men banished, made *grandi*, or declared rebels by Salvestro de' Medici's priorate. The list includes: Lapo da Castiglionchio, Migliore Guadagni, Piero degli Albizzi, Bartolo Siminetti, Niccolò Soderini, Carlo Strozzi, and Piero di Dato Canigiani. These seven are listed by Stefani as supporters or leaders of the Parte. The second list, at STEFANI, rubr. 799, p. 328, includes men confined more than 50 miles (*miglia*) away for a year and required to present themselves before the officials of the place of their confinement every day and to send proof of this once per month (with a 1000 florin penalty for failing to do this once, 2000 florins for the second failure, and being made a rebel for the third). The list includes three Buondelmonti, Niccolò Soderini, Carlo Strozzi, Andrea di Signino Baldesi, Bartolo Siminetti, Antonio di Niccolò Ridolfi, Uberto di Schiatta Ridolfi, Iacopo de' Pazzi, Vieri di messer Pepo Cavicciuli, Attaviano di Boccaccio Brunelleschi, Bonaiuto di Belcaro Serragli, Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, and Simone di Rinieri Peruzzi. These 12 named individuals and the three

down by the Ciompi; among them were the houses of Lapo da Castiglionchio, Carlo Strozzi, Bartolo Siminetti, Niccolò Soderini, several Buondelmonti, Ristoro and his father Piero Canigiani, Piero di Filippo and several other Albizzi, Iacopo di Francesco Pazzi, Vieri Cavicciuli, Migliore Guadagni, Antonio Ridolfi, Michele Castellani, Simone Peruzzi, and Andrea di Signino Baldesi.³⁹⁷ In all, at least nine of the men listed by Stefani as supporters of the Parte had their houses burned down, as did all five of the men listed by Stefani as leaders (excluding the ambassador Stoldo Altoviti). As we have seen, it is clear that the Ciompi unleashed their fury at the leaders of the Parte (instead of, say, the persons most prominent in the woolen cloth industry). In the same way, Stefani's lists and the massive condemnation of January 1379 [80] allow us to understand which men composed the core of the elite conspirators in 1379. The elites who conspired against the guild government came, to a large extent, from the ranks of the leadership and core supporters of the Parte Guelfa, from the ranks of men who had regularly held the highest offices and who were most politically active before the Ciompi tumult, from the ranks of the men who had terrorized Florence with the policy of *ammunizione*, men whom Salvestro de' Medici and his priorate exiled and excluded from government, and men whose houses were burned by the Ciompi. In order to secure the new government of the guilds, these men were made *magnates*, excluded from office, declared rebels, banished, exiled, confined, monitored, subjected to fiery violence, and killed when their attempted criminal conspiracy

Buondelmonti are listed by Stefani as supporters or leaders of the Parte. Iacopo Sacchetti and Iacopo di Bartolomeo de' Medici are also included; the former was beheaded in December and the latter condemned in January.

³⁹⁷ The five lattermost are listed in STEFANI, rubr. 795, p. 322-3; the other arsons are described at rubr. 791, p. 319-20, see also Chapter 2 of this thesis.

to return failed. In many ways, this was not unlike all of the other factional purges that had occurred in Florence and other medieval Italian cities. As the 14th-century chronicler and poet of Aquila, Buccio di Ranallo, says: “Omne parte ha probato / Che è gire de fore / da poi che è cacciato,” or “Every party has experienced what it’s like to wander around away from home after it was expelled.”³⁹⁸ Indeed, the leaders of the Parte faction wandered throughout Italy, gathered in secret places, recruited allies, and plotted the destruction of the faction that had expelled them. This too is traditional; “E ciascuna ha probata,” added Buccio later on in his poem, “che è rentrer a furore,” “and each party also learned how to come back with a fury.” The Parte Guelfa faction’s attempt to return, while marked by fury, was not successful. First, the great plot of December failed and the exiles were not able to return until 1382, when another revolution swept the guild government out of power. Second, even when the Guelf exiles and their Ciompi allies returned, they did not re-establish their political power and pre-eminence in the city, as is clear in *Table III*, where one sees a sharp drop-off in office-holding in and after 1382, compared to 1370-1378.

More than half of the men condemned in January of 1379 [80] were not from the Florentine elite; and the condemnation also permits us to say a great deal about these men. Between 17 and 20 September 1378, nearly 50 people were accused of having committed crimes against the newly consolidated regime of the guilds, the vast majority of them (around 37) Ciompi or members

³⁹⁸ *Cronica aquilana*, ed. Vittorio de Bartholomeis (Rome, 1907), p.139.

of the *popolo minuto* engaged in wool production.³⁹⁹ The discourse of moderation, thought necessary to attract a broader base of supporters for the new regime, required not only the exclusion of the Ciompi guilds from the government, but the criminalization of the least moderate among the Ciompi—of the men whom the so-called *Anonimo fiorentino* (himself among the group of moderates desired by the new regime) called “the Ciompi, thieves and traitors and robbers and killers and murderers and scoundrels and evil-doers.”⁴⁰⁰ Of the 13 conspirators who met at Ronco on 18 July 1378, for example, nearly half were accused in September. In fact the Ciompi in these

³⁹⁹ Most of the accused are listed in STEFANI, rubr. 807, pp. 336-7; but a somewhat fuller and more detailed list was reconstructed by Trexler in *Neighbors and Comrades*, table 6, pp. 104-5; these are their names (using Trexler’s spelling): (1) Messer Luca di Totto da Panzano, (2) Anibaldo di Bernardo del Magogo degli Strozzi, (3) Mezza di Jacopo di Mezza, (4) Luca del Melana, (5) Bartolomeo di Lorenzo del Grasso, (6) Fiore di ser Bartolo, (7) Zanobi di ser Bartolo, (8) Vico, (9) Niccolò di Betto Bardi, (10) Piero di Fede called Ciamo, (11) Paolo di Guido called Bodda, (12) Giusto di Luca Petrini, called Pezzotto, (13) Guasparre del Ricco, (14) Piero di Francesco da Melano or del Mulina, (15) maestro Andrea de’ Bartoli, called Melagamba, (16) Neri di Giovanni Biancardi, (17) ser Agnolo Latini, (18) ser Giustino Giusti [Landucci], (19) Donnino da S. Donnino, (20) Venturino Gelli, (21) messer Guido, called Bandiera, (22) Bartolomeo di Bartonto da Pistoia, (23) Baldo di Niccolò Betti, (24) Biagio di Francesco, (25) Jacopo di Piero Borsi, (26) Sandro di Feduccio, called Guando di Gualfonda, (27) Manetto Piccardo, (28) Talento di Pacco or Puccio, (29) Antonio di Giovanni [called Recca], called Guargaglia, (30) [Bartolomeo del Bello, called] Zoccolo, (31) Matteo [Matta] di Turino (Nerini), called Teo, (32) Piero di Gherardo Borsi, (33) Jacopo di Testino, called Testinella, (34) Salvestro del Tegghia, (35) Domenico called Mifferi, Muffori, or Musson, (36) Michele di Piero Picchini, (37) Francesco di Bartolo or Giovanni Guidarezzi, called Rincacato, (38) Simone d’Andrea called Morello, (39) Marco di Davizino, (40) Domenico di Buonaccorso, (41) Agnolo di Cenzo [called Bacciano], (42) Nofri di Cinello, (43) Niccolò di Bartolo, (44) Luca di Guida, called Mogliazza, (45) Andrea di Giovanni, called Nocca, (46) Domenico di Tuccio, called Tambo, and (47) Matteo di ser Salvi Gai. Ten of these men (#1, 2, 3, 5, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, 37) were definitely or likely not woolworkers of any sort, leaving 37 who were likely Ciompi. In order to avoid confusion, it should be noted that Messer Guido (#21) gained his title as a knight of the Ciompi.

⁴⁰⁰ ANONIMO, p. 384: “...de’ Ciompi, ladri e traditori e rubatori e micidiali e assassini e ghiontoncegli e ma’fattori;” this description on 10 September 1378.

two groups might be taken as a (very rough) representative sample of the type of men who constituted the radical vanguard of the Ciompi.⁴⁰¹ I have listed and numbered the men in this group in notes 423 and 425 below; and for the purposes of the analysis here, I often refer to them by a number or numbers in parentheses. On the list (discussed above) of 48 persons condemned on 30 January 1379 [80], six were also among those condemned in September of 1378 (#4, 19, 29, 31, 33, and 38), and one of the January 1379 [80] group was the son of one of the September 1378 group (Bartolomeo, the son of Simone d'Andrea called Morello, #38). If we exclude elite plotters from the January 1379 [80] list, 28 remain, most of whom were Ciompi and more than 20% of whom were among the radical Ciompi. Put simply, a sizeable number of the Ciompi enlisted in the December 1379 [80] plot were drawn from the ranks of the Ciompi vanguard I have described, and a smaller (but still noteworthy) number of the Ciompi vanguard became involved in the December plot. The picture becomes clearer when we expand beyond the January 1379 [80] condemnation and look at the fates of these 44 Ciompi during the tenure of

⁴⁰¹ On the conspiracy at Ronco, see my discussion in Chapter 2, pages 115 and following above. The conspirators at Ronco are listed in Trexler, *Neighbors and Comrades*, table 1, p. 69. Six of them appear on the list in note 423 (namely, #4, 5, 11, 21, 26, and 30). I list here the remaining seven, continuing the numeration from the preceding note: (48) Simoncino called il Bugigatto, (49) Lorenzo di Riccomanno, (50) Leoncino di Biagino [Franchino], (51) Nardo di [Manetto da] Camaldoli, (52) Salvestrino [di Tanuccio] da S. Giorgio, (53) [Cambio di Bartolo called] Galasso, and (54) Filippo [di Simone]. All of the conspirators at Ronco were Ciompi. Of the total of 54 persons, some 44 (or roughly 80%) were definitely or very likely Ciompi; for the purpose of percentile analysis in the text, I use the total of 44, even though 54 men are listed and numbered. It is important to note that this analysis is far from precise (in terms both of the limited sample and the lack of precision in identifying Ciompi) and is meant only to give a rough picture.

the guild government. Two of these men (#48 and 53) were condemned in January of 1381 [82] along with men like Tommaso Strozzi and Giovanni Dini and had possibly become supporters of the guild government.⁴⁰² But some 17 others (and likely more) became conspirators or, at least, were implicated (like #15)⁴⁰³ in plots against the guild regime: at least one (#4) of them plotted against the regime until 1382 when he was recalled from exile along with Luca da Panzano (#1) and other Parte Guelfa adherents;⁴⁰⁴ at least three (#21, 33, 38) were condemned *in absentia* while they plotted with other Ciompi and elite conspirators at Bologna,⁴⁰⁵ at least four (#6, 38, 39, and 40) were declared enemies of the government⁴⁰⁶; at least 9 others (including #37)⁴⁰⁷ were condemned for plots against the regime—one (#46)⁴⁰⁸ was executed in September and two (#20 and 52)⁴⁰⁹ in December 1378, and at least five of

⁴⁰² Despite the variety of patronymics and occupations, it seems clear that #48 is the Simoncino listed in STEFANI, rubr. 910, p. 400; ANONIMO, p. 437, and the First Anonymous Chronicle in SCARAMELLA, p. 96. And for “Galasso,” #53, also see ANONIMO, p. 437

⁴⁰³ See ANONIMO, pp. 405 and 411.

⁴⁰⁴ See Brucker, “Ciompi Revolution,” pp. 354-5; he is also on the January 1379 [80] list.

⁴⁰⁵ “Bandiera” was a Ciompi hero and constant plotter, as in ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, ff. 16r and 103rv.; as were “Morello” and “Testinella,” see ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, f. 56rv.

⁴⁰⁶ See *I capitoli del comune di Firenze*, ed. Cesare Guasti (Florence, 1893), vol. 2, p. 190.

⁴⁰⁷ See ANONIMO, p. 411.

⁴⁰⁸ See the First Anonymous Chronicle in SCARAMELLA, p. 84.

⁴⁰⁹ For Venturino’s execution, see ANONIMO, p. 389. Salvestrino is reported to have been crying, “Viva il Popolo e Parte Guelfa,” see the account in the First Anonymous Chronicle in SCARAMELLA, p. 88.

them (#10, 12, 26, 30, and 50)⁴¹⁰ were executed in 1379 or later. This list of 17 includes three (#4 and 33, 38) of the six men on the January 1379 [80] list, about whom we can say more, but not the other four. Thus, of the 44 Ciompi at Ronco and/or condemned in September of 1378, at least 20 (or 45%) of them are documented to have been involved in conspiratorial activities against the guild regime. These Ciompi conspirators came primarily from the quarters of San Giovanni and Santo Spirito; they were neighbors, often from the same parishes (*popoli*).⁴¹¹ As Gene Brucker has shown for the leadership of the Ciompi in general, many of these men were financially secure before the tumult of 1378 and many of them had served the commune during or before the War of the Eight Saints—at least 9 of the Ciompi conspirators had been *caporali* or soldiers in the militia between 1360 and 1377,⁴¹² and four of them

⁴¹⁰ See my discussion of Piero in Chapter 2 at pp 138-9. The condemnation against him (Pierum Fedis vocatum El Ciri) for crimes committed in August 1379 [80] is reprinted in Rodolico, *La democrazia*, app. 1, pp. 441-5. “Pezotto” and Sandro are discussed in this chapter and are in Appendix 1, condemned along with Lanfranco di Messer Luca da Panzano in ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, ff. 47r-49v. For the condemnation of “El Zocco,” see ASF, *Capitano*, 1198, ff. 31r-35r, and ANONIMO, p. 401. And the final conspirator is Lioncino di Francino, discussed in this chapter at and condemned in ASF, *Capitano* 1197 bis, ff. 99v-101r.

⁴¹¹ The Quarters: San Giovanni 10, Santo Spirito 7, Santa Maria Novella 3, Santa Croce 1. On this, I have generally followed Trexler’s data, in “Neighbors and Comrades,” although some discrepancies exist with the condemnations I have examined. For example, for #19, Trexler gives S. Maria in Verzaia and the January 1379 [80] condemnation gives S. Frediano, though both are in the quarter of Santo Spirito. The information on parish (*popolo*) is not always reliable, consistent, or available; but the most common *popolo* was certainly San Pier Maggiore in San Giovanni (with five), and San Frediano was also well represented (with at least two, and possibly four).

⁴¹² All are recorded in ASF, *Camera del comune, Uscita*: (#4) 228; (#31) 222; (#26) 147-222; (#50) 222; (#6) 147-95; (#39) 186-222; (#37) 207-222; (#20) 147-210; (#52) 147, 155; folio numbers omitted.

had been assessed more than a florin in *prestanze* (#6: 2fl., 4d.; #12: 1 fl., 3s., 9d.; #26: 1fl., 5d.; and #50: 1fl., 1s., 6d).⁴¹³ The Ciompi who conspired against the guild regime came, to a large extent, from the ranks of the radical Ciompi vanguard, from the ranks of men who had conspired in 1378 and achieved their goals through terror and violence, from the ranks of men who had been marginalized and excluded from the revolutionary government that they had made possible, from the ranks of men who had been criminalized and exiled and executed by that government. If the leaders of the guild regime thought the exclusion and criminalization of these men would attract moderates who despised the “rabble” and thereby secure their rule, they made a terrible miscalculation. The most radical Ciompi, having already lost everything (including their property, their role in the government, and their homes) could do nothing but channel their energies against the regime that had excluded them. And they would channel their energies in the same way that they had in 1378 and in nearly every other moment when they sought to increase their political power, namely, through conspiratorial action. The guild regime also miscalculated if they thought that these men would not join forces with the elite adherents of the Parte Guelfa. If it is true today that politics makes “strange bedfellows,” it was truer in the late 1370s, when the Ciompi’s politics were practiced before or without ideology.

The condemnation of January 1379 [80] provides us with a revealing look at a large and complex criminal enterprise. Although it is impossible to know now the full extent of the linkages between these conspirators or to distinguish clearly the actual structure of the plot and the structure of the plot

⁴¹³ ASF, *Prestanze*, 332, f. 167v; 332, f. 121v; 334, f. 118v; and 332, f. 117v.

“revealed” by those condemned, who fashioned or refashioned it in their confessions, some aspects of it are clear. The two amorphous “groups” of conspirators—elite and Ciompi—were united in a common purpose; they acted in concert, perhaps according to a plan originally laid out in Padua by Lapo da Castiglionchio and Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi; among the conspirators certain men were entrusted with forging the network of conspirators, men like Matteo Tinghi who moved across Italy spreading the word from the plot’s leaders to its willing participants; the conspirators were drawn together at a single site, Bologna, where they could plot together and join Giannotto’s forces; they employed the traditional techniques of Florentine political conspiracy (the pact or oath of the plotters, the use of banners and slogans, the planned eruption of violence in multiple locales, the request of assistance from a sympathetic foreign ruler), but were fully aware of the unprecedented scope of their plot and acted accordingly. To call this simply a “plot,” though, is surely an understatement: exiles, voluntary and involuntary, brought together by banishments, shared interests and sympathies, founded something like a conspiratorial government in exile—a pan-Italian conspiracy that commissioned agents, raised armies, and participated in secret diplomacy.⁴¹⁴ In the areas outside of Florence, in the zones between cities where mercenary armies and exiles could wander unhindered, this band of

⁴¹⁴ The structure of the plot might be thought of visually as similar to the “conspiracy art” of Mark Lombardi, such as his famous “BCCI-ICI & FAB 1972-1991” or “Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, Reagan, Bush, Thatcher, and the arming of Iraq, 1979-90,” which show (with hundreds of circles, lines, and arrows) the dynamic interaction and interconnection of the modern financial-military-criminal conspiracy. The two referenced works may be found in Mark Lombardi, *Global Networks* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2003), pp. 96 and 89-90.

conspirators created an alternative to the power of the Florentine government. In the minds of men like Benedetto Peruzzi, the *stato* belonged to them and the question was never whether it should be taken, but whether it could be.

The condemnation of January 1379 [80] also provides us with a revealing look at the nature of Italian politics at the macro-level, where one can clearly neither legitimate rule nor illegitimate rule, only the faction with and in power and the faction without and wanting it, the winners and losers, the victims of the political purge and the perpetrators of it. The regime in power in Florence, the guild government, had, like so many before it, secured its rule by expelling its enemies and those whom it felt undermined or threatened its authority. In this case, these were the men of the Parte Guelfa, who had supported the policy of *ammunizione* and the radical vanguard of the Ciompi. The party of exiles out of power, the conspirators of December, like so many parties of exiles before it, plotted to return to power, to reenter the city, to retake the *stato*. Excluded from the city, from their homes, from the electoral purses, they had no other choice if they wished to have a role in government. As I argued in my introduction, the lack of any means of legitimate political opposition makes every form of political opposition a crime. And, more importantly, it makes criminal conspiracy the only available form of political opposition. As such, the members of the party out of power are left with only two possible identities: the exile who hopes to be brought back and the conspirator who plots to return home. Within the city, the popolo's corporate ideology of inclusion may have bolstered the regime of 1378-82 and given it its spirit, but outside of the city were only those who were excluded and, as always, old scores that needed to be settled.

