



Katalin Prajda

# Network and Migration in Early Renaissance Florence, 1378-1433

## Friends of Friends in the Kingdom of Hungary

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*Friends of Friends in the Kingdom of Hungary*

*Katalin Prajda*

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# Introduction

‘Friendship is useful to the poor, gracious to the lucky,  
comfortable to the rich, necessary to families,  
to principalities and to republics.’<sup>1</sup>

In February 1426, Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi, one of the ambassadors to Sigismund of Luxembourg, King of Hungary, departed from the city of Florence for Buda with Nello di Giuliano Martini da San Gimignano, the jurist doctor. Upon their arrival, they stayed at the house of the Florentine Nofri di Bardo de’Bardi, officer of the royal mint. During their visit, the ambassadors contacted several other Florentine merchants who worked in different areas of the Kingdom of Hungary. Meanwhile, they arranged a meeting with the King; they also greeted Hungarian dignitaries of Florentine origins, among them the bishop, Giovanni di Piero Melanesi, and the baron, Pippo di Stefano Scolari. Rinaldo and Nello were welcomed at the residence of Pippo Scolari, key figure of the Florentine community in Buda. Pippo and Rinaldo, one of the leaders of the dominant Albizzi faction, were political allies and neighbours back in Florence, but an even stronger reason for the invitation might have been the fact that the two men were about to become in-laws due to the upcoming engagement between Rinaldo’s eldest son and one of Pippo’s nieces. In Ozora, the ambassadors admired the general splendour of Pippo’s castle, and met the Florentine woodcarver, Manetto Amannatini, who was employed at that time as the baron’s architect. On their way back to Florence, Rinaldo and Nello were accompanied by servants of other Florentines living in Hungary; the servants carried messages for them and guaranteed their safety within the borders of the Kingdom.<sup>2</sup>

During Sigismund of Luxembourg’s reign, many Florentine citizens were drawn to work in the Kingdom of Hungary for various economic and political reasons. Analyzing the social network<sup>3</sup> of these politicians, merchants, artisans, royal officers, dignitaries of the Church, and noblemen is the primary objective of this book. The Florentines’ network in Hungary,

1 ‘[...] Lamicizia sta utilissima a’ poveri, gratissima a’ fortunati, comoda a’ ricchi, necessaria alle famiglie, a’ principati, alle republiche [...]’ Alberti, *Della famiglia*, p. 106.

2 *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, II, pp. 552-594.

3 A social network, in my understanding, is a group of individuals linked together in pairs by a single type of relation. In its more complex multiple-network form, these individuals are interconnected by multiple, overlapping types of relations.

discussed in the book, was concentrated at its centre on one catalytic figure: the Florentine-born Pippo Scolari and his most intimate male relatives. I believe that these three men, Pippo, his youngest brother, Matteo, and their cousin, Andrea Scolari, had the most significant influence on Florentines' migration to the Kingdom of Hungary during the first three decades of the fifteenth century. This concentrated network structure was a result of the centralized political system in the Kingdom of Hungary, dominated by the royal court and its members. Pippo, as baron of the *aula regis*, obtained a social status, incomparable to those of his Florentine contemporaries, which allowed him to elevate others in his network.

The success of the network can be seen in the various ways in which its members were connected to each other and especially to the centre of the network. Some of these individuals developed weak ties among each other, characterized by a single type relation to one of the key figures of the Scolari family; meanwhile others established strong ties with them by multiple links of kinship, marriage, politics, neighbourhood, and business partnerships. I shall refer to members of this network as 'friends', defining in this way the existing personal connections set among them by their common political interests, neighbourhood proximities, marriage alliances, kinship ties, patronages, and company partnerships.