The Roster of Guildsmen

Just as the Capitano's lengthy sentence allowed us to examine, in some detail, the men who conspired against the guild government late in 1379, another document allows us to say a great deal about the men who formed that government. On 17 January 1379 [80], the regime responded again to the conspiracies with a lengthy and solemn enactment. At its start, every member of the government and its magistracies was named—the Priors and Standardbearer of Justice, the Twelve and the Sixteen, the Captains of the Parte Guelfa, the Ten of Liberty, the Eight of the Watch, the Nine of Mercanzia, and the *Capitudini* of all the guilds; with guild affiliations provided for 80%, or all but 24, of the 115 persons listed—and all were described as 'being aware of the scandals and conspiracies that have occurred, and intending to wholesomely provide for peace, quiet, and tranquility so that the citizens, merchants, and guildsmen may live safely and securely'.⁴¹⁵ (The list is transcribed in Appendix 2) Of the men serving on the Signoria on that date, none had previously served as prior or Standardbearer of Justice, and only three came from families that had had priors in the past: Simone di ser Matteo Biffoli's family had had two priors, the first in 1356; Agnolo di Donato Barucci's only one, in 1364; and Giorgio di Guccio di Dino Gucci's family ten, with his father being the first in 1355 and serving three more times himself before 1380. Only this last, Giorgio, was obviously tied to the leadership of the war

⁴¹⁵ The list is located at ASF, CR, ff. 89r-90v, with the quotation from 89r: "actentis et consideratis scandalis e novitatibus exortis ... et volentes intendere et salubriter providere circa pacem quietem et tranquillitatem... et ut cives mercatores et artifices... in quiete et securitate vivant".

party and the popular leadership, his father Guccio having been one of the Eight of War. Of the remaining six, in accordance with the government's new election procedures, only one (the furrier Christofano di Bartolo) came from the major guilds; and the others were drawn from the traditional middle and minor guilds (a butcher, an armorer, and an oil dealer), or from the newly created guilds of 1378 (a wool napper and a wool shearer).⁴¹⁶ The large presence of new men and families is not surprising; as John Najemy has shown, the years 1378-1381 saw 89 new families admitted to the Signoria, more than any other three-year period in the history of the republic (with the 84 of 1344-6 coming closest).⁴¹⁷ Nor is it surprising that the popular faction which, in part, created the government should be represented by the son of one of the Eight of War. Among the Sixteen Gonfalonieri, only one had previously served as prior (the furrier Francisco Spinelli in 1368), and only three others (Niccolò di Giovanni da Uzzano, Alessio di Francesco Borghini, and Zanobi di Taddeo Borghini) came from families previously-represented in the signoria; and all three came from families first admitted only in the 1360s. Similarly, among the Twelve Buonomini, only two had been priors before—Baldese di Terino Baldesi, four times previously, and the merchant Iacopo di Bonafede, once in 1371—and only one other, Iacopo di Niccolò Riccialbani, came from a family previously admitted (twice in the 1290s, and his father in 1351). The document lists the two groups of Captains of the Parte Guelfa ending and beginning their terms on 19 January 1379[80]; among these eighteen men,

⁴¹⁶ All individual office-holding data here and below is from the ONLINE TRATTE. On the electoral procedures of the guild government, see Najemy, *Corporatism and Consensus*, 217-62.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Appendix, table A.3, 321.

only two had been priors (Michele di Lando in 1378, and Nofri di Giovanni di Bartolo Bischeri in 1377), while three others came from families previously admitted to the priorate (Antonio di Marignano Sassolini, Manetto di Gianni Spini, and Guido di messer Tommaso di Neri Lippi). If we compare the last two groups of Captains before the Ciompi tumult, we see, of course, a very different picture: of *those* eighteen men, all but two (the blacksmith Simone del Chiaro and armorer Bernardo di Andrea) had surnames; of those with surnames, four came from families that were or had at some point been magnates (Rossi, Buondelmonti, Ricasoli, Agli), while the rest came from families that had been represented on the signoria before 1380 a total of 258 times, including men from some of the most elite political families in Florence (Altoviti, Peruzzi, Magalotti, Anselmi, Gherardini, Canigiani).⁴¹⁸ In the government roster of January 1379[80], only a very few elite families were represented among the 115 listed citizens (one Medici, one Rinuccini, etc.) and only a few politicians who had been part of the earlier ruling elite (like Baldese Baldesi). The roster itself is evidence of a remarkable political upheaval unlike any other in Florentine history, an upheaval which filled not only the priorate but every government magistracy with men of the Popolo and, in massive numbers, men of the minor guilds: wine retailers, innkeepers, sellers of oil and cheese, tanners, girdlemakers, armorers, ironworkers, woodworkers, bakers, doublet makers and wool shearers, dyers and sewers. When this roster was read aloud in the palace of the priors, in the presence of the whole government, it announced nothing less than a revolution; but it

⁴¹⁸ The 1378 Capitani are listed in Chapter 2, note 182.

announced a revolution already doomed to collapse under the weight of the “scandals and conspiracies” that it had gathered to repress.

There would never be another guild government in Florence and, not surprisingly, the elites of subsequent generations would remember the period of the last guild regime as among the worst in Florence’s history. In his *Ricordi*, for example, Giovanni Morelli would decry the “forty-two months” in which the guildsmen ruled for burning the houses of the great citizens, for beheading and exiling them, and for keeping the whole city in fear by dispatching “dogs, that is, spies” to every corner of the city.⁴¹⁹ And, if the historian Giovanni Cavalcanti is to be believed, Rinaldo degli Albizzi railed in 1426 against the guild government for keeping Florence in servitude for “forty damned months”, for exiling noble citizens to foreign lands, and for falsely executing them.⁴²⁰ Remembrances like these, though, conveniently omit the

⁴¹⁹ Giovanni Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Le Monnier, 1956), p. 325: “Allora montarono in istato gli artefici, e ressono quarantadue mesi. Erano i Signori divisi in questa forma: sempre era Gonfaloniere un Artefice, e’ Priori per metà arti maggiori, e minori, ed era loro capo Messer Giorgio degli Scali, e Messer Tommaso di Marco, e in parte fu Messer Benedetto degli Alberti; costoro arsono molte case a’ grandi cittadini, feciono a molti tagliare la testa in più volte; tra questi fu Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, Messer Donato Barbadoro, Messer Jacopo Sacchetti, Messer Ghirigoro di Pagnazzo, ed a molt’ altri gran cittadini, e molti ne cacciarono, e teneano in gran paura, e in gran tremor la cittadinanza; aveano molti cani, coìè spioni, che sempre erano per Firenze, o per pigliare, o per ispiare di dì, e di notte, qui non si poteva nè convitare persona, nè usare punto, che tu eri abominato agli Otto...” Cited and partially translated in Brucker, *Civic World*, p. 57.

⁴²⁰ Giovanni Cavalcanti, *Istorie fiorentine*, ed. Filippo Polidori, (Florence: S.A.R., 1838), vol. 1, p. 82: “Perchè col fuoco le loro furie l’arsero e disfecero: quaranta maledetti mesi tennero in servitù questo popolo: tanti sbanditi, tanti confinati, ed ancora con veleni nobili cittadini falsamente feciono morire: e tali con el coltello perirono: e non era cittade che non fusse piena de’ vostri antichi: chi v’era in esilio, che per isbandito, e tale per rubella, e così le strane patrie abitavano.” See the discussion in Najemy, *History of Florence*, p. 177. Contemporary observers, even

extraordinary plots undertaken by the “noble citizens” (as Cavalcanti calls them) against their own city. But they were not likely omitted out of shame or denial: the ceaseless conspirator Lapo da Castiglionchio, for example, was able to discourse on “true nobility,” the nobility that men like him possessed, at the very moment he was plotting against the guild government.⁴²¹ They were likely omitted because they were not unique: after the factional struggles of the early fourteenth century came to an end, conspiracy became a regular style of politics for the Florentine elite. In their scope and size and ceaselessness, the plots of 1379 were astonishing, but they were not unique.⁴²² If anything was unique, it was the regime against which they conspired, which thwarted their plots, which challenged their power. The plots that would come later in the century, like the so-called Alberti plot of 1393, or those of Filippo Bastari (1394), Donato Acciaiuoli (1396), or Bastardino de’ Medici,⁴²³ were, at their

sympathetic ones like Stefani, found fault with some of the government’s executions and condemnations; on this see ANONIMO, p. 431; and STEFANI, rubr. 836, p. 360, as well as my discussion of Donato Barbadori’s case in Chapter 4, at pp. 224-28.

⁴²¹ See Allesandro Valori, “Tra orgoglio aristocratico e identità comunale: Lapo da Castiglionchio sulla ‘vera nobiltà’,” *Archivio storico italiano* 154 (1996): 437-477.

⁴²² They were also astonishing in their frequency and number. In the three rectors’ courts, Umberto Dorini, *Il diritto penale e la delinquenza in Firenze nel secolo XIV* (Lucca: Corsi, n.d. [1923]), p. 129, counted 48 condemnations for crimes against the state (*delitti contro lo stato*) in the three-year period 1353-5 and more than three times as many (148) in 1380-3. I was unable to precisely determine Dorini’s criteria, but his numbers are likely accurate. By my own reading of the records of the three rectors’ courts in the period 1379-82 (roughly overlapping with Dorini’s), almost 300 persons were condemned for taking part in political conspiracies.

⁴²³ The supposed Alberti plot—a mixed conspiracy of exiles, mercenaries, and workers to invade the city with the help of supporters within—was structurally similar to those of 1379, but the regime chose to deal with it politically rather than criminally, just as its root causes were political; on the conspiracy, see Brucker, *Civic World*, pp. 90-93; on the political solution, a *balià*, see Gino Capponi, *Storia della Repubblica di Firenze* (Florence: Barbera, 1875), vol. 1, appendix at pp. 625-27. For the other three

core, internecine struggles among the elite. The plots of 1379 may be seen as expressions of a political style (elite, private, and conspiratorial) clashing with a set of political ideals (popular and public), but the root cause of these plots and their repression too often represented a triumph of the elite political style and a failure of commitment to popular political ideals: the political purge that accompanied the guild regime's birth was Florentine business as usual, but the repressive tactics of the frightened guildsmen and their leaders were not. What François Furet said of the French Revolution, that conspiracy was its anti-ideology, could also be said of the revolutionary guild government.⁴²⁴ Men like Tommaso Strozzi and Giorgio Scali, themselves among the Florentine elite, and their cliques among the government partisans, defined themselves and defended their sometimes extreme actions on the grounds of being under constant siege by conspirators.⁴²⁵ This, I believe, is nowhere clearer than

plots, see ASF, *Capitano*, 1988, ff. 162-163; *Capitano* 2012, ff. 39-41r; *Capitano*, 2056, ff. 65-80r and 92-99r.

⁴²⁴ *Interpreting the French Revolution*, tr. Elborg Forster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 55-6: "The power to govern legitimately was directly related to the ability to keep up the denunciation of the aristocrats' plot: the constant raising of the ideological stakes was the rule of the game of the new system. Obsession with conspiracy thus became a discourse common to all, to be heard on either side of power. Those who were excluded from it used the discourse to conquer power. Those who held power used it to warn the people of the constant and formidable threat posed by that other and less fragile power." Building upon Furet's insights, Lynn Hunt more fully explored the notion that conspiracy (or, better, anti-conspiracy) was central to French revolutionary rhetoric (as an anti-principle) in *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 19-51. For another similar, though more limited approach, see Marisa Linton, "'The Tartuffes of Patriotism': Fears of Conspiracy in the Political Language of Revolutionary Government, France 1793-1794," in *Conspiracies and Conspiracy Theory in Early Modern Europe: From the Waldensians to the French Revolution* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 235-254.

⁴²⁵ The modern problem of a "state of siege" has recently been the subject of much debate following the publication of Giorgio Agamben, *Stato di eccezione* (Torino: Boringhieri, 2003) and a renewed interest in the jurisprudence of Carl Schmitt.

when rigged elections for the priorate were proposed or when armed guildsmen co-opted the procedures of the Capitano's court in December of 1379. In times of turmoil, when the security of the state is threatened, law holds a precarious place.

In 1861, the historian Niccolò Tommaseo wrote that “because conspiracies are a thing of the few and powerful, it is an aristocratic thing: the *popolo* doesn't know how to conspire, it knows how to rise up.”⁴²⁶ As we have seen in the previous chapters, both the Florentine elite and the city's radical working class knew all too well how to conspire. In this chapter we have seen how they conspired together to overthrow the guild government of 1378-82. The *popolo*, whose principles were perhaps better embodied in that regime than in any other, would never truly rise up again.

Parallels might also be found with Edward A. Shils, *The Torment of Secrecy: The Background and Consequences of American Security Policies* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1956) and its notion a “secrecy-fearing radicalism” that is “hostile to civil society” (at p. 32), seen in the case of demagogues like Joseph MacCarthy.

⁴²⁶ “Pensieri sulla storia di Firenze,” *Archivio storico italiano*, Nuova serie, 13 (1861), p. 16: “Perchè le congiure son cosa di pochi potenti, cosa cioè aristocratica: il popolo non sa congiurare, sa insorgere.”

CHAPTER 4:

BALDO DEGLI UBALDI ON CONSPIRACY AND TREASON (*CRIMEN LAESAE MAIESTATIS*) IN LATE TRECENTO FLORENCE

The Condemnation of Donato Barbadori

Within a week of the discovery of the incredible conspiracy of December 1379, more than a dozen men implicated in the plot had been beheaded, among them Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, leader of the Florentine faction purged in the summer of 1378, and a number of his supporters and allies in the Guelf Party, including Filippo di Biago degli Strozzi, Giovanni di Piero Anselmi, and Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti. The unwillingness of the judicial officials (the Capitano and Esecutore) to condemn these men had led to a political crisis in Florence that was resolved when the consuls (*capitadini*) of the guilds subverted the procedures of the courts by granting full power (*balìa*) to execute the alleged conspirators to a group of loyal representatives of the government.⁴²⁷ When the Capitano still refused to carry out the executions, saying “Put them to death yourselves, I won’t do it if I don’t find them guilty!,” a crowd incited by the leaders of the government even threatened to kill him.⁴²⁸ One chronicler and critic of the guild government

⁴²⁷These events are described in detail in Chapter III, at pp. 195.

⁴²⁸ STEFANI, rubr. 334, 358: “Andate, e fategli morire voi, che se io non gli troverò colpevoli, io no ‘l farò.”

ruling Florence expressed an opinion that was not uncommon in the city when he stated that the alleged conspirators had been killed “at the bidding of Tommaso Strozzi and Giorgio Scali, who were ruling the city with a group of bandits.”⁴²⁹ This judgement would persist among later Florentine historians who despised the guild government, like Leonardo Bruni, who wrote that the executed men “had committed no crime” and that the guildsmen had “inflicted punishment on great and innocent men.”⁴³⁰ But even Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, a supporter of the government who was then serving on the priorate, questioned one of the executions, that of the lawyer Messer Donato Barbadori, who had famously defended Florence at the court of Gregory XI during the War of the Eight Saints and had served the guild government as an ambassador.⁴³¹ Before being beheaded, Donato had proclaimed his innocence and declared himself the person “most faithful and most loyal” to

⁴²⁹ *Cronaca terza d’anonimo*, in *Il tumulto dei Ciompi: Cronache e memorie* (Bologna, 1934), ed. G Scaramella, 132-3: “per operatione di messere Tomaso di Marco degli Strozzi e di messere Giorgio degli Scali che governavano questa terra con una brigata di ladroncelli.”

⁴³⁰ *History of the Florentine People*, vol. 3, trans. J. Hankins (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), VIII.17, 21 [original at 20: “...nullum in captivis crimen neque rei notitia ulla reperiebatur...” and “Magnis et innocentibus viris supplicio affectis...”]

⁴³¹ In the second half of the 1370s, Donato Barbadori was undoubtedly Florence’s leading diplomat; his career is sketched in Arnaldo D’Addario, “Donato Barbadori,” *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, VI, 21-2 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1964); on his crucial service during the War of the Eight Saints, see Alessandro Gherardi, “La guerra dei fiorentini con Papa Gregorio XI detta la guerra degli Otto Santi,” *Archivio storico italiano*, Series 3, volumes 5-8 (1867-8), *passim*; Richard C. Trexler, *The Spiritual Power: Republican Florence Under Interdict* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 144-50; and, recently, David S. Peterson, “The War of the Eight Saints in Florentine Memory and Oblivion,” in W. J. Connell (ed.), *Society and the Individual in Renaissance Florence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 184 and 191.

the government. And “if he was guilty,” Stefani wrote, “he committed a great sin by making such a mistake, since he was a sincere man, very wise, and very helpful to the commune; but if he was not guilty, he was wronged greatly and the person who denounced him acted wickedly.”⁴³² The sentence recorded by the Esecutore against Messer Donato described the events that led to his death:

Messer Donato had been sent by Florence as an ambassador to Lord Charles of Durazzo, the commune of Venice, and the lord of Padua; and he took a trip to Bologna. While staying there, he came upon Bartolomeo di Niccolò Ridolfi, Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi, and at least twelve other people under the ban [*exbanditi*] of the Florentine commune whose names he could not remember and had a meeting with them. They said to him that they had organized a plan for some Florentines there called “the Ciompi”, some *exbanditi* and some not, to enter Florence carrying banners with the arms of the Guelf Party, which they had made in Bologna, and shouting “Viva il popolo e la Parte Guelfa!” And they planned for some of them to cause a tumult in Porta San Niccolò and others in the Porta a Faenza and still more in other places in the city. With the tumult underway, they would gather at the Porta a Faenza and break open the gate and the *exbanditi* would enter with a great band of men. And they would do these things on 20 December and overthrow the government of the city of Florence. Messer Donato said that the plot was well-organized and will surely have its desired end, and that he will give his help and favor to the plot at the necessary and advantageous time.⁴³³

⁴³² STEFANI, rubr. 836, 359: “Messer Donato Barbadori, letto la condennagione, molto si scusò, non essere colpevole, e raccontò in conclusione, essere stato il più fedele ed il più leale a quella cosa, cioè a quella de’ Priori, che mai fusse niuno. E certamente di messer Donato, se fu colpevole, gran peccato fu di lui che in tanto errore venisse, perocch’era franco uomo e molto savio e molto utile al Comune; e se non fu colpevole, gran danno ne fu, e male fece chi di ciò l’abbominò.”

⁴³³ The sentence “contra Donatum Ghieruccii de Barbadoris” is in ASF, Esecutore, 840, ff. 49r-50r; quotation at 49rv: “...dictus dominus Donatus fuisset transmissus pro parte communis Florentie in ambascatam ad dominum Carolum

Since Donato did not actually give any assistance to the plotters, his alleged crime was remaining silent about what he had heard in Bologna; and for this he was beheaded. Beyond the political turmoil that the events created, though, the repression of the December conspiracy and the executions of these men (and especially Donato) raised a number of vexing legal problems. In this chapter, I discuss these problems and the solutions offered by the great jurist Baldo degli Ubaldi of Perugia (d. 1400) in order to explore the ways in which conspiracy and treason were understood in medieval Italian jurisprudence and to examine the meaning of the rule of law in times of emergency.

delapace ad commune Venetiarum et ad dominum Padue et iter facerat per civitatem Bononie. Et dum in dicta civitate moraretur , invenit in dicta civitate Bononie Bartholomeum Nicoli Cionis Rodulfi Benedictum Simonis Raynerii de Peructiis exbanditos dicti communis Florentie et bene xii alios exbanditos communis Florentie predicti de quorum nominibus dixit se non recordari. Cum quibus exbanditis dictus dominus Donatus infrascriptum tractatum et colloquium habuit, videlicet quod supradicti exbanditi disserunt dicto domino Donato quod ipsi ordinaverant quod certi cives Florentini qui morantur Bononie exbanditi et non exbanditi qui vocantur liciompi debebant venire ad dictam civitatem Florentie cum certis banderiis cum signis partis Ghueffe que banderie fuerunt facte in dicta civitate Bononie et levare rumorem in dicta civitate Florentie cum dictis banderiis in manibus et gridare vivat populus et pars Ghueffa. Et aliqui debebant incipere dictum rumorem in porta Sancti Nicolaii & alii in porta Fagientie et in pluribus aliis locis dicte civitatis Florentie. Et elevato dicto rumore debebant tragiere ad dictam portam fagientie et dictam portam debebant rumpere et per dictam portam debebant intrare dicti exbanditi cum [f. 49v] maxima gentium conmitiva. Et predicta debebant fieri die xx presentis mensis Decembris et sic mutare statum civitatis Florentie. Ad que omnia predicta et singula respondidit dictus dominus Donatus quod predicta erant bene ordinata et bene facta et pro certo habebit finem optatum. Et quod in tempore necessario et opportuno dictus dominus Donatus dabit ad predicta ausilium et favorem.”

The Legal Issues

In late medieval Italy, rebels (*rebelles*), betrayers (*proditores*), and traitors (who have fallen into the *crimen laesae maiestatis*) were outsiders, inhabiting distinct physical and juridical spaces. Like criminals placed under the ban (*banniti pro maleficio*), they dwelled between cities, in the vast territories outside the *de facto* reach of the regimes they opposed, or else they resided uncomfortably in cities not their own. Like public enemies (*inimici* and *hostes*), deserters (*transfugae*), and *banniti*, they were also outside the law, stripped of rights and subject to being killed with impunity.⁴³⁴ For the repression of political crime, cities arrogated to themselves a range of extraordinary powers, from the free use of torture to the suspension of normal criminal procedures to swift and secret summary condemnations.⁴³⁵ Under normal procedures, convictions in *contumacia* for serious crimes were remarkably common;⁴³⁶ threatened with summary procedures and the

⁴³⁴ Practices of exclusion have recently moved to the forefront of scholarship on pre-modern Italian cities; see for example Giuliano Milani, *L'esclusione dal Comune: Conflitti e bandi politici a Bologna e in altre città italiane tra XII e XIV secolo* (Rome: Roma: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio, 2003), Christiane Klapisch Zuber, *Retour à la cite: Les magnats de Florence, 1340-1440* (Paris: EHESS, 2006), and Fabrizio Ricciardelli, *The Politics of Exclusion in Early Renaissance Florence* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007). The many types of exclusion in juridical thought is a subject in need of further treatment, but see Desiderio Cavalca, *Il bando nella prassi e nella dottrina medievale* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1978).

⁴³⁵ See, for example, *Statuta populi et communis Florentiae publica auctoritate collecta castigata et praeposita anno salutis MCCCCXV* (Freiburg [Florence]: Michael Kluch, 1778-83), I, 278-80, 283-286.

⁴³⁶ The figures in Umberto Dorini, *Il diritto penale e la delinquenza in Firenze nel secolo XIV* (Lucca: Corsi, [1923], 38, show rates as high as 87% (for murder, in the years 1380-3).

severest possible penalties, political criminals fled prosecution in even greater numbers and fell under the ban. They formed the large bands of *usciti* and *cacciati* that loomed so frightfully in the medieval Italian political consciousness and attracted to themselves not-yet-targeted friends and allies.⁴³⁷ Because it delineates so clearly the boundaries of inside and outside, adumbrating the very limits of state power, political crime posed for jurists the question to which sovereignty was the answer; it presented jurists with a set of problems that required them to examine and explicate the foundations of their thought on the lawful exercise of political power.

At the center of this answer is the Roman idea of *maiestas*, the awesome dignity and encompassing power of supreme political authority, as well as the creation of the corresponding “crime of injured *maiestas*,” the *crimen laesae maiestatis*, or treason. Defined in both Justinian’s *Code* and *Digest* in the *Corpus iuris civilis* under the title *Ad legem Iuliam maiestatis* (C. 9.8 and D. 48.4), treason encompasses a wide range of “crimes against the state”, from gathering together for seditious purposes to turning a city over to the enemy, and provides for a range of penalties, including death and crucially the confiscation of property; the constitution *Ad reprimendum* (1313), issued by the emperor Henry VII, which was rapidly incorporated in Justinian’s *Corpus iuris* by medieval jurists, adds that traitors can be condemned “summarily, simply, and without commotion or normal judicial procedures.”⁴³⁸

⁴³⁷ See, for example, the events in Buonaccorso Pitti, *Cronica*, ed. Alberto Bacchi della Lega (Bologna: Romagnoli dall’acqua, 1905), 44-6.

⁴³⁸ Text in Jacob Schwalm, ed., *Constitutiones et acta publica imperatorum et regum inde ab anno MCCXCVIII usque ad annum MCCCXIII (1298-1313)* (Hannover: Hahn, 1911), II, 965-6: “summarie et de plano sine strepitu et figura iudicii.”

Central to this chapter is an opinion, probably written early in 1380, of the jurist Baldo degli Ubaldi of Perugia that questions whether the commune of Florence possessed *maiestas* and whether conspirators against the city could be said to have committed treason.⁴³⁹ At first glance, these may seem to be conventionally narrow and legalistic questions, since even without *maiestas* a city like Florence could unquestionably prosecute such conspirators for sedition (*seditio*) and other crimes that carried severe penalties and allowed for abbreviated inquisition procedures. But these questions and Baldo's answers will serve to challenge the master narrative of the inexorable transformation of the late medieval commune into the early modern state or *principato*. Laced with the poison of anachronism, this master narrative reads back into Trecento jurisprudence later legal developments and has haunted the history of medieval and Renaissance politico-legal thought from at least the time of the right-wing legal scholar, Francesco Ercole.⁴⁴⁰ In addition, they will serve to problematize the widely-held view (given its most explicit recent

⁴³⁹ Baldo addressed treason in a number of places in his lectures and commentaries, sometimes allowing for treason against cities; see, for example, Baldo ad C. 9. 24. 2, ad C. 9. 41. 16, ad D. 4. 5. 5. 1, ad X 1.29.1, and ad X 1.32.1 (ff. 370v, 373r, 204r, 121v, and 155v in the Venetian edition of 1497-8). In addition to this opinion, Baldo also addressed treason directly in at least one other *consilium*; see BAV, Barb. lat., 1408, f.123rv (=cons I. 243 in the Venetian editions).

⁴⁴⁰ See, for example, the influential essays in Ercole's *Dal comune al principato: Saggi sulla storia del diritto pubblico del Rinascimento italiano* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1929) and *Da Bartolo all'Althusio: Saggi sulla storia del pensiero pubblicistico del Rinascimento italiano* (Florence: Vallecchi, [1932]). On Ercole, see Luca Lo Bianco, "Ercole, Francesco," in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol.43 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1993), 132-4.

expression by Mario Montorzi⁴⁴¹) that jurists were almost monolithically instrumental in the early modern state's triumph and legitimization by showing how jurists could challenge and limit the power of regimes and assert the primacy of law.

Bartolo da Sassoferrato (d. 1357) had addressed a similar question in his influential commentary on the constitution *Qui sunt rebelles* of Henry VII, which had been issued along with the constitution *Ad reprimendum* as part of his campaign against Robert of Naples. "Should this constitution," wrote Bartolo,

also apply to one who rebels against any prince or king, or against any given city? It seems so, since the constitution says "against our officials"... [but] I say the opposite because it is not against the good of the emperor or the empire... Kings and cities can have jurisdiction from the emperor, but they exercise it mainly for themselves and not on behalf of the emperor and thus this constitution does not apply to them, since it mainly speaks of those who plot against the person of the emperor or the good fortunes of his empire.⁴⁴²

⁴⁴¹ *Fides in rem publicam: Ambiguità e tecniche del diritto comune* (Naples: Jovene, 1984).

⁴⁴² Gloss on the word "rebellando," BAV, Vat. Lat. 2641, f. 18r: "Sed an constitutio habeat locum in eo qui rebellat contra aliquem principem vel aliquem regem vel contra aliquam propriam civitatem. Quod videtur quia hic dicitur contra officiales nostros... Contrarium dico quia nam tunc non fit contra prosperitatem imperatoris vel imperii... Reges vero et civitates licet habeant iurisdictionem a principe tamen eam exercent principaliter propter se et non propter principem et sic cessat hec constitutio, que principaliter loquitur in hiis qui machinantur contra personam imperatoris vel eius imperii prosperitatem." This opinion is cited in both of Baldo's opinions on the December 1379 Conspiracy (discussed below); it is interpreted more expansively in the Vatican manuscript, which is followed verbatim by

This opinion speaks directly to the political rights and authority of cities, an issue long at the center of the scholarship on Bartolo's political thought. And it suggests that Walter Ullmann's well-known and influential claim, that for Bartolo "the sanctions for non-obedience to the laws of the people are exactly the same as those for non-obedience to the Prince's law," is not entirely true.⁴⁴³ As we will see, it was also not true for Bartolo's most famous student.

The Consilia

The son of a doctor, Baldo degli Ubaldi⁴⁴⁴ was born in Perugia on 2 October 1327 and, having proved himself a precocious student with a mind

Nello da San Gimignano, *De bannitis*, II, 1, q. 16, in *Tractatus universi iuris*, vol. XI (Venice, 1584), f. 366v.

⁴⁴³ "De Bartoli sententia: Consilium repraesentat mentem populi," in *Bartolo da Sassoferrato: Studi e Documenti per il VI centenario*, ed. Danilo Segoloni (Milan: Giuffrè, 1962), vol. 2, 725.

⁴⁴⁴ A classic bio-bibliographical treatment of Baldo is found in Friedrich Carl von Savigny, *Geschichte des römischen Rechts im Mittelalter*, Volume 6 (Heidelberg, 1851; repr. Aalen: Scientia, 1986), 208-48, but these shorter works are now more valuable: Georges Chevrier, "Baldi de Ubaldi," *Dictionnaire de droit canonique*, 2 (Paris: Letouzey, 1937), 39-52; Enrico Besta, "Baldo degli Ubaldi," *Bollettino della Regia Deputazione di storia patria per l'Umbria* 46 (1949): 140-53; Vincenzo N. Rizzo, "Baldo degli Ubaldi," *Annuario di diritto internazionale* (1966), 359-70; Paul Weimar, s.v. "Baldo de Ubaldis," *Lexicon des Mittelalters*, I (Munich: Artemis, 1980), 1376, and, recently, Kenneth Pennington, "Baldo de Ubaldis," *Rivista internazionale di diritto comune* 8 (1997): 35-61. Essential for accurately establishing the details of Baldo's life are Oscar Scalvanti, "Notizie e documenti sulla vita di Baldo, Angelo e Pietro degli Ubaldi," *L'opera di Baldo, per cura dell'Università di Perugia nel V centenario dalla morte del grande giureconsulto*, edited by Oscar Scalvanti (Perugia: Università degli studi, 1901), 181-359; Torquato Cuturi, "Baldo degli Ubaldi in Firenze," in *L'opera di Baldo*, 365-95; Domenico Maffei, "Su alcuni nodi della biografia di Baldo degli Ubaldi," in *Giuristi medievali e falsificazioni editoriali del primo Cinquecento: Jacopo Belvisio in Provenza?* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1979), 71-74; Patrick Lally, "New Light on the Birth and Death of Baldo de Ubaldis," *The Two Laws: Studies in Medieval Legal History Dedicated to Stephan Kuttner*, ed. Laurent Mayali and Stephanie Tibbetts (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1990), 209-20; Paola Monacchia, "*La casa che abitamo*: Riflessioni patrimoniali su Baldo e

well-suited to the rigors of law and logic, he studied at his city's university under the expert tutelage of Bartolo of Sassoferrato and a group of other jurists including the civilian Francesco Tigrini and the canonist Federico Petrucci of Siena.⁴⁴⁵ Baldo attained the degree of *iuris utriusque doctor*, doctor of both laws, in the latter half of the 1340s and taught at Perugia alongside Bartolo and, later, his brother Angelo until 1357, when he moved on to Pisa. In 1358, he accepted an invitation to teach at the Florentine *Studium* and remained there until 1364.⁴⁴⁶ Early in his tenure, Baldo became a citizen of

la sua famiglia," *Ius Commune* 27 (2000): 3-27, and Maria Grazia Nico Ottaviani, "Su Baldo e Baldeschi: Scalvanti rivisitato," *Ius Commune* 27 (2000): 27-68.

⁴⁴⁵ See Paolo Nardi, "Contributo alla biografia di Federico Petrucci con notizie inedite su Cino da Pistoia e Tancredi da Corneto," *Scritti di storia del diritto offerti dagli allievi a Domenico Maffei*, ed. Mario Ascheri (Padua: Antenore, 1991), 153-180, on Petrucci, and Johann Friedrich von Schulte, *Die Geschichte der Quellen und Literatur des Canonischen Rechts von Gratian bis auf die Gegenwart*, vol. II. (Stuttgart, 1880; repr. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1956), 277, on Tigrini. On Baldo's most famous teacher, the bibliography is too vast to briefly survey, but for an introduction one may consult Francesco Calasso's entry for "Bartolo da Sassoferrato" in the *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, 6 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1964), 640-669; on Bartolo's role as Baldo's teacher, see Domenico Maffei, *Giuristi medievali e falsificazioni editoriali*, pp. 71-74; and for some important, recent contributions to the literature, see Osvaldo Cavallar et al., *A Grammar of Signs: Bartolo da Sassoferrato's Tract on Insignia and Coats of Arms* (Berkeley: The Robbins Collection, 1994) and Osvaldo Cavallar, "River of Law: Bartolus's *Tiberiadis* (*De alluvione*)," in *A Renaissance of Conflicts: Visions and Revisions of Law and Society in Italy and Spain*, ed. John A. Marino and Thomas Kuehn (Toronto: Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2004), pp. 31-129.

⁴⁴⁶ See Torquato Cuturi, "Baldo degli Ubaldi in Firenze," 365-6. Baldo was only one of four jurists invited to Florence by the Signoria on 25 June 1358; Cuturi notes that one of them, Ranieri da Forlì, received a salary of "florenorum auri quactuorcentorum triginta," so we can assume that Baldo was well-compensated for his lectures at the *Studio*.

Florence and matriculated into the commune's Arte dei Giudici e Notai.⁴⁴⁷ Baldo left Florence for Perugia, where he spent more than a decade before accepting a position at the University of Padua in 1376 and where he would return in 1379 for another 11 years. For the decade before his death on 28 April 1400, Baldo was in the employ of Giangaleazzo Visconti, duke of Milan, teaching at the University of Pavia and becoming an expert in feudal law.⁴⁴⁸ Throughout the course of his long career, Baldo acted more than once as a diplomat. He served, for example, as one of Perugia's Tre della Guerra in 1370 and as his city's ambassador to Charles of Durazzo in 1379.⁴⁴⁹ Along with Giovanni da Legnano, he journeyed to Rome in 1380 to support Urban VI's position in the Great Schism.⁴⁵⁰ His most lasting fame, though, derives

⁴⁴⁷ A transcription of the document granting Baldo citizenship on 9 October 1359 is included in Cuturi, "Baldo degli Ubaldi in Firenze," 366-9, and part of his matriculation into the Arte has been transcribed by Julius Kirshner in "Ars imitatur naturam: A Consilium of Baldus on Naturalization in Florence," *Viator* 5 (1974), 306, n.43.

⁴⁴⁸ At the moment of his death, Baldo was writing a *consilium* for Giangaleazzo; on this, see Kenneth Pennington, "Baldus de Ubaldis," 35, and Giancarlo Vallone, "La raccolta Barberini dei *consilia* originali di Baldo," *Rivista di storia del diritto italiano* 62 (1989): 75-8.

⁴⁴⁹ Scalvanti, "Notizie e documenti," 322-3.

⁴⁵⁰ James Albert Wahl, "Baldus de Ubaldis: A Study in Reluctant Conciliarism," *Manuscripta* 18 (1974): 21-29, and Salvatore Fodale, "Baldo degli Ubaldi, difensore di Urbano VI e signore di Biscina," *Quaderni medievali* 17 (1984): 73-85, are directly relevant to Baldo's role, but Walter Ullmann, in *The Origins of the Great Schism: A Study in Fourteenth-Century Ecclesiastical History* (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1948), 143-160, discusses the character and opinions of Baldo and Giovanni da Legnano at some length. See also R. N. Swanson, *Universities, Academics and the Great Schism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 15-6, on the general issues involved.

from his work as a teacher, legal consultant, and political thinker.⁴⁵¹ He taught students such as Paolo di Castro and Francesco Zabarella, wrote commentaries on the entire *Corpus iuris civilis*, the *Libri feudorum*, the Peace of Constance, the *Decretales* of Gregory IX, the *Clementinae*, and the *Liber Sextus* of Boniface VIII; composed at least 11 *tractatus*, including the lengthy *De statutis*; and penned more than 2,500 *consilia*.⁴⁵²

⁴⁵¹ It is in the lattermost role that Baldo has received the most attention. The best introduction is Joseph Canning, *The Political Thought of Baldus de Ubaldis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), which has not wholly diminished the value of idem, "The Corporation in the Political Thought of the Italian Jurists of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," *History of Political Thought* 1 (1980): 9-32; idem, "A Fourteenth-Century Contribution to the Theory of Citizenship in the Thought of Baldus de Ubaldis," in *Authority and Power: Studies on Medieval Law and Government Presented to Walter Ullmann on His Seventieth Birthday* (Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 1980), 197-212; and idem, "Ideas of the State in Thirteenth and Fourteenth-Century Commentators on the Roman law," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Series, 33 (1983): 1-27. One of Canning's more recent works on Baldo, "Permanence and Change in Baldus' Political Thought," *Ius Commune* 27 (2000): 283-298, traces the contours of Baldo's inconsistent political philosophy. On the political, see also James A. Wahl's "Baldus de Ubaldis' Concept of State: A Study in Fourteenth-Century Legal Theory," (Ph.D. Diss., University of St. Louis, 1968) and "Baldo de Ubaldis and the Foundations of the Nation-State," *Manuscripta* 21 (1977): 80-96. Although dated, Carlo Curcio's "La politica di Baldo," *Rivista internazionale di filosofia del diritto* 17 (1937):113-39. and Walter Ullmann, "Baldus' Conception of Law," *Law Quarterly Review* 58 (1942): 386-99 are not without substantial merit. Norbert Horn, "Philosophie in der Jurisprudenz der Kommentatoren: Baldo philosophus," *Ius commune* 1 (1967): 104-49, and Maximiliane Kriechbaum, "Philosophie und Jurisprudenz bei Baldo de Ubaldis: "Philosophi legum imitati sunt philosophos naturae," *Ius Commune* 27 (2000): 299-344, explore the philosophical underpinnings of Baldo's philosophy in a systematic way not attempted elsewhere.