In the literature, there has been much research dedicated to simple historical networks and how they affect various public and private spheres. More rare are those historical case studies, which allow us to trace back the impact of a multiple set of relations. In this book, I shall look both descriptively at patterns of connectivity and causally at the impacts of this complex network on cultural exchanges of various types, among these migration, commerce, diplomacy, and artistic exchange. In the setting of a case study, this book should best be thought of as an attempt to cross the boundaries that divide political, economic, social, and art history so that they simultaneously figure into a single integrated story of Florentine history and development.<sup>4</sup>

## Historical Networks

The complexity of relations built among individuals has been a subject for network scientists for decades. One of the pathbreaking studies in this field was by anthropologist Jeremy Boissevain, titled *Friends of Friends*, a

4 Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, p. XIV.

network-centred analysis of Malta's society, published in 1974. By challenging the traditional view, which saw man as a member of a social group, society, or institution, Boissevain proposed to take a closer look at the network of relations that defines social space. He suggested that social groups must be understood as networks of choice-making individuals, rather than faceless abstractions.<sup>5</sup>

More than thirty years later, Paul Douglas McLean used the title of Boissevain's book as the chapter title in his monograph that dealt with strategic interaction and patronage in Renaissance Florence. McLean presented there an exhaustive analysis of the rhetoric used in letters of recommendation and how such letters were employed as a constitutive means to connect friends to friends of friends.<sup>6</sup> Throughout his study, he concentrated on networking as a social process, but actors in the networks played only a secondary role in his argument. As McLean has pointed out, 'Friendship (*amicizia*) was the loosest and the most ambiguous framework Florentines had at their disposal to apply to a multitude of different relationship constructions.'<sup>7</sup> These relations, in his understanding, were embedded in various sets of networks of politics, kinship, marriage, and business, a phenomenon previously little studied by specialists. Building upon Richard Trexler's claim, McLean argued that Florence, indeed, was a society of friends.<sup>8</sup>

McLean started his career with social scientist John F. Padgett, the first scholar to apply methods of network science to Florentine Renaissance history. In his article, addressing the robustness of Cosimo de' Medici's social circle, Padgett analysed quantitative data of considerable size, obtained from secondary literature, to show the organizing principles that governed the two competing political parties of the pre-Medici era.<sup>9</sup> Since then, Padgett's interest has shifted towards original archival sources and his most recent works are concerned with the complexity of Florentine networks, embracing politics, society, and economics during the time span which expands from the Ordinances of Justice (1282) to the end of the Republic (1530). Padgett's primary focus is to uncover historical processes connected to socially embedded inventions.<sup>10</sup> As part of this inquiry on the numerous inventions that emerged in Renaissance Florence, Padgett has opened

5 Boissevain, *Friends of Friends*, pp. 7-9.

6 McLean, *The Art of the Network*, p. 152.

7 Ibidem, p. 15.

8 Ibidem, p. 152. 'Networks of friendships were the building blocks of social discourse and of politics [...]' Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, p. 139.

9 Padgett and Ansell, 'Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici'.

10 Padgett, 'Transposition and Refunctionality', p.168.

important discussions about the technical novelties in Florentine trade and banking, such as the evolution of the credit system.

In their co-authored paper, *Economic Credit in Renaissance Florence*, Padgett and McLean, following Ronald Weissman's definition of friendship, discuss the concept of 'instrumental friendship', meaning both that Florentines tended to form friendship ties with their business partners, and that doing business together usually provided solid ground for the formation of friendships.<sup>11</sup> Padgett and McLean also argued that the concept of friendship was different in Florence than it is today. 'Florentine friendship was more ritualized and stereotypical and less a unique meeting of unique souls than we believe modern friendship to be.'<sup>12</sup> Therefore, friendships between businessmen, by Padgett and McLean's definition, commonly implied economic transactions or even partnership ties.

Florentine friendships also extended beyond business. Anthony Molho, in his book on nuptial ties among Florentine elite families, has interpreted marriages as 'alliances' and strategic choices of adult male members of two families, which they made in order to strengthen their social relations. Marriage ties, therefore, in a more abstract sense, might be seen as indicators of friendship bonds between individuals and their nuclear families.<sup>13</sup> Molho has also established the social elite of early Renaissance Florence to be around 410 families, with a core of 110 families, which were mainly engaged in trade and were eager to build personal relations among each other.<sup>14</sup> Some of these lineages traced their history only to the beginnings of the Albizzi period.

On the subject of neighbourhood, studies conducted by Nicolas Eckstein, Francis W. Kent, and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber have demonstrated that several of these prosperous lineages tended to cluster into well-defined areas within the city, a feature particular to the medieval urban landscape, which remained an organizing principle in the early fifteenth century.<sup>15</sup> As

11 'The Renaissance need for friendship and kinship extended