⁴⁵² On Baldo's *consilia* generally, see Hermann Lange, *Die Consilien des Baldo de Ubaldis* (Mainz: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 1973); Kenneth Pennington, "The Consilia of Baldus de Ubaldis," *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 56 (1988): 85-92, which despite its broad title, is devoted primarily to the printed editions; and Thomas Izbicki and Julius Kirshner, "Consilia of Baldus of Perugia in the Regenstein library of the University of Chicago," *Bulletin of*

Medieval Canon Law 15 (1985): 95-115. For discussions of individual *consilia*, see the following: Guido Bonolis, "Due consigli inediti di Baldo degli Ubaldi," *Diritto commerciale* 21 (1903): 641-72; idem, "Su alcuni consigli inediti di Baldo," *Atti del Congresso internazionale di scienze storiche* 9 (1903): 213-215; idem, *Questioni di diritto internazionale in alcuni consigli inediti di Baldo degli Ubaldi: Testo e commento* (Pisa: Enrico Spoerri, 1908); idem, "La condizione degli oblati secondo un consiglio inedito di Baldo degli Ubaldi," *Studi storici e giuridici dedicati ed offerti a Federico Ciccaglione* 1 (1909): 274-310; Julius Kirshner, "Messer Francesco di Bici degli Albergotti d'Arezzo, Citizen of Florence (1350-76)," *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* 2 (1972): 84-90; idem, "Ars imitatur naturam"; idem, "Between Nature and Culture: An Opinion of Baldo of Perugia on Venetian Citizenship as Second Nature," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* (1979): 179-208; idem, "Baldus de Ubaldis on Disinheritance: Contexts, Controversies, Consilia," *Ius Commune* 27 (2000): 119-214; idem, "Baldo degli Ubaldi's Contribution to the Rule of Law in Florence," in *VI Centenario della morte di Baldo degli Ubaldi*, 313-64; idem and Jacques Pluss, "Two Fourteenth-Century Opinions on Dowries, Paraphernalia and Non-Dotal Goods," *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* 9 (1979): 65-77; Pluss, "Baldus de Ubaldis of Perugia on *Dominium* over Dotal Property," *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 52 (1984): 399-412; idem, "Reading Case Law Historically: A *Consilium* of Baldus de Ubaldis on Widows and Dowries," *American Journal of Legal History* 30 (1986): 241-65; Diego Quaglioni, "Inter Iudeos et Christianos commercia sunt permessa: Questione ebraica e usura in Baldo degli Ubaldi (c.1327-1400)," *Aspetti e problemi della presenza ebraica nell'Italia centro-settentrionale secoli XIV-XV* (Rome: Istituto di Scienze storiche dell'Università, 1983), 273-305; and Jolande Rummer, "A Fourteenth-Century Legal Opinion," *Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 25 (1968): 179-93. Baldo's work as a canonist has received far less attention than the rest of his *corpus*; see, however, these works: Thomas Izbicki, "Notes on Late Medieval Jurists: I. Juan de Mella: Cardinal and Canonist. II. Baldo on the Sext," *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law* 4 (1974): 53-54; Stefan Kuttner, "The Apostillae of Johannes Andreae on the Clementines," in *Études d'histoire du droit canonique dédiées à Gabriel Le Bras*, vol. 1 (Paris: Sirey, 1965), 195-201; Vito Piergiovanni, "La *peregrinatio bona* dei mercanti medievali: A proposito di un commento di Baldo degli Ubaldi a X.1.34," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* 74 (1988): 348-56; Jean Portemer, *Recherches sur les Differentiae iuris civilis et canonici au temps du droit classique de l'Église* (Paris: Jouve, 1946), esp. 70-78; Diego Quaglioni, "Un *Tractatus de Tyranno*: il commento di Baldo degli Ubaldi alla *lex Decernimus*, C. De sacrosanctis ecclesiis (C.1,2,16)," *Il pensiero politico* 13 (1980): 64-77; Wahl, "Reluctant Conciliarism"; and Robert Feenstra, "Editions lyonnaises des lecturae de droit civil de Balde par Jean de Gradibus, avec un aperçu des autres éditions du XVIe siècle," *Ius Commune* 27 (2000): 345-374.

Although he notes that the jurist's "professional and public activity during December and early January of 1379-80 has never been determined," one scholar has argued convincingly that, on his way back to Perugia from Padua, "Baldus visited Florence and delivered [an] opinion" in the case of Ser Orlando, a notary who had petitioned the commune for a grant of citizenship in the winter of 1379.⁴⁵³ It was, in all likelihood, on the same trip that Baldo was asked to give his opinion on the legal issues related to the thwarted conspiracy. Indeed, during the first two years of the guild government, Baldo returned to Florence and wrote a handful of *consilia* on important political issues there.⁴⁵⁴ At least two *consilia* addressing the December 1379 conspiracy are now extant; one is preserved in manuscript in the Vatican Library (Vat. lat. 8069, ff. 364v-367v), the other in the Biblioteca Capitolare Feliniana of Lucca (MS 351, ff.89v-90v). Although the former appears to have been more widely cited in the fifteenth century (see below), I center my discussion on the latter in this chapter. Unlike the more philosophical and polished Vatican *consilium*, which focused on the condemnation of Donato Barbadori and the issue of whether not revealing a secret plot could be treason, the latter opinion (which would later be widely disseminated in the

⁴⁵³ "*Ars imitatur naturam*," 307. Kirshner notes that at least two other contemporaneous Florentine *consilia* of Baldo (i.e., the one central to this paper and *Consilium* III.264) are known. Coincidentally, Ser Orlando believed he deserved Florentine citizenship on account of a service provided to the commune in her war against the papacy—he had, at Avignon, recorded the plea to Pope Gregory XI against the imposition of interdict delivered by the jurist Donato Barbadori, who would, as we have seen, be executed as a conspirator in 1379.

⁴⁵⁴ In addition to those discussed in this chapter, see the *consilium* discussed in Kirshner, "*Ars imitatur naturam*," with the contemporaneous opinions discussed at p. 307.

Venetian editions of Baldo's *consilia*) was drawn from a *liber consiliorum* of Baldo that had once belonged to his descendants and it addressed the question of whether the goods of the executed conspirators could be confiscated while also speaking to broader questions of the limits of governmental power.⁴⁵⁵

But why was Baldo chosen to consult on this issue? Baldo's stature as a *consiliarius* was, undoubtedly, the foremost reason for entrusting such an important task to him. By 1385, in fact, Baldo's prestige as a teacher of law was such that Coluccio Salutati, Chancellor of the Florentine Republic, wrote to Perugia in order to secure the return of the great jurist—a request that was denied on the grounds that it would ruin Perugia's own school of law.⁴⁵⁶ At the

⁴⁵⁵ In this chapter, I quote from the Lucchese manuscript, but I also provide variants from the Milanese incunabulum, Baldo degli Ubaldi, *Consilia, cum tabula compilata per Ludovicum de Perego*, in five parts (1489), in square brackets marked M. On the Lucchese manuscript, see Vincenzo Colli, "Il Cod. 351 della Biblioteca Capitolare "Feliniana" di Lucca: Editori quattrocenteschi e *Libri consiliorum* di Baldo degli Ubaldi (1327-1400)," in *Scritti di storia del diritto offerti dagli allievi a Domenico Maffei*, ed. M. Ascheri (Padova: Antenore, 1991), 255-282; on the printed editions, see Colli, "Le opere di Baldo: Dal codice d'autore all'edizione a stampa," in *VI Centenario della morte di Baldo degli Ubaldi, 1400-2000*, eds. C. Frova and M. G. N. Ottaviani (Perugia: Università degli studi, 2005), 25-85. According to Colli, the Lucchese manuscript contains a copy of a *Liber consiliorum* or "minutario" of Baldo reflecting his work as a *consultor* at Padua in the late 1370s that was taken from the library of his descendants and no longer extant, but it is not necessarily better than the Milanese incunabulum. The opinion (as it appears in the Venetian editions, I.59) has been briefly discussed in Mario Sbriccoli, *Crimen Laesae Maiestatis: Il problema del reato politico alle soglie della scienza penalistica moderna* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1974), 211, and recently in Enrico Spagnesi, "L'insegnamento di Baldo degli Ubaldi a Pisa e a Firenze," *Atti e memorie dell'Accademia toscana di Scienze e Lettere "La Colombaria"* 69 (2004): 146-55.

⁴⁵⁶ Salutati's letter (19 July 1385) has been published in *Rassenga bibliografica della letteratura italiana* IV (1896): 318, and the Perugian reply is

same time, though, Baldo's intimate familiarity with Florentine political institutions and his simultaneous disinterestedness as an outsider (for no local lawyer could be trusted to be impartial in this case) made him perfectly suited for the job.⁴⁵⁷ But what was the job? Recently, it has been proposed that, while the category "*consilium*" is a fluid construct, five interrelated types of *consilia* can be identified in the legal procedure of late medieval Italy: 1) the famous *consilium sapientis iudicale*, which was binding on the judge in civil matters, 2) a *consilium* that, while filed by a disinterested *sapiens*, was not binding on the judge, 3) an "in house" *consilium* meant to clarify technical points of law, 4) a *consilium* requested of a *consultor* by an official in order to establish the proper bounds of his power, and 5) the widespread *consilium pro parte*, which

included in Oscar Scalvanti, "Notizie e documenti," 325: "annilichare et destruere studium perusinum."

⁴⁵⁷ According to the *ricordanze* of Lapo da Castiglionchio, Baldo was (along with the canonist Cerretano de' Cerretani of Siena) godfather to one of the Arch-Guelf canonist's sons; ASF, Carte strozziane II, 3, f. 85r (modern): "furono miei co[m]pari a farlo cristiano messer Baldo da Perugia dottore di leggi e di decretali, messer Cerretano de Cerretani da Siena dottore di decretali". On Lapo's *ricordi* and the milieu in which they were written, see Philip J. Jones, "Florentine Families and Florentine Diaries in the Fourteenth Century," *Papers of the British School in Rome* 24 (1956): 182-205. Lapo was, perhaps, the most hated and most active conspirator against the Guild Regime and was implicated in the plot about which Baldo wrote the *consilium* at issue here (see Chapter III, throughout). Thus, we cannot say that Baldo was *entirely* disinterested given his friendship with Lapo. For Lapo's extraordinary role as leader of the Arch-Guelfs in Florence before the Ciompi tumult, see Gene Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society, 1343-1378* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), *passim*. See also Robert Davidsohn, "Tre orazioni di Lapo da Castiglionchio ambasciatore fiorentino a Papa Urbano V e alla curia di Avignone," *Archivio storico italiano*, Series 5, 20 (1897): 225-85; Alessandro Valori, "Tra orgoglio aristocratico e identità comunale: Lapo da Castiglionchio sulla 'vera nobiltà'," *Archivio storico italiano* 154 (1996): 437-477; and now the essays in Franek Sznura (ed.), *Antica possessione con belli costumi: Due giornate di studio su Lapo da Castiglionchio il Vecchio* (Florence: ASKA, 2005). Although much has been written on Lapo's condemnation in 1378 and flight from Florence, his extraordinary activities against the subsequent regime of the guilds have not yet been explored other than in Chapter III.

was requested by a party interested in the outcome of the dispute.⁴⁵⁸

Although, as a Florentine citizen and member of the Arte dei Giudici e Notai, Baldo was qualified to write *consilia sapientis iudicialia* in Florence, statutory law forbade the requesting of such *consilia* in criminal cases or on issues that arose from criminal cases.⁴⁵⁹ The *consilium* on the conspiracy of 1379 was, then, not a *consilium sapientis iudicale* and, as such, did not have the statutory power to bind the judge or judges. And since Baldo was not, in the winter of 1379, in the regular employ of any of the rectors or other officials of the commune of Florence, the *consilium* could not have been an “in house” *consilium*. The language of the opening paragraph of the *consilium* does not give full priority to any of the particular sentences, nor does the opinion

⁴⁵⁸ Mario Ascheri, “Le fonti e la flessibilità del diritto commune: il paradosso del *consilium sapientis*,” in *Legal Consulting in the Civil Law Tradition*, edited by Mario Ascheri et al. (Berkeley: University of California, 1999), 16-7. Guido Rossi, *Consilium sapientis iudicale: Studi e ricerche per la storia del processo romano-canonico (Secoli XII-XII)* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1956), discusses not only *consilia* of the first type, but also of type 2, which were more common in the earlier period, on pp. 76-83, and of Type 3, on pp. 127-8, where the illuminating example of a Podestà reaching a decision *cum consilio sociorum suorum* is given. Osvaldo Cavallar, *Francesco Guicciardini giurista: I ricordi degli onorari* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1991) presents a detailed account of the process of requesting and writing *consilia* of the fifth type. See also Peter Reisenberg, “The *Consilia* Literature: A Prospectus,” *Manuscripta* 6 (1962): 3-22, for an examination of the nature of *consilia*, and Julius Kirshner, “Some Problems in the Interpretation of Legal Texts *re* the Italian City-States,” *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 19 (1975): 16-27, for a theoretical analysis of the use of such texts as historical sources.

⁴⁵⁹ On the question of qualification, see Kirshner, “Ars imitatur naturam,” 307, n.44-5, and idem, “Paolo di Castro on Cives ex privilegio: A Controversy Over the Legal Qualifications for Public Office in Early Fifteenth-Century Florence,” in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Hans Baron*, edited by Anthony Mohlo and John A. Tedeschi (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University, 1971), 236-8. For the statutory prohibition on *consilia sapientis* in criminal matters, see *Statuta populi et communis Florentiae*, lib. 1, rub. 81, p.181, even though these statutes were promulgated in the fifteenth century.

explicitly take up the interests of any particular one of the condemned. In spite of this, some have held that the *consilium* was written for Donato Barbadori.⁴⁶⁰ There is, however, no evidence that Baldo's opinion was a *consilium pro parte* written on behalf of Donato's heirs, although they would have had an interest in claiming that the confiscation of Donato's property was illegitimate. Other evidence points to the 1380 *consilium* having been requested by the Capitano del Popolo, Cante di Iacopo Gabrielli da Gubbio, and/or the Esecutore, Gianino d'Ascoli, in order to clarify the scope of their power, especially with regard to the confiscation of the goods of the condemned. Whether these two were sympathetic to the condemned and their cause or simply interested in the type of technical clarification that only a juridical *sapiens* could provide, it would have been wise for them to request a *consilium* narrowly tailored to say whether a confiscation of goods was proper, in the light of the *ius commune*, even if the Florentine statutory law was not silent on the issue. It is also possible that the opinion was requested by the Florentine government as a *consilium sapientis* on similar issues. Either way, while Baldo's opinion would not have had binding authority, it would certainly have possessed persuasive authority on account of the jurist's professional expertise, impartiality, and sacred dignity.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁶⁰ See, for example, Spagnesi, "L'Insegnamento." The confusion seems to have resulted from a conflation of the Vatican opinion, cited as "Pro Donato Barbadori," by lawyers like Bartolomeo Tegio, *De criminibus in genere*, f. 11v, and Girolamo Giganti, *De crimine lese maiestatis*, f. 85r, both in *Tractatus universi juris*, vol. 11 (Rome, 1584-6). The Vatican opinion was never printed and influenced these later jurists in manuscript.

⁴⁶¹ Kirshner, "Consilia as Authority," 109-128.

In the Lucchese manuscript, as in the later printed editions, two successive *consilia* appear on the December 1379 conspiracy. The compilers of Baldo's *libri consiliorum* as well as the later Quattrocento print editors treated both of these opinions as having been written by Baldo. Joseph Canning has more recently done so, arguing that the first opinion represents Baldo's summary of the facts and presentation of *pro-et-contra* arguments, while the second opinion represents his *solutio*.⁴⁶² To the contrary, evidence within the text shows that the first opinion was written by another as yet unidentified lawyer, presumably Florentine, and that the second opinion alone represents the work of Baldo. I believe the case for misattribution is clear. First, the first *consilium* (I.58) is not written in Baldo's style. Second, Baldo implicitly says that the arguments in the first *consilium* have been prepared by another, as in the opening line of the second *consilium* (f. 89v, "Licet eleganter pro et contra sint inducte leges..."), where he states that "laws for and against have been elegantly presented". Third, there is no reason that Baldo would have written two different *consilia* on the same case, which both proffer distinct and opposing arguments, as opposed to two versions of the same opinion. Fourth, it is clear that Baldo in his *consilium* is simply adding his opinion to the previous one, which he found to be defective. In response to Canning's argument, it must be noted that, while it is true that I.58 is for the most part balanced in its argumentation, providing *pro-et-contra* arguments after the summary of the facts, there is actually a brief and informal *solutio* provided at the end (at f.89v), a *solutio* that Baldo rejects and criticizes in his opinion. The existence of both opinions implies strongly that Baldo's opinion was, in fact,

⁴⁶² Canning, *Political Thought*, 122, n98.

requested by the government of 1378-82 after a Florentine lawyer had first treated the problem. In all likelihood the government or its officials realized that the case for confiscation was built on unstable foundations and, to avoid later legal liability, requested the 'second opinion' of a trusted *consultor*. Since the convictions of the conspirators do not assert that the crime of treason had been committed or bring up a confiscation of their goods, it is apparent that Baldo addressed these issues because they were raised in the opinion of the Florentine lawyer, who had supplied for Baldo his *questio iuris*. Legal experts (like the Capitano, Baldo, and likely even the Florentine lawyer) knew quite well that, from a legal point of view, a strong case could not be made against the conspirators. They also knew that asserting a charge of treason was the simplest way to confiscate property; indeed, in a practical sense, *crimen laesae maiestatis* means *confiscatio bonorum* in the Trecento because the person who committed treason lost control of and could no longer dispose of his property from the moment the crime was perpetrated. In this case, even the first jurist consulted by the government was unwilling to go so far.

While the relationship between Baldo's opinion and that of the Florentine lawyer is relatively clear, the relationship between the (at least) two versions of Baldo's opinion is less clear, and will remain so at least until the original opinion surfaces. It was not uncommon for Baldo to rewrite his opinions after he dictated them, and the preserved opinions (as in the Vatican Barberini collection or the Lucchese *liber consiliorum*) may represent a preparatory stage. It is harder to say which of the two extant versions is the earlier draft. Baldo is more emphatic in terms of what he thought of the condemnation of Donato Barbadori (a friend and fellow jurist) in the Vatican

consilium, and it is possible that Baldo toned down his language in the later Lucchese version; but it is also true that the Vatican *consilium* seems more polished and may have been the refined form of the Lucchese version.

Even though it is not Baldo's opinion, it is nonetheless important to describe the first opinion (86v-89v in the Lucchese manuscript; I.58 in the printed editions) composed by our anonymous Florentine jurist in order to provide the context in which Baldo wrote. Rather than a brief summary of the material facts, as was the usual practice, the jurist began his opinion by providing lengthy, verbatim extracts from four condemnations pronounced by the Capitano, those of messer Iacopo Sacchetti, Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, Cipriano di Lippo Mangioni, and Filippo di Biagio degli Strozzi; and from one pronounced by the Esecutore, that of Messer Donato Barbadori.⁴⁶³ Structurally, the four sentences of the Capitano are nearly identical: the condemned conspirator is in exile and is approached by a friend who tells him of the plan for retaking Florence, asks him to join and sign a document attesting to his membership in the plot. After a brief exchange in which the condemned expresses concern about the plot and then decides to join it, it is noted that he signed the document and "kept the plot secret and revealed it to no one" in order to bring about "grave damage to the Guelph party and the peaceful and popular government of the guilds and guildsmen of Florence"⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶³ BCFL, MS 351, ff. 86r-88v; the original sentence contra "Donatum Ghieruccii de Barbadoris" is in ASF, Esecutore, 840, ff. 49r-50r; those against the others are in ASF, Capitano, 1198, 54v-66r, along with many others.

⁴⁶⁴ For example, at BCFL, MS 351, f. 87r: "Et predicta [the elements of the plot] dictus Cyprianus in secreto tenuit et nemini revelavit ad hoc ut predicta habilius executioni demandarentur [mandarentur M] in grave dampnum et preiudicium partis Guelfe [et *add. Cod.*] pacifici et popularis status artium et artificum civitatis Florentie." Correction in brackets from the original at ASF, Capitano, 1198, f. 65v.

A sentence of capital punishment is then formally recounted, “that [he] be led to the place of justice and there be beheaded.”⁴⁶⁵ And no further penalty is noted. Nothing is said of treason or confiscation. The condemnation of Donato Barbadori is different: as noted above, Donato had met with a group of Florentine exiles (*exbanditi*) in Bologna and learned of their plan for a band of Ciompi and other forces to retake Florence on 20 December 1379. In response, “Messer Donato said that the plot was well-organized and will surely have its desired end, and that he will give his help and favor to the plot at a necessary and advantageous time.”⁴⁶⁶ Unlike the others, he is not asked to join the plot or to sign the document as proof of his loyalty. Yet he too also sentenced to death. After the condemnations, the Florentine lawyer surveys the relevant statutory law of Florence, which included six statutes on issues such as the confiscation of goods and the penalty for creating a tumult, again quoting verbatim.⁴⁶⁷

Having presented the condemnations and statutes, the lawyer then asked whether the goods (and the profits thereof) of the executed conspirators should have been and may now be confiscated. He laid out the issues

⁴⁶⁵ For example, at BCFL, MS 351, f. 87r: “quod predictus Cyprianus ducatur ad locum iustitie et ibidem caput ab eius [a *post* caput M] spatulis separetur [separetur *om.* M] amputetur,” etc; and ASF, Capitano, 1198, f. 66r.

⁴⁶⁶ BCFL, MS 351, f. 87v: “Ad que omnia predicta et singula respondidit dictus dominus Donatus quod predicta erant bene ordinata [et bene facta *add. Cod.*] et pro certo habebit finem optatum. Et quod in tempore necessario et opportuno dictus dominus Donatus dabit ad predicta consilium {ausilium} et favorem.” Corrections in brackets from ASF, Esecutore, 840, ff. 49v.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 88r-89r. For the original of those mentioned, see ASF, Statuti, 18, ff. 36r-37v and 53r-53v.

logically, presenting *pro* and *contra* arguments within the dual conceptual frameworks of the *ius commune* and statutory law. In favor of confiscation, he noted that the conspirators seemed to have committed treason and are thus subject to confiscation, adding that “one who knows about a conspiracy or other crime in his city is punished as a participant because of his knowledge alone, according to the *lex Utrum* (D. 48. 9. 6),” which states that even accomplices outside the family can be punished for parricide.⁴⁶⁸ Likewise, the Florentine statutes seemed to allow confiscation. For example, one of the 1355 statutes of the Podestà cited in the condemnations and quoted by the lawyers “seems to expressly impose confiscation”⁴⁶⁹; and even “if confiscation were not expressly imposed in the condemnation, it may be legally inferred from the content of the municipal legislation.”⁴⁷⁰ To the contrary, the lawyer argued that treason is not applicable to the case of the Florentine conspirators because it applies only when one acts “against the emperor, or those who are at his side, or against the Roman republic, but not against other cities... as is proved in the final paragraph of the *lex Fallaciter* (C. 9. 42. 3. 4), where the crime of treason and that of fighting against one’s country are distinguished as different types.”⁴⁷¹ As a result, the accomplice who merely knows of a plot can

⁴⁶⁸ BCFL, MS 351, f. 89r: “consciis de turbatione civitatis sue vel de alio commisso in civitate sua ex sola scientia punitur ut particeps, l. utrum ad l. pompe. de parri.”

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., “imponi videtur bonorum publicatio expresse”; the original in ASF, Statuti, 20, f. 37r-38r, *De pena facientis congregationem*, etc.

⁴⁷⁰ BCFL, MS 351, f. 89v: “si in sententia bonorum publicatio non sit expressa, tamen intellegitur de iure vigore dictarum legum municipalium.”

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., “contra principem vel qui iuxta latus eius sunt vel contra rem publicam Romanorum non in aliis civitatibus... ut probatur in d. l. Fallaciter § fi., C. de

still receive a punishment according to the *lex Utrum* “but not the punishment of one guilty of treason.”⁴⁷² Even though Florence has many of the same privileges and immunities as the Roman republic, the Florentine lawyer continued, “the republic or fisc of Florence is still not the republic or fisc of Rome” and the words of the statutes do not say that it is.⁴⁷³ Nonetheless, “in the case of an offense committed against the republic and fisc of the city of Florence confiscation ought to follow, just as in the case of an offense committed against the republic or fisc of Rome, because the republic and fisc of the city of Florence has the same privileges, rights, etc.”⁴⁷⁴ The Florentine lawyer’s argument is, *prima facie*, a weak one and he was likely aware of this. His conclusion eschews the arguments presented in order to reach a conclusion in favor of confiscation, one that is based almost entirely on an expansive view of Florence’s legal status.

Baldo would address the Florentine lawyer’s opinion in his *consilium*, but he would also implicitly be addressing the history of the jurisprudence on treason. The great jurist and writer of *consilia* Oldrado da Ponte (d.1335) had previously addressed the nature of treason in the conflict between Henry VII

abolitionibus, ubi crimen lese maiestatis et oppugnationis patrie alterantur ut species differentes.”

⁴⁷² Ibid., “non tamen rei criminis lese maiestatis.”

⁴⁷³ Ibid., “non tamen res publica et fiscus Florentie est res publica vel fiscus civitatis Romane.”

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., “tamen pro delicto commisso contra rem publicam et fiscum civitatis Florentie debet sequi publicatio bonorum, sicut pro commisso contra rem publicam vel fiscum civitatis Romane, quia res publica et fiscus civitatis Florentie habet eadem privilegia, beneficia etc.”

and Robert of Naples in two influential *consilia* on behalf of Robert (numbered 43 and 69 in the printed editions), in which he had defined *maiestas* as *maior status*, that is, greater rank, and as *maior potestas*, greater power; “by definition (*a ratione nominis*),” he could then argue, “the *crimen maiestatis* is not committed except when *maior potestas* is harmed (*laeditur*).”⁴⁷⁵ Robert, of course, claimed that he was not subject to Henry’s authority (and, therefore could not commit treason against him) because his true *maior status* and *maior potestas* was the Pope. Such an etymological argument would be followed by Oldrado’s student Alberico de Rosciate (d.1360) in his important, early lexicon of jurisprudence, the *Dictionarium*, where the headword is tellingly given as “Maiestas, that is, greater rank.”⁴⁷⁶ And Baldo would follow it as well, in spirit, but not, as we will see, before problematizing the unitary nature of *maiestas* that had stood at the center of the legal wrangling in 1313.

⁴⁷⁵ On Oldrado’s role in the conflict, see Edward Will, *Die Gutachten des Oldradus de Ponte zum Prozeß Heinrichs VII. gegen Robert von Neapel* (Berlin: Rothschild, 1917) and, for a more recent approach to Oldrado’s *consilia*, see Norman Zacour, *Jews and Saracens in the Consilia of Oldradus de Ponte* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990), Tilmann Schmidt, “Die Konsilien des Oldrado da Ponte als Geschichtsquelle,” in *Consilia im späten Mittelalter: Zum historischen Aussagewert einer Quellengattung*, ed. I. Baumgärtner (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1995), 53-64, and now Chiara Valsecchi, *Oldrado da Ponte e i suoi Consilia: Un’auctoritas del primo Trecento* (Milan: Giuffè, 2000); for the definition, see cons. 43, at n.8, in Oldradus de Ponte, *Consilia seu responsa et quaestiones aureae* (Venice, 1585): “maiestas dicitur maior status sive maior potestas; arguendo ergo a ratione nominis non committitur crimen maiestatis nisi cum laeditur maior potestas.”

⁴⁷⁶ On Alberico, see the brief biographical sketches of Paul Weimar, “Albericus de Rosate”, in *Lexicon des Mittelalters*, vol. 1 (Munich, 1980), 282-83, and L. Prosdocimi, “Alberico da Rosate”, in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 1 (1960), 656-57 and idem, “Alberico da Rosciate e la giurisprudenza italiana del secolo XIV”, *Bergomum* 49 (1955): 1-7; for the definition, s.v. “Maiestas idest maior status,” in *Dictionarium iuris tam civilis quam canonici* (Venice, 1581).

The more pressing problem of whether treason could be committed against a city had also been treated before, in a variety of places within the gloss and commentary tradition of the *ius commune*. For example, following the list of crimes included under the umbrella of treason in the *lex Quisquis* (C.8.8.5), the early glossator Azo (d. 1220) was not as seemingly discriminatory as later jurists would be. “There is treason,” he wrote, “where anyone undertakes anything against the City [*urbem*, i.e., Rome], or goes over to its enemies, or helps them in any way with arms, money, or advice; or causes subject provinces to become rebellious, *or causes sedition in a city (vel quod seditionem movet in civitate)*, or kills a magistrate or the emperor or those who serve at his side, or takes up arms, or occupy places against the republic.”⁴⁷⁷ But, as we have already seen, by the mid-fourteenth century, Bartolo would be unwilling to expand the sphere of *maiestas* beyond the imperial dignity. In addition to the already mentioned gloss on the constitution of Henry VII, Bartolo would address the problem directly in a tantalizing passage in his commentary on the *lex Proximum* (D.48.4.1): “I ask,” he wrote there, “whether anyone who assembles a group [for illicit purposes] in a city other than Rome should be treated in accordance with the *lex Iulia maiestatis* (D.48.4); the gloss says that it does not apply to other cities because when it says “de urbe” the city of Rome is to be understood, but consider instead that

⁴⁷⁷ Commentary ad C.9.8.2, in *Summa Azonis super novem libris codicis* (Pavia, 1506): “Est autem crimen laesae maiestatis ubicunque quis contra urbem aliquid molitur, vel quod profugit ad hostes; vel quod hostes qualitercunque iuvat, vel armis, vel pecunia, vel consilio; vel quod subiectas provincias nititur facere rebelles, vel quod seditionem movet in civitate, vel quod magistratus occidatur, vel princeps, vel qui circa latus eius militant, vel quod arma sumit, vel occupant loca contra rempublicam ut appellatur hoc crimen perduellionis.” The switch to the plural may represent an error in the printed edition.

one who assembles a group in a city other than Rome should be treated in accordance with the *lex Iulia de vi* (D.48.6 and 7).⁴⁷⁸ Just as the word *maiestas* came to stand for the *crimen laesae maiestatis* more often than the imperial dignity itself in Roman law and literature, so the word *vis* (violence) had come to stand for the crime of sedition in later Roman law, as in the titles on private *vis* and public *vis*. Bartolo, grappling with the gloss on the words “in urbe sint” in D.48.4.1, which held that “urbs” (city) should stand for Rome alone, declared that the crime of assembling a group in a city (one of the elements of treason if committed against an entity with *maiestas*) would be instead the crime of *sedition*. According to Bartolo, Such a crime should be treated not as treason, but as *vis*, the umbrella under which serious offences against public order that did not rise to the level of treason were punished in Roman law.⁴⁷⁹ In practical terms, moreover, treason meant confiscation, and on the crucial and related issue of the existence of a fisc, no less an authority than Alberico de Rosate had held that, even though *civitates* are republics, “nevertheless the *fiscus* and the *respublica* are different.”⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁸ Bartolo ad D.48.4.1 in *Commentaria in secundam Digesti novi partem* (Lyon, 1555), f. 183v: “quero aliquis congregat gentem in alia civitate quam in civitate Romana: an incidit in l. Iul. Maie. Dicit glossa quod non habet locum in alia civitate quia cum hic dicat de urbe, intelligitur de civitate Romana, non autem intelligitur de alia: et allegat suas leges [gl. “in urbe sint” ad 48.4.1]. Sed adverte quod qui facit congregationem gentis in alia civitate, tenetur l. Iul. de vi.”

⁴⁷⁹ Olivia F. Robinson, *The Criminal Law of Ancient Rome*, 78-80.

⁴⁸⁰ Alberico de Rosate, *De statutis*, iii, q.19, in *Tractatus universi iuris*, vol. 2, f. 57v: “tamen fiscum et respublicam differunt.”

“Though laws prescribing both for and against have been elegantly presented in this matter,” Baldo began his opinion, directly addressing the Florentine lawyer’s *consilium*, “three points must be reviewed in order to arrive at a more fruitful teaching: First, what is the category of this crime? Second, by what law is it punished? And third, with what penalty?”⁴⁸¹ And it is here, immediately, in his answer to the first question, that Baldo arrives at the philosophical crux of the matter: *maiestas*, he states, is fourfold, since the law speaks of the majesty of God, the emperor, the Roman people, and the king; but cities do not share in the quadruplicity of majesty because they merely stand in the place of private persons, nor do parties (like the Guelfs and Ghibellines) because they are simply factions.⁴⁸² Indeed, most cities are *municipia*, autonomous but still subject to a superior, and thus possess no *maiestas*; on the basis of name alone, then, they cannot be the object of “the

⁴⁸¹ Ibid., “Licet eleganter pro et contra sint inducte leges proprie ad propositum facientes et determinantes tamen pro uberiori doctrina recensenda sunt tria, primo [consideranda sunt *add. M*] quis est titulus huius criminis, secundo, qua lege punitur, tertio qua pena.”

⁴⁸² Ibid., ff.89v-90r; I quote this crucial passage at length: “Et premitto ad evidentiam quod quadruplex est maiestas, scilicet Dei. ff. de arbitris, l. Non distinguemus, §. Sacerdotio (D.4.8.32.4), Imperatoris ut Inst. in prohe. (l. *Pr.*), et C. ad l. iul. mai., l. Quisquis (C. 9.8.5) cum si., Romani populi ff. e. l.i (D. 48.4.1), Regis C. ut nemo privatus titulos, l. Regie maiestatis (C. 2.15[16].11). Dicitur maiestas pretoris, ff. de iusti. et iur., l. pen. (D.1.1.1), ff. de iur. om. iud., l. si familia (D. 2.1.9). Civitatis vero alie ab urbe non dicitur maiestas, quia civitates loco privatorum habentur ff. de furtis, l. Ob pecuniam (D.47.2.82), ff. de verborum significatione, l. Bona civitatis (D.50.16.15), et l. eum qui vectigal (D.50.16.16). Item partis guelfe vel gebelline non dicitur maiestas hec enim non sunt nomina civitatis sed nomina partialitatis, de quibus notatur in c. statutum, § cum autem, de rescriptis lib. vi. (VI. 1.3.11.3).” Alberico, in his Dictionarium, s.v. “maiestas cadit”, would also present *maiestas* as multiplex to some extent, since it can be committed “in principem et in regem et in praetorem et in quemlibet iudicem.”

crime of injured *maiestas*.” But the crime of sedition can be committed against them: “He is guilty of sedition,” Baldo stated, “who conspires to betray or overthrow the public and good government of a city or to wage war against it or something similar, not in thought alone but by acting, like conspiring, waging war, or occupying a territory of his city or *municipium*.”⁴⁸³ In a sense, sedition is the broader category into which the crime of treason falls (i.e., sedition against an entity with *maiestas* is treasonous), but for sedition against a *municipium* it is not enough to merely wish for tumult or revolution, rather a seditious conspirator must betray his city in a material way. Under the *ius commune*, sedition is punishable by death, but some conspirators are given clemency “either because of their rank or, perhaps, because they did not act to promote the sedition.”⁴⁸⁴ Since Florence is a *municipium* and governed by its own laws, though, those who conspire against it should not be punished under the *ius commune* of sedition but according to the statutes of the commune. “Thus,” Baldo says, “we should follow the *via statutorum*, neither adding nor detracting.”⁴⁸⁵ Reviewing the statutes, he found that they had given the rectors considerable choice (*arbitrium*) in terms of sentencing and, as a result, argues that the penalties they announced should not be supplemented after the

⁴⁸³ Ibid., f. 90r: “Est autem seditiosus ille qui [seditio quando quis *post Est M*] tractat facere prodicionem et novitatem contra publicum et bonum statum civitatis, vel facere guerram, vel aliquid simile non nuda cogitatione, sed perveniendo ad aliquem actum: puta faciendo coniurationem vel rumorem vel guerram vel occupando aliquam terram contra suam civitatem vel municipium.”

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., “vel propter personarum dignitatem, vel puta quia minus delinquerunt ut quia non processerunt ad actum proximum factis.”

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid., “ergo sequamur viam statutorum neque addendo neque detrahendo.”

fact.⁴⁸⁶ Since the sentences against the conspirators had not mentioned a confiscation of their goods, the officials of Florence ought to remain firmly fixed in the *ius strictum* and do nothing to ramp up the penalties. “It is apparent,” Baldo concluded, “that an implicit confiscation is not included within the ambit of corporal punishment, and since the statute, which is of the *ius strictum*, does not assert this, we should neither assert nor add it.”⁴⁸⁷

Baldo’s opinion was a brilliant balancing act. On the one hand, he had diminished the authority of Florence, declaring that it lacks *maiestas* and arguing that it ought not be allowed to impose a delayed confiscation on the conspirators. On the other, though, he has not challenged the sphere of capacious authority secured for it in the Florentine lawyer’s opinion, in which its rights and privileges are equal to those of Rome and in which its statutes and judicial acts are inviolable. By maintaining the logical fire wall of separation between the *ius commune* and statutory law in the opinion, Baldo was able to arrive at his desired conclusion and his desired goal, the perpetuation of the rule of law—that is, that governments themselves, as well as their citizens, are constrained to adhere to their own lawfully established statutes and procedures. The government of Florence could have declared in its statutes that sedition against it be treated like treason, but it did not; those statutes could have called for confiscation, but they did not; and its judges could have used their statutory authority to impose such a confiscation, but

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid., 90v: “Et quia pena arbitraria est incerta, donec declaretur per iudicem, nullo modo pena non declarata supplenda est per impetrationem legalem.”

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid., “Et ex his apparet quod confiscatio tacita bonorum non venit in conscientiam pene corporalis, quia statutum quod est stricti iuris hoc non dictat ergo nec nos dictare debemus neque supplere.”

they did not. Baldo's reasoning would have permitted all those things, but it will not permit them after the fact. In his opinion, it is precisely the very power and authority of Florence that restricts its power and authority. And this is the paradox at the heart of the primacy of law. In a metaphorical sense, one could say that the almost spectral superiority of Rome over Florence in Baldo's opinion stands for the superiority of the law over the Florentines and its officials, the *maiestas* of Rome for the awesome dignity and terrible power of the law itself.

The Influence of Baldo's Opinion

While the importance of the specific legal issues of 1379 diminished over time and ultimately disappeared, the perceived injustice of the guild government's beheading of Donato Barbadori would live on in Florentine memory. In his *Cose fiorentine*, for example, the Florentine statesman and historian Francesco Guicciardini discussed his execution more than 150 years after it had occurred, lamenting the death of a noble and likely innocent citizen in the midst of a turbulent time for the Republic and embellishing his final, plaintive speech.⁴⁸⁸ In the margin of the text, Guicciardini, a trained jurist, wrote: "See the *consilium* of Baldo that speaks of messer Donato."⁴⁸⁹ One

⁴⁸⁸ *Cose fiorentine*, edited by Roberto Ridolfi (Florence: Olschki, 1945), 76-81.

⁴⁸⁹ Guicciardini, *Cose fiorentine*, 79, n.2: "Vedi el consiglio di Baldo che parla di messer Donato."

legal historian has seen in this reference evidence of the impact of Guicciardini's legal training on his later work as a theorist and historian, one for whom a *consilium* can transcend its strictly legal bounds.⁴⁹⁰ While this is certainly true, I prefer to see this extraordinary reference in a different light—as an intended proof of Guicciardini's point, as the opinion of a respected jurist who (after the deed was done) condemned and was repulsed by the execution. Baldo's repulsion is seen clearly in the version of the opinion that he wrote about the December 1379 conspiracy that survives in manuscript in the Vatican Library. He laments: "We turn now to Messer Donato de' Barbadori, in whose person one can cry out 'O my people, what have I done to thee?' (Micah 6:3) and also 'Why have the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things' (Psalms 2:1) and his faith was decapitated by lies and false accusations."⁴⁹¹

Although it is clear that the influence of Baldo's lament stretched into the sixteenth century, it is difficult to know the true impact of Baldo's opinion in its own time. Early in February of 1379 [80], the Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati crafted an eloquent defense of the repression of the conspiracy in a letter to Urban VI that contrasted the moderation of the city's response with the astonishing evil of the conspirators' plans, noting that "although the goods of

⁴⁹⁰ Osvaldo Cavallar, *Francesco Guicciardini giurista: I ricordi degli onorari* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1991), 4-5. Cavallar's brief description of the *consilium*, on pp.5-6, follows the headnotes of the Venetian printed editions.

⁴⁹¹ BAV, Vat. lat. 8069, fols. 364v-367v, 367r: "Quinto, respice in dominum Donatum de Barbadoris, in cuius persona dici potest deplorando popule meus, quid feci tibi et iterum quare fremuerunt gentes et populi meditati sunt inania et confictis et mendacibus allegationibus decapitata est fides eius." For the biblical quotations, I have used the Douay-Rheims translation.

the condemned had been confiscated for treason, we never allowed the sentences to be executed with respect to those goods.”⁴⁹² And although it was never common, Florentine officials continued to use the language of *maiestas* when discussing conspiracies against the city.⁴⁹³

It is also remarkably difficult to assess the influence of Baldo’s *consilium* in juridical thought. First, the opinion was not printed until the early 1490s in the Milanese *incunabulum* of Leonardus Pachel,⁴⁹⁴ and before that was circulated in manuscript in at least two forms, as I discussed above. Second, any survey of Quattrocento legal literature on the subject of treason will necessarily be capricious and impressionistic. Nonetheless, such a survey throws some light on the question, revealing that the Vatican version was more widely circulated and had greater influence in Tuscany and its

⁴⁹² ASF, Missive, 18, 109r: “quod quamvis fuissent damnatorum bona pro lese maiestatis crimine confiscata, numquam tamen passi sumus sententias exequi quo ad bona”; the full letter is also transcribed in Heinrich Otto, “Eine Briefsammlung vornehmlich zur Geschichte italienischer Kommunen in der zweiten Hälfte des Mittelalters,” *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 11 (1908): 80-146, at 103-107.

⁴⁹³ For example, the Esecutore Marino di Niccoluccio da Fermo condemned 38 persons on 2 April 1380 for committing, among many other terrible acts, “crimen lexe maiestatis contra civitatem predictam et eius regimina”; transcribed in Giuseppe Odoardo Corazzini, *I Ciompi: Cronache e documenti con notizie intorno alla vita di Michele di Lando* (Florence: Sansoni, 1887), 72-3.

⁴⁹⁴ The Pachel edition is dated 1489, but it almost certainly followed the Brescian 1491-2 edition of Boninus de Boninis Ragusius Dalmatini. The problems that accompanied the printed transmission of the *consilia* of Trecento jurists, are addressed for Bartolo (who produced far fewer *consilia* than Baldo) in Mario Ascheri, “The Formation of the *Consilia* Collection of Bartolus of Saxoferrato and Some of His Autographs,” in *The Two Laws*, 192-197. A more detailed discussion of this problem as it relates to Baldo’s *consilia* is found in the articles of Colli and Vallone cited above.

surroundings than in the Veneto, where Baldo ended his career. The Tuscan jurist Nello di Giuliano Martini Cetti (d.1430), called Nello da San Gimignano, who taught at Florence during the last two decades of his life, appears to have been the first lawyer extensively influenced by Baldo's opinion.⁴⁹⁵ In his important 1424 treatise *De bannitis*, Nello cites Baldo and regularly quotes him on the question of whether sedition against cities, like Florence, should be treated as treason; for Baldo, he says, "the name of such a crime is sedition and not *perduellio* or treason."⁴⁹⁶ In the sections where Nello quotes Baldo verbatim, it is apparent that he was using the Vatican *consilium*. In his important treatise on crime, the *De maleficiis*, the Aretine jurist Angelo Gambigliani (d.1450) devoted an entire rubric (*Et hai tradito la tua patria*) to the problem of treason understood broadly, and, on the question of whether one can commit treason through knowledge alone (*scientia simplex*), expectedly cited the Vatican version of the *consilium* of Baldo, disagreeing with it.⁴⁹⁷ Likewise, Agostino Bonfranceschi, called Agostino da Rimini (d.1479), also cited Baldo's *consilium* in his widely distributed *Additiones* to

⁴⁹⁵ On Nello and his treatise, see Anthony M.C. Mooney, *The Legal Ban in Florentine Statutory Law and the De bannitis of Nello da San Gimignano (1373-1430)* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation: UCLA, 1976), esp. 194-223.

⁴⁹⁶ Nello follows Baldo throughout *I.II., quaestio 16*, in *De bannitis* in *Tractatus universi iuris*, vol. 11; quote at 366v: "tenuit tunc Baldus consulendo ex eo quia titulus talis criminis est seditionis non perduellionis, vel maiestatis quod sic probavit."

⁴⁹⁷ Angelo Gambigliani, *De maleficiis* (Lyon, 1551), rubr. *Et hai tradito*, etc., f.79rv: "quod tamen limitat Baldus in quodam suo consilio, quod incipit quanquam allegata sint multa etc." On Angelo, see Domenico and Paolo Maffei, *Angelo Gambigliani giureconsulto aretino del Quattrocento: La vita, i libri, le opere* (Rome: Fondazione Sergio Mochi-Onory, 1994) and Giorgio Zordan, *Il diritto e la procedura criminale nel Tractatus de maleficiis di Angelo Gambigliani* (Padua: CEDAM, 1976).

Angelo's treatise. On the problem of whether treason can be committed against tyrants and princes, or only against the emperor, he notes, "and on this issue, see a beautiful *consilium* of Baldo that begins 'Quanquam allegata sint multa et plura'."⁴⁹⁸ This is the incipit of the Vatican *consilium*, and Agostino's adjective "beautiful [*pulchrum*]" is certainly fitting for that version of the opinion, in which Baldo was more attentive to rhetorical issues than in the Lucchese version.

Yet slightly later Martino da Lodi (d. 1453), who taught in Pavia, Siena, and Bologna and was one of the leading jurists in northern and central Italy during the early Quattrocento, did not cite Baldo's opinion in his very early treatise on treason, the *De criminine laesae maiestatis*, even when he addresses the question of whether one may be guilty of treason by knowledge alone (*sola scientia*).⁴⁹⁹ Similarly, the fifteenth-century Veronese jurist Bartolomeo Cipolla (d. 1475), who worked at the Paduan *Studium* and wrote a series of famous *consilia* on criminal matters, addressed the familiar question of whether treason could be committed against a city, in this case Faenza, and

⁴⁹⁸ *Additiones Augustini de Arimino ad Angeli Aretini De maleficiis tractatum*, printed in Angelo de' Gambiglioni, *De maleficiis* (Lyon, 1551); quotation at ff.78v-79r: "Et in hac materia vide unum pulchrum consilium Baldi quod incipit quanquam allegata sint multa et plura." On Agostino, see the entry "Bonfranceschi, Agostino" in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. 12 (Rome, 1970), 32-4.

⁴⁹⁹ *De crimine laesae maiestatis*, in *Tractatus universi iuris*, ff. 22v-23v. On Martino, see the brief biographical sketch in L. Frati, "Martino de Garati da Lodi," *Archivio storico lombardo* 6 (1919): 322-25 and Ingrid Baumgärtner, *Martinus Garatus Laudensis: Ein italienischer Rechtsgelehrter des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1986). The treatise has also been attributed falsely to the French jurist Pierre Rebuffe (d.1557), as in *Tractatus varii Petri Rebuffi* (Lyon, 1619).

if a confiscation of goods could occur after death.⁵⁰⁰ One is not said to commit treason, Bartolomeo declares with certitude, “if he is a rebel or betrayer against an inferior of the emperor or against a city, except Rome, because cities stand in the place of private persons.”⁵⁰¹ To support this claim, he cites the *lex Eum qui vectigal* (D.50.16.16) and other sources, but not Baldo’s opinion, even though he uses similar language. Later in the opinion, Bartolomeo does cite Baldo’s commentary on the *lex Si quis nummos* (D.38.2.3.4) to the effect that counterfeiting the money of such a city would be treason, which seems at odds with the main thrust of Bartolomeo’s argument and, indeed, Baldo’s *consilium*.⁵⁰²

In his legal commentaries, Baldo had given to the emperor an extraordinary and unique dignity; this is perhaps nowhere clearer than in his

⁵⁰⁰ *Consilium* 17 in Cipolla, *Consilia criminalia* (Venice, 1555), ff. 37v-42r. On Bartolomeo, see the biographical sketch in O. Ruffino’s entry “Cipolla (Caepolla, Cepola, Cepolla, Cevola, Zevola), Bartolomeo (Bartolomeo da Verona, Bartholomaeus Veronensis),” in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 25 (Rome: Istituto della enciclopedia italiana, 1981), 709-13. On the importance of Bartolomeo in Quattrocento Venetian jurisprudence, see Aldo Mazzacane, “Lo Stato e il Dominio nei giuristi veneti durante il ‘secolo della terraferma’,” in *Storia della cultura veneta*, vol. 3 (Vicenza: Nero Pozza, 1980), 595-605. His *consilia* have not received the attention they deserve, but see, for example, Giuliano Marchetto, “Il *matrimonium meticulousum* in un *consilium* di Bartolomeo Cipolla (ca. 1420-1475),” in *Matrimoni in dubbio: Unioni controverse e nozze clandestine in Italia dal XIV al XVIII secolo*, ed. Silvana Seidel Menchi and Diego Quaglioni (Bologna: Mulino, 2001), 247-278.

⁵⁰¹ Cipolla, *Consilia criminalia*, f.39r: “si est rebellis vel proditor contra inferiorem ad imperatorem vel contra civitatem excepta romana, quia alie civitates habentur loco privatorum.” This holds even in the case of a city “quae non recognoscit superiorem, sicut est civitas Florentina, ut no. Bar. in l. hostes (D.49.15.24), circa fin. ff. de capti.”

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, 39v.

treatment of the *lex Si ab hostibus* (I.1.12.5), where, following Bartolo closely, he declares: “Anyone who stubbornly says that the emperor is not lord and king of the whole world should be counted as a heretic because he speaks against the opinion of the Church and the text of the gospel which says, ‘there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that [the whole world] should be enrolled, etc. (Lk. 2:1),’ for Christ himself recognizes the Emperor when he says ‘Render therefore to God, the things that are God’s; and to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s (Mt. 22:21).’”⁵⁰³ But in his commentaries he had also held that free and self-governing cities (“qui vivunt in propria libertate et absolute proprio regimine”) did not require the authority of a superior, even if only by virtue of custom (“consuetudinis prescriptae”).⁵⁰⁴ His rationale was, essentially, *de facto*: because the cities no longer obey Caesar (“cum civitates non obediunt Caesari”), the superior no longer has power over them.⁵⁰⁵ While he never went as far as Bartolo, Baldo believed that a *civitas* like Florence could fill the place of the *princeps*, even if it could never attain the *suprema*

⁵⁰³ Baldo ad I.1.12.5, in *Commentaria ad quatuor Institutionum libros* (Lyon, 1585), f. 10v: “Dicendum est ideo, quod si aliquis eorum diceret pertinaciter Imperatorem non esse dominum, et monarcham totius orbis, esset censendus haereticus, quia dicit contra determinationem ecclesiae, et contra textum evangelicum qui dicit Exiit edictum a Caesare Augusto ut describeretur etc (Lk. 2:1). nam Christus recognoscit Imperatorem cum dixit reddite quae sunt Dei, Deo, et quae sunt Caesaris Caesari (Mt. 22:21)”. I have used the Douay-Rheims translation for the biblical passages, modifying appropriately. Here Baldo followed Bartolo’s commentary on the *lex Hostes* (D.49.15.24), which was much copied, as noted by E. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1957), 466, n.42.

⁵⁰⁴ Baldo ad C.7.46.2

⁵⁰⁵ Baldo ad C.9.12.17.

potestas of one.⁵⁰⁶ If not the *suprema potestas*, though, Baldo in certain lectures did argue that a free city could at least possess something like the *maiestas* that had been translated from the *populus romanus* to the Emperor himself.⁵⁰⁷ This ambiguity is especially clear in Baldo's commentary on the *lex Si quis nummos* (C.9.24.2), where he discusses counterfeiting and argues: "I should say that in such a city it would be a crime like treason (*simile lese maiestatis*) if any subject of that city were to counterfeit its coinage; I say subject because a non-subject does not commit the crime of treason."⁵⁰⁸

In the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Florentine lawyers adopted arguments like these and established in the *populus florentinus* and its Signoria the "force and majesty associated with the *princeps* of the law books."⁵⁰⁹ In practice, they defined a "political entity which acknowledged no superior in temporal affairs, at the same time claiming a *fiscus*, a subject territory, and an unlimited right to make its own laws."⁵¹⁰ This precious freedom and power would survive, essentially unchallenged until the sixteenth

⁵⁰⁶ On this point, see Canning, *Political Thought*, 115-6, and Magnus Ryan, "Bartolus of Sassoferrato and Free Cities," 65-89.

⁵⁰⁷ Canning, *Political Thought*, 122, misconstrues Baldo's opinion on *maiestas* to imply that Baldo believed such cities possessed the same *maiestas* as the emperor.

⁵⁰⁸ In *Lectura in VI-IX libros Codicis* (Lyon, 1498), f.370v: "Dicerem in civitate ista quod esset crimen simile lese maiestati, si quis subditus istius civitatis falsaret istam monetam. Ideo dico subditis [sic?] quia non subditus non incidit in crimen lese maiestatis."

⁵⁰⁹ Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft*, 425.

⁵¹⁰ Martines, *Lawyers and Statecraft*, 430.

century, when Charles V's control over Duke Cosimo I would prompt Tiberio Deciani to say that "the emperor is superior and lord, so the republic is not free as it once was."⁵¹¹

The Case of Tommasino da Panzano

Less than a year after the repression of the December 1379 plot, another case would draw Baldo's attention to Florence and its precarious guild government, and this opinion would also seem to problematize Baldo's clarity on the issue of *maiestas*. On 15 September 1380, Messer Giovanni di Mone, ambassador of the republic of Florence, was murdered in Arezzo. A grain dealer who had more than once been drawn as prior and gonfaloniere, Giovanni had served as one of the so-called "Eight Saints" in 1376, was knighted by the Ciompi in 1378, and continued to serve the subsequent and short-lived guild government until his death.⁵¹² When word of Messer Giovanni's death reached Florence, says the chronicler Stefani, it came to be considered the "most disgraceful and unruly thing that had ever been done,

⁵¹¹ Tiberio Deciano, *Responsa* (Venice, 1602), III, 19, quoted in Danilo Marrara, "I rapporti giuridici tra la Toscana e l'impero (1530-1576)," in *Firenze e la Toscana dei Medici nell'Europa del '500* (Florence: Olschki, 1983), v. 1, 223: "imperatorem esse superiorem et dominum, ergo Republica non est libera ut prius erat."

⁵¹² ASF, Tratte, 223, *passim*; R. C. Trexler, "Who were the Eight Saints?" in *Renaissance News* 16 (1963): 89; DIARIO D'ANONIMO, 73.

because no other ambassador had ever been killed by Florentines.”⁵¹³ Among the three assassins who assaulted and stabbed him was Tommasino da Panzano, who had arrived in Arezzo one day earlier along with Charles of Durazzo, who had been received “with every royal honor” by the Aretines and denounced in a Florentine *pratica* on the same day as a “public enemy” and “enemy of the regime.”⁵¹⁴ Along with the killers, Charles had brought a small army, including hundreds of mounted soldiers and a band of more than fifty Florentine exiles and conspirators, led by Lapo da Castiglionchio, many of whom had been implicated in the plot to overthrow the government nine months earlier.⁵¹⁵ In an assembly on 15 September, Francesco Cambi, a fervent supporter of the government, called for the priors to “make sure, using every means, that the murder of messer Giovanni di Mone be punished and his memory honored.”⁵¹⁶ In a stern measure, the priors declared Giovanni di Mone’s murder an “unspeakable wickedness and abominable crime” and the perpetrators “sons of Satan” who should be killed; the government also proclaimed that if Tommasino were not dead within one year his male relatives

⁵¹³ STEFANI, rubr. 870, 379: “la più sconcia cosa mai fosse fatta, perocchè mai non fu più morto ambasciadori per Fiorentini.”

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*, rubr. 869, 378: “con ogni onore reale”; ASF, CP, 19, f. 59v: “quod Dominus Karolus est inimicus istius status,” and f. 60r, “quod Dominus Karolus est hostis publicus.”

⁵¹⁵ The Florentine plotters with Charles are listed in ASF, CR, 13, 137rv; compare with the list of those condemned in ASF, Capitano 1198, 55r-56r, discussed above.

⁵¹⁶ ASF, CP, 19, f. 63v: “Quod Domini provideant per omnem modum quod occisio Domini Johannis Monis puniatur et honoretur sua memoria.”

would also be condemned as rebels of the commune.⁵¹⁷ His memory was, indeed, honored days later with a public funeral, but the punishment would have to be deferred.⁵¹⁸ Fearing war with Charles, the Florentines agreed to pay 40,000 florins for a peace pact, which required Charles to stop harboring Florentine exiles and to refrain from interfering with Florence and her subject towns. In the words of the pact, Charles, who had been a public enemy, would become “as his ancestors had been, protector and benefactor of the city of Florence.”⁵¹⁹ The murder of Messer Giovanni would finally be avenged on 20 January 1381, when Giovanni di Messer Luca da Panzano killed his cousin, the murderer Tommasino, in a Sienese inn. Hoping to avoid becoming a rebel and having been promised a reward, Giovanni had become an assassin for the republic.⁵²⁰ In a measure two months later, the priors and Otto di Guardia praised and rewarded Giovanni for the killing, explaining that, by murdering the ambassador, Tommasino had become a rebel of the commune, and was thus liable to be killed by citizens of Florence.⁵²¹

⁵¹⁷ ASF, PR, 69, ff. 131v-133r: “nefandum scelus et abominabile delictum... satane filios...”; Stefani, *Cronaca*, rubr. 889, 387.

⁵¹⁸ For the Florentine response, see STEFANI rubr. 871, 379; ANONIMO, 417; and the diplomatic letter of 17 September to Charles of Durazzo in ASF, Missive, 19, f. 47r.

⁵¹⁹ ASF, CR, 13, 136r-139r (along with related documents at 139v-143v): “erit prout fuerunt eius progenitores protector et benefactor] civitatis Florentie.”

⁵²⁰ Tommaso Strozzi, one of the leaders of the guild government, was also accused of having paid someone in Lapo da Castiglionchio’s household in Rome to poison him; STEFANI, rubr. 890, 387, and ASF, Missive, 19, ff.100r-101v.

⁵²¹ ASF, PR, 256r-257v, “Octo Balie et custodie Civitatis Florentie in favorem Johannis domini Luce de panzano.”

In these days, the tumult of politics could dissolve even the strong, affective bonds of pre-modern Italian kinship, setting cousins like Giovanni and Tommasino against each other, and even fathers against sons.⁵²² In a *consilium sapientis* in support of Giovanni's reward, Baldus addressed this very issue. "He is not said to be a fratricide who, driven by the fervor of public love and desiring the protection of his native homeland, kills a savage enemy of it."⁵²³ Indeed, Baldus argued, the kinship between them is annulled and the enemy is cut from the republic like a diseased limb; and since such a person deserves to be killed, his killer deserves a payment "that should be called 'the reward for an extraordinary service' as in the *lex Si pater* (D. 39. 5. 34)."⁵²⁴ But Bartolo had signaled an opposing argument in his commentary on the *lex Si adulterium § Liberto* (D. 40. 5. 39[38]. 9). He opened his discussion of that law, which asks whether a freedman can kill his patron with impunity if he catches him in adultery, by presenting the opinion of the thirteenth-century jurist Dino del Mugello, who had held that "if a statute says that anyone can kill a banned person with impunity, it will not allow a son to kill his banned father, nor a

⁵²² For example, Benedetto di Simone Peruzzi, whose condemnation is discussed above, was famously denounced by his father in his account book for his treasonous activities against the guild government; Armando Sapori, ed. *Libri di commercio dei Peruzzi* (Milan: Treves, 1934), 522.

⁵²³ Baldus, *Consilia*, III.264 (Milan, 1489), n.f.: "Qui fervore publice caritatis pro tutela naturalis patrie accensus cruentissimum eiusdem patrie hostem occidit non dicitur fratricida..." There is no extant manuscript of this *consilium*; the Milanese edition is therefore the most authoritative version.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*, "merces enim eximii laboris appellanda est, ut ff. de don. l. si pater." In support of his assertion, Baldus also offered other relevant citations, namely D. 37. 1. 13, D. 37. 4. 1. 9, D. 3. 4. 5. 9, D. 28. 2. 29. 5, D. 11. 7. 35, and D. 3. 27. 1-2.

freedman his patron, nor a vassal his lord.”⁵²⁵ In disagreement with Dino, Bartolo observed that such a situation was addressed in Todi, where it was said that a son could even kill his father if banned. He accepted the view that a patron caught in adultery is still a patron, “but this is not so in the case of a banned person, who is made an enemy and deserter of his city... and he is lost to his son just as he is lost to his city”.⁵²⁶ This doctrinal conflict between Dino and Bartolo was deftly reconciled by Baldus in his *consilium*. Bartolo’s commentary on *Si adulterium § Liberto*, he explained, “concerns an enemy who committed treason (*hostem ex crimine lese maiestatis*), as here, and another enemy who was banned because he primarily harmed a private person and secondarily harmed the republic”; and since the contrary opinion is speaking about “one to whom the city is an enemy” and “not one who is an enemy to the city,” his own argument about the reward stands.⁵²⁷ A person to whom the city is an enemy because he fell under the ban for a primarily private offense (as, presumably, in Dino’s opinion) cannot be killed by his son with impunity. If Tommasino had been an enemy of this sort, then Giovanni would have been bound by kinship not to kill him and would not have

⁵²⁵ Ad D. 40. 5. 39(38). 9, in *Super infortiato et digest novo* (Bologna, 1971 rpt), n.f.: “quod si contineatur in statuto quod quilibet possit impune occidere exbannitum quod non ideo filius ex vigore predicti statuti possit patrem occidere nec libertus patronum nec vasallus dominum”.

⁵²⁶ *In secundam Digesti Novi partem* (Venice: 1590), f. 162v: “Nam licet hic libertus reperiat patronum in adulterio, remanet tamen patronus et habet iura patronatus, sed non hic in exbannito, qui efficitur hostis et transfuga civitatis l. Amissione § Qui deficiunt, ff. de cap. dimi (D. 4. 5. 5. 1) et sicut is perditur civitati, ita perditur filio l. Postliminium § Filius ff. de cap. et postlim. rever. (D. 49. 15. 19. 7).”

⁵²⁷ Baldus, *Consilia*, III.264, n.f.: “...sed refert inter hostem ex crimine lese maiestatis ut hic et alium hostem qui est diffidatus quia offendit principaliter privatam personam et secundo offendit rem publicam de quo cui civitas est hostis sed non ipse civitati de quo loquitur Bartolus.”

deserved the reward paid by the Otto. But Tommasino is an enemy of the other kind, an enemy to the city, an enemy “ex crimine lese maiestatis,” and thus Giovanni was rightly rewarded. In this *consilium*, Baldus did not extensively address the question of whether Tommasino, in addition to being a rebel and enemy of the commune, was also guilty of treason; but he did at least imply in his discussion of Bartolo’s opinion that he was. Baldus had a repertoire of steering assumptions, philosophical principles, and a consistent working method throughout his works, even when the *solutiones* necessarily hinged on particulars; it is thus entirely possible that, if he had explicitly addressed the issue, he would have held that Tommasino could not commit treason against Florence for the reasons presented in the earlier *consilium*. Yet the possible discrepancy between Baldus’s two opinions, which were probably first written within a year of each other, is nonetheless meaningful because it makes clear that the question of whether Florence possessed *maiestas* and could be the object of treason was still open to juristic interpretation.

The power of the Florentine regime when Baldo wrote these opinions was regularly threatened within the walls of the city and outside them, by elite Florentine families, by disgruntled workers, and by foreign princes and their armies. Mobs subverted the procedures of the courts and threatened the lives of judges; the priors lived in a state of siege and dispatched assassins to kill enemies of their regime. Nonetheless, Gene Brucker has accurately described the Florentine guild government of 1378-82 as the “closest approximation to the corporate ideal that Florence was ever to experience,” and a commitment to legality was fundamental to that ideal and to the motivating ideology of the

Florentine *popolo*.⁵²⁸ At moments of emergency, such regimes asked jurists to serve as trusted third parties and honest brokers to resolve troubling politico-legal issues. In response, jurists like Baldo blended legal principles and pragmatic attention to specific circumstances in order to fashion solutions that conformed to the *ius commune*, respected legitimate political authority and lawfully-enacted governmental measures, and afforded legal protection to citizens and subjects. When judges are menaced by armed mobs, when suspicion and fear govern the men entrusted with preserving the republic's welfare, and when possibly innocent citizens are condemned to death, law may seem to be nothing more than a flimsy rationalization or, worse, a convenient instrument of injustice. In such a time, though, Baldo's strict adherence to the law and his ability to speak freely as an "oracle of the law" provides refuge. In such a time, we should look to Baldo's opinions, crafted with consummate skill by a jurist who believed in the sacred character of law, because they attest to the abiding dignity of law as a human institution, one that although imperfect aims in the words of Ulpian to be the great "ars boni et aequi."

At its moment of greatest weakness, the Florentine guild government cloaked itself in the language of Roman imperial power and *maiestas*. This fiction is blatant when discussing weak and precarious regimes like that one, but the ways in which later regimes, ones far less committed to law, in Florence and elsewhere, adopted and employed this rhetoric to mask or justify their illegal abuses of power and erode the fragile authority of the law are more subtle and thus more dangerous. As the power of these regimes increased,

⁵²⁸ *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton, 1977), 46.

the authority of jurists decreased, and the history of the jurisprudence surrounding the *crimen laesae maiestatis* is thus an essential site for an examination of this process. What F. W. Maitland famously said of treason in medieval England, that it is a “crime which has a vague circumference and more than one centre,” was also true of *laesa maiestas* in Trecento Italy.⁵²⁹ This vagueness gave to jurists the freedom to defend the rule of law against the capricious and unrestrained power of political regimes, a freedom they would not enjoy two or three centuries later, when the authority of jurists as oracles of the law had been greatly diminished and the power of such regimes greatly enlarged, when, in other words, the sphere of *laesa maiestas* (and, as a result, of state power) was less like Maitland’s and more like the terrifying, disorienting, and all-encompassing sphere described in a different context by Pascal, “whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere.”⁵³⁰

⁵²⁹ Frederic W. Maitland and Frederick Pollock, *The History of English Law before the Time of Edward I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899), II, 503.

⁵³⁰ *Pensées and Other Writings*, trans. Honor Levy (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 66; on this metaphor, see Borges, “The Fearful Sphere of Pascal,” in *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*, edited by Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby (New York: New Directions, 1962), 189-92.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

List of *ammoniti* compiled from several sources (see note 177 at page 96).

In the absence of official lists of *ammoniti* from September 1377 through April 1378, one must assemble a (necessarily faulty and to some extent capricious) list from the available chronicle sources—STEFANI, rubrics 770, 775, and 788, MONALDI, 511-514, and ANONIMO, 336-53—which can be collated, along with the official lists of persons drawn for office and declared *ammonito* or *ghibellino*, located in ASF, *Tratte*, 595, for example at ff. 57-59r, and searchable in the ONLINE TRATTE. Stefani's lists are the most complete. Aside from some variation in spelling (e.g., Gianni for Giovanni), the lists in STEFANI rubr. 770 and 775 are identical, sharing 69 names. On the basis of other sources, it is clear that "Ammodeo di Frate Grigio da Barberino (rubr. 770) is the same person as "Ramondo fratello di Giorgio da Barberino" (rubr. 775), and that "Francesco di ser Tingo Rocchi" (rubr. 770) and "Francesco di ser Arrigo Bocchi" (rubr. 775) are as well. The list in STEFANI 788 contains 23 names, for a total of 92 in Stefani's Chronicle. 41 names are added from MONALDI, ANONIMO, and ONLINE TRATTE, marked respectively [M], [A], and [T]. The 133 named *ammoniti* are : Agnolo di Giovanni di ser Lotto, Agnolo Palarcione [A and M], Alberto di ser Lapo da Barberino, Albizzo di messer Filippo da Barberino [ser] (notaio) [R], Alessandro dell'Antella [messer] [M], Alessandro di Benedetto Gucci [T], Amaretto di Zanobi Mannelli, Amaretto di Zanobi Pontigiani [T], Amedeo di Frate Grigio da Barberino OR Ramondo brother of Giorgio da Barberino, Andrea di Betto Filippi (San Iacopo Oltrarno

A), Andrea di Feo (lanaiuolo) (lastraiuolo M), Andrea di Iacopo di Collino
 Grandoni (lanaiuolus T), Antonio d'Agnolo Mazza (corrazzaio) [M], Attaviano di
 Dino Attaviani, Attaviano di Geremia di ser Tano (Attaviano di ser Tino Della
 Casa T), Baldassare di Giovani Nucciboni [or: di Nuccio Boni], Baldo Coppini
 da Vicchio (di Mugello A) (da Borgo a San Lorenzo M), Banco di Tosco [Tosto
 T] (rigattiere), Bancozzo di Giovanni di ser Bartolo Catenacci (tintore AM, San
 Iacopo tra fosse A), Bartolommeo di Iacopo di Giambernardo Adimari,
 Benedetto di Geri del Bello, Bernardo di messer Covone [T], Bettino di messer
 Covone Covoni, Bonafede di ser Piero Aringhieri[ser] [T], Cantino d'Agnolo di
 Monna Checca (popolo di San Lorenzo), Ceo Cei (speziale) [M], Cinozzo di
 Piero Agli (notaio), [ser], Como Federighi da Signa (Santa Trinita A),
 Cristofano di ser Bartolo Nevaldini da Barberino (notaio) (Santa Maria in
 Campo A) [ser], Davanzato di Naccio di Contro Guidi (galigaio), Diedi di ser
 Francesco Fei [ser], Diedi, brother of Miniato de' Libri [ser] [M], Domenico de'
 Gualzelli (fornaio) [A], Donato del Ricco [Aldighieri] [Gherardi M] (giudice)
 (San Romeo A), [messer], Dono di Lotto (vinatterius) [T], Duccio Dietaiuti
 Gualzelli, Filippo di Maso [di Iacopo M] Mangieri Mauvoli da Ognano, Filippo di
 Ugo (spetiarius) [T], Forese di Francesco Adimari, Forese di messer Forese di
 Guido Benzi [A], Francesco Bartoli Baldoni (bottaio), Francesco di Benedetto
 Gucci (quartiere di San Giovanni) (lanaiuolo A), Francesco di Bonaccorso
 Alderotti (San Felicie A), Francesco di Cino Rinuccini, [messer], Francesco di
 Geremia di ser Tano, Francesco di Geri (ferraiuolo), Francesco di Giovanni di
 Buonaccorso Alderotti [R], Francesco di Iacopo del Bene [M and T],
 Francesco di Lippo di ser Bonaventura Bonaiuti (setaiuolo A), Francesco di
 Niccolò called "Bate" [or: Abate A] (orafo M) (da Poggibonsi A), Francesco di
 ser Arrigo Rocchi [Bocchi M], Francesco di ser Donato [Fazzi] (speziale),

Francesco di ser Iacopo Cecchi da Signa, Francesco di Ventura (lanaiuolo) (in Baldracca A), Francesco Vigorosi, Giorgio di messer Francesco Scali [T], Giovanni Ciari [or Cia A] (quartiere di Santo Spirito) (ritagliatore A), Giovanni d'Aldobrando del Ricco (popolo di Santa Maria Maggiore), Giovanni d'Amerigo del Bene, Giovanni del maestro Neri da Barberino (giudice) (da Poggibonsi A) [messer], Giovanni di Luigi Mozzi, Giovanni di Mancino Sostegni, Giovanni di messer Scolaio di Berto da Petrognano (giudice) [messer], Giovanni di Piero Palarcioni, Giovanni di Piero Parenti (quartiere di San Giovanni) (corazzaio AM), Giovanni di Riccardo Cerchi [R], Giovanni di Ruberto Ghini (popolo di Santa Trinita) (in Porta Rossa A), Giovanni di ser Rucco (quartiere di S. Croce) (lanaiuolo A), Giovanni di ser Ugo Orlandi [R], Giovanni di Tura Dini, Giovanni Dini (speciale), Guido di Caccialoste Guidi Trinciavelli, Iacopo d'Amerigo del Bene [A], Iacopo di Bonafè (popolo di S. Pier Maggiore) (mercator T), Iacopo di Vanni (ritagliatore) [T], Lapo di Guido di Fabro Tolosini, Lionardo di Rinieri Rustichi, Lorenzo Capogrosso [M], Lorenzo di Giovanni Lottini (lanaiuolo A), Lorenzo di maestro Dino medico (da Ulena M), Luigi di Poltrone Cavalcanti, Manente [or: Monte] di Amedeo [Buon-]Cristiani (lanaiuolo A), Manieri di Giovanni Chiarissimi Bilenchi (notaio) (tavoliere A) [ser], Martino di maestro Dino medico, Maso di Neri (funaiuolo, quartiere di San Giovanni), Matteo di Bonaccorso Alderotti (S. Felicie in piazza A), Matteo di Giovanni di Meglio Bonarli [R], Mazza d'Andrea (corazzaio), Meo di Bartolo Cocchi, Mese di Guccio (corregiarius) [T], Michele di ser Vanni di ser Ugolino di ser Dino da Castiglione (da Cascia M), Nastagio di ser Francesco (popolo di San Simone), Niccolò del Ricco (lanaiuolo), Niccolò di Bocchino [Rimbaldesi], Niccolò di Filippo Soldani [T], Niccolò di Giovanni di Meglio Bonarli (San Frediano A), Niccolò di Lodovico Ricciardi [R], Niccolò di Lodovico Ricciardi

Cerchi, Niccolò di Manetto Tecchini [R], Niccolò di Neri Macinghi [T], Niccolò di ser Ventura Monachi [ser] [R], Niccolò di ser Ventura Monaci [Monachi T], [ser], Niccolò di Zanobi di Rinieri Rustico [A], Niccolò di Zuccherò (campor) [T], Nofri di Simone dell'Antella, Nofrio di Giovanni di Meglio Bonarli, Nozzo di Vanni Manetti [T], Nutino di Pontone [Fantone] di Giraldo da Ognano, Piero di Donato (spetiarius) [T], Pierozzo di Francisco (speziale, San Filicie) [A], Pietro Donati dal Sambuco (speziale M), Ricco [ser], "che era tratto priore" [M], Salvestro d'Andrea di Chiarissimo [or: Chiarissimi] da Barberino (called Tragualza A) (in charge of gabelles AM), Sandro Muletti da Panzano (popolo di San Niccolò) (sensale M), Santi de' Ricco (San Iacopo tra le fosse) [A], Scarlatto di Nuto Scarlattini (popolo di San Fr[ed]jano), Simone di Gabbriello di ser Simone (beccaio), Simone di Monte Grimaldi [M], Simone' di Palmieri (vasaio, quartiere di S. Spirito) (vaiaio A), Simone di ser [messer M] Benedetto di Martino Petri da Santo Ellero (da Castiglione A), Simone di Vanni Meccere (popolo di San Lorenzo), Stefano Brunacci (lanaiuolo), Stefano di Bindo Benini [or: Del Benino] [Bernini M] (quartiere di Santa Croce), Tommaso di Giovanni Cocchi [T], Tommaso di Lippo Soldani, Tommaso di Luigi Mozzi [T], Tommaso di Pazzino (bilanciaio) ("che fa i saggiuoli A), Tommaso d'Ugolino di Vieri (speziale), Ugolino di Bonsi [Bonzi M] (speziale, popolo di San Fr[ed]jano), Vanni di Pontone [Fantone] di Giraldo da Ognano, Vieri di Niccolò Bocchini [T], Zanobi del Truffa (ritagliatore A), and Zanobi di Neri Macinghi [T]. In addition to the individual names, five entire families are named as *ammonite*, "la casa de' Covoni" [M], "la casa de' Manelli" [M], "la casa de' Mozzi" [M], "la casa de' Soldani" [M], "tutta la casa Tolosini" [M]; and a group of individuals described as follow but not actually named: "tutti i consorti" of Meo di Bartolo Cocchi [M], "tutti que' del lato" of Nofri di Simone dell'Antella [A], the brothers

of Francesco di ser Iacopo Cecchi da Signa [A], the consorts of messer Alessandro dell'Antella, one person from the contado, "da Monte Lupo" [M], one of the Davanzati [M], and Santi de' Ricco's brother (San Iacopo tra le fosse) [A].

Appendix 2

List of *confinati* from 30 August 1378. Source: Archivio di Stato di Firenze, *Capitoli, registri*, 12, f. 86rv. Note: *The places of confinement are given after the name; I have supplied the Italian version in parentheses only where the Latin version is significantly different.*

Bonaiutus ser Belchari de Serraglis, Peseri
Nicholaus Gerii de Soderinis, Trivisii
Nicolaus Sandri de Bardis, Ferrarie
Antonius Niccoli Cionis Rodulfi, Viterbii
Ubertus Schiatte Rodulfi, Arimini
Dominus Johannes ser Fruosini, Forilivii (*Forli*)
Bettinus d[omini] Bindaccii de Ricasolis, Ancone
Simon Rainerii de Peruçis, Spoleti
Iohannes Iacobi de Giugnis, Mutine (*Modena*)
Pierus Masini de Antilla, Fulginei (*Foligno*)
Dominus Iacobus Pieri de Sacchettis, Tuderti (*Todi*)
Dominus Benghi de Bondelmontibus, Perusii (*Perugia*)
Alexander domini Francisci de Bondelmontibus, Rome
Bartolus Ionannis Siminetti, Mantue
Andreas Segnini Baldesis, Bononie (*Bologna*)
Filippus Blaxii de Stroçis, Castelli (*Città di Castello*)
Ser ~~Dona~~ Taddeus Donati de Marchis, Neapoli
Bingerius Iohannis de Oricellariis, Parme
Ciprianus Lippoççii de Mangionibus, Mediolani (*Milan*)

Perus Iohannis de Tornaquincis, Faventie (*Faenza*)
Pepus Marignani de Bondelmontibus, Verone
Franciscus Donati de Marchis, Esculi (*Ascoli*)
Carolus Stroçe de Stroçis, Ianue (*Genoa*)
Pierus Filippi de Albiçis, Venetiis
Masus Luce de Albiçis, Barlette
Iacobus domini Francisci de Paçis, Brixie (*Brescia*)
Giovenchus domini Lotterii de Filicharia, Manfredonie
Verius domini Pepi de Adimaribus, Aquile
Piggellus domini Loisii de Cavicciulibus, Padue
Attavianus Boccaccii de Brunelleschis, Eugubii (*Gubbio*)
Iacobus Bartolomei de Medicis, Regii

2a. Preliminary list of *confinati* from 25-27 August 1378.

Source: Archivio di Stato di Firenze, *Capitoli, registri*, 12, f. 81v. Note: The *confinati* were voted upon by 127 representatives of the government and its magistracies.

Bonaiuto ser Belcharo Serragli

Nicolo Soderini

Niciolo di Sandro de Bardi

Antonio di Nicolo di Cione Ridolfi

Uberto di Schiatta Ridolfi

Messer Giovanni di ser Fruosino

Bettino di messer Bindaccio da Ricasoli

Symone di Rinieri Peruçi

Giovanni Giugni

Piero di Masino Dellantella

Messer Iacopo Sacchetti

Messer Benghi Bondelmonti

Alexandro di messer Francesco Bondelmonti

Bartolo di Giovanni Siminetti

Andrea di Segnino Baldesi

Filippo di Biagio degli Stroçi

Ser Taddeo di Donato Marchi

Bingieri di Giovanni di Bingieri

Cipriano di Lippoço Mangioni

Pero Tornaquinci
Pepo di Marignano Bondelmonti
Francescho di Donato Marchi
Carlo degli Strocçi
Piero di Filippo degli Albiçi
Iacopo di Messer Francescho de Paçi
Giovencho di messer Lottieri da Filichaia
Vieri di Messer pepo Adimari
Piggello di Messer Luigi Cavicciuli
Attaviano di Bocchaccio Brunelleschi
Iacopo di Bartolomeo de' Medici

Appendix 3

List of persons condemned on 30 January 1379[80]

Source: ASF, Atti del Capitano del Popolo 1198, ff 55r-56r

Note: The numbering does not appear in the original.

- 1 Dominum Lapum olim Lapi de Castiglionchio populi Sancti Remigii de Florentia
- 2 Dominum Iohannem Pocciam Bectoli de Coppolis de Perusio
- 3 Benedictum Simonis de Peruççis populi Sancti Jacopi inter foveas de Florentia
- 4 Adouardum Bartolomei de Pulcis populi Sancti Petri Scheraggi de Florentia
- 5 Bernardum Lippi Cionis del Cane populi Sancti Fridiani de Florentia
- 6 Iohannem Bartoli Cennis de Biliottis populi Sancti Felicis in piaçça de Florentia
- 7 Nicolaum Brunetti populi Sancte Trinitatis de Florentia
- 8 Dominum Albertum Pepi Antonii de Albiçis populi Sancti Petri Maioris de Florentia
- 9 Marianum Landi Antonii de Albiçis populi Sancti Petri Maioris de Florentia
- 10 Iohannem Guereri Tribaldi de Roscis populi Sancte Felicitatis de Florentia
- 11 Pigellum] fratres et filios quondam Domini Loigii de Adimaribus populi Sancte Marie
- 12 Talanum] Nepotecose de Florentia

- 13 Tomassum quondam Raneri de Cavalcantibus populi Sancte Lucie
Omnium Sanctorum de F.
- 14 Bartolomeum olim Niccoli Ridolfi populi Sancti Michaelis Berteldi de
Florentia
- 15 Cennem quondam Naddi de Rucellariis populi Sancte Marie Novelle de
Florentia
- 16 Nicolaum Iacopi de Bordonibus populi Sancti Michaelis Berteldi de
Florentia
- 17 Bernardum Iacopi de Beccanugis] populi Sancti Michaelis
- 18 Loigium vocatum Mostone filium dicti Bernardi] Berteldi de Florentia
- 19 Iacopum Bartolomei et Domine Nicolose de Medicis populi Sancti Tomasi
de Florentia
- 20 Dominum Guidonem Silvestri Bandere populi Sancti Petri Maioris
- 21 Simonem Andree vocatum Morello] populi Sancti Pauli de Florentia
- 22 Bartolomeum filius dicti Simonis]
- 23 Iacopum Teste vocatum Testinella populi Sancti Petri Maioris de Florentia
- 24 Mateum Turini vocatum Teo populi Sancti Laurentii de Florentia
- 25 Mateum Scilti populi Sancti Fridiani de Florentia
- 26 Bingerium Peri de Rocellariis populi Sancti Pranchatii [sic] de Florentia
- 27 Dominichum Bonaiuti vocatum Bonaiuti Dança populi Sancti Laurentii
[comitatus Florentie
[a Vicchio
- 28 Checchum] fratres et filios Vannini populi Sancte Felicitatis de
Florentia
- 29 Guidonem]

- 30 Canbium Iohannis vocatum Carnacino populi Sancti Nicolai de Florentia
- 31 Çanobium Montini tesitorem populi Sancti Ambrogii de Florentia
- 32 Lucarinum petinatorem populi Sancti Georgii de Florentia
- 33 Checchum Çanobii vocatum Ghinazzo populi Sancte Marie a P[e]retola
- 34 El Maçça tesitorem populi Sancti Ambrosii de Florentia
- 35 Nannem Ghutii populi Sancti Ambrosii de Florentia
- 36 Simonem vocatum Compare populi Santi Fridiani de Florentia
- 37 Francischum Sixti vocatum Lomperio scardaçierem populi Sancte Lucie
Omnium Sanctorum [de Florentia
- 38 Testam fratrem Macinelle populi Sancti Fridiani de Florentia
- 39 Basilium] fratres et filios Matei populi Sancte Lucie
OmniumSanctorum de Florentia
- 40 Abraamum]
- 41 Ormannum olim de Padua habitantem populi Sancti Ambrosii de Florentia
- 42 El Fredura habitantem in via a San Gallo de Florentia
- 43 Lucam Melani populi Sancti Pieri Gatolini de Florentia
- 44 Michaellem Giufredi veneditorem [sic] populi Sancte Trinitatis de Florentia
- 45 Doninum de Sancto Donino petinatorem populi Sancti Fridiani
- 46 Antonium vocatum Cateratti populi Sancti Laurentii
- 47 Antonium Recche populi Sancti Ambrosii de Florentia
- 48 Antonium vocatum Lombardo Schamantini habitantem a San Gallo de
Florentia
- Omnes et quemlibet ipsorum proditores et rebelles communis Florentie et
homines male conditionis vite et fame contra quos et quemlibet eorum per
modum et viam inquisitionis processimus, *etc.*

Appendix 4

Roster of the Personnel of the Guild Government in January 1379[80]

Source: ASF, Capitoli, Registri, 12, ff. 89r-90v

Note: The names are left here, as in the original, in the ablative case; I have supplied my own headings and translated occupations in parentheses.

The Priors:

Christofano Bartholi vaiario (*furrier*)
Bartholo Lapuccii cardatore (*wool napper*)
Angnolo Donati Barucci
Arigio Biondi cimatore (*wool shearer*)
Georgio Gucci Dini Guccii
Laurentio Puccii Cambini [*oliandolo, oil dealer*]
Francischo Jacobi coraçario (*armorers*)
Simone ser Matthey Biffoli

The Standardbearer of Justice:

Francischo Terii becchario (*butcher*)

The Sixteen Gonfalonieri:

Niccholao Johannis de Uçano

Bartholo Betti bicchiarario (*dish maker*)
Mattheo Lugli feratore (*iron worker*)
Michaele Lapi spetiario (*apothecary*)
Ceffo Venture Ceffii farsettario (*doublet maker*)
Çenobio Taddey Borghini
Francischo Spinelli vaiario (*furrier*)
Lapaccio Ammoniti tintore (*dyer*)
Alesso Francisci Borghini
Biecho Teghie linaiuolo (*linen draper*)
Batino Cambiuççi magistro (*stoneworker*)
Gregorio Barducci linaiuolo⁵³¹ (*linen draper*)
Cenne Marchi albergatore (*innkeeper*)
Ser Guccio Francisci Andree
Dominico Pieri vaiario (*furrier*)
Bartholo Guiducci balisterio (*crossbowman*)

The Twelve Buonuomini:

Pegolotto Francisci Balducci [setaiuolo, *silk merchant*]
Johannes Çenobi magistro (*stoneworker*)
Guido Justi farsettario (*doublet maker*)
Jacobo Niccholai Riccialbani (SC)
Niccholao Cambini linaiuolo (*linen draper*)
Francischo Gosi linaiuolo (*linen draper*)
Baldese Turini Baldesis

⁵³¹ ONLINE TRATTE has “Lanifex” (*lanaiuolo, wool manufacturer*) instead of “linaiuolo”.

Mattheo Pacini legnaiuolo (*carpenter*)
Agostino ser Pieri galligario (*tanner*)
Jacopo Bonafedis mercatore (*merchant*)
Micchaele Francisci Lippi setaiuolo (*silk merchant*)
Micchaele Giobbi becchario (*butcher*)

Captains of the Parte Guelfa (ending 19 January):

Ridolfo Jacobi Guerucci
Franciscus Saliti linaiuolo (*linen draper*)
Panicho Angeli Panichi
Bartholomeo Leonis Simonis
Iacomino Goggii campsore (*money changer*)
Manetto Iannis de Spinis
Anthonio Francisci sartore (*tailor*)
Guidone domini Thomasii Nerii Lippi
Michaele Landi [*probably scardassiere, wool carder*]

Captains of the Parte Guelfa (beginning 19 January):

Anthonio Marigniani Sassolini
Bartholomeo Ristori coregiario (*armorers*)
Filippo Taddey Donati lanaiuolo (*wool manufacturer*)
Salvi Laurentii cimatore (*wool shearer*)
Piero Lençi ritagliatore (*cloth cutter*)⁵³²
Anthonio Gherei albergatore (*innkeeper*)

⁵³² ONLINE TRATTE has “Lanifex” (lanaiuolo, *wool manufacturer*) instead of “linaiuolo”.

Nofrio Johannis Bartholi Bischari

Angnolo Pauli Perini biadaiuolo (*grain dealer*)

Ristoro Cionis magistro (*mason*)

The Ten of Liberty (*Dieci della Libertà*):

Mattheo Niccholi Corsini

Johanes Tinghi calçolario (*shoemaker*)

Fantino Tegnie ritagliatore (*cloth cutter*)

Simone Vespuccii

Dominico Matthey galigario (*tanner*)

Piero Andree chiavaiuolo (*locksmith*)

Piero Cecchi rigatterio (*cloth cutter*)

Leonardo Neri ser Benedicti

Francischo Ricchi tintore (*dyer*)

The Eight of the Watch (*Otto di Guardia*):

Ugolino Bonsi spetiario (*spice merchant*)

Bruno Pauli ferratore (*ironworker*)

Domino Francischo milite de Rinuccinis

Simone Cini legnaiuolo (*wood worker*)

Jacopo Ubaldini Fastelli

Johannes Taddei Bencii linaiuolo (*linen draper*)

Guidone domini Thomasi Neri Lippi

Piero Francischi becchario (*butcher*)

The Nine of Mercanzia:

Bindo Lapi Gili

Johannes Montis becchario (*butcher*)

Leonardo Bartholini

Dominico Francischi

Scarlatto Nuti Scarlattini

Leonardo Bellincionis saponario (*soap maker*)

Johannes Cambii de Medicis

Francischo Renaldi galigario (*tanner*)

Londo Baldovini spetiario (*spice merchant*)

The Capitadini of the Guilds:

Giudici e notai (*judges and notaries*):

Ser Francischo Masini *and* Ser Nicholao ser Pieri Gucci

Kalimala (*international merchants*):

Niccholao Vannis Ricoveri *and* Thomasio Monis Guidetti

Cambio (*money changers*):

Leonardo Bartholini Salimbenis *and* Bardiccio Cherichini

Lana (*wool*):

Thomasio Pieri Parigii *and* Bartholomeo Lorini Bonaiuti

Por Santa Maria (*silk*):

Filippo ser Johannis *and* Johannes Lençi

Medici e Speciali (*doctors and apothecaries*):

Carroccio Caroccii spetiario (*apothecary*) *and* Stefano Miglioris borsario (*purse maker*)

Vaiari e Pellicciai (*furriers*):

Piero Lapozzi vaiario (*furrier*) *and* Francischo Brunaccii pellipario (*skins dealer*)

Beccai (*butchers*):

Jacopo Montis *and* Laurentio Matthey Perini

Calzolari (*shoemakers*):

Benedicto Tendi de Carlone *and* Tolomeo Cecchi Bocchini

Fabbri (*blacksmiths*):

Johannes Ugolini coltellinario (*knifemaker*) *and* Donnino dominici maliscalco (*farrier*)

Linaiuoli e Rigattieri (*linen drapers and used cloth dealers*):

Lapaccino Tosi linaiuolo (*linen draper*) *and* Benino Guccii linaiuolo (*linen draper*)

Maestri di Pietro e Legname (*masons and wood workers*):

Mattheo Gerii fornaciario (*oven maker*) *and* Johannes Fecti magistro (*mason*)

Vinatieri (*wine sellers*):

Piero Fantonis *and* Berio Ricchuccii

Albergatori (*innkeepers*):

Simone Tuccii *and* Blasio Garduccii

Oliandoli e Pizzicagnoli (*oil and wax and sausage and cheese sellers*):

Lodovico Andree [pizzicagnolo, *sausage and cheese dealer*] *and* Migliore

Gherardi [pizzicagnolo, *sausage and cheese dealer*]

Cuoiai e Galligai (*leather workers*):

Filippo Gardi [galigaio, *leather worker*] *and* Francischo Angeli [pezzaio, *leather cutter*]

Corrazzai e Spadai (*armorers and sword makers*):

Nuto Vannis *and* Salvi Nuti

Correggai (*belt makers*):

Bartholo Micchaelis *and* Mese Guccii

Chiavaioli (*locksmiths*):

Jacopo Ricci *and* Laurentio Simonis

Legnaioli (*carpenters*):

Francischo Bartholi schodellario (*bowl maker*) *and* Verio Guidonis

Fornai (bakers):

Johannes Rote *and* Piero Pauli Tondi

Farsettai e Cimatori (doublet makers and wool shearers):

Jacobo Micchaelis del Rosso cimatore (*wool shearer*) *and* Anthonio Johannis
cappellario (*hatter*)

Tintori, etc. (dyers, etc.):

Romolo Buoni tintore (*dyer*) *and* Bino Bini remendatore (*wool sewer*)

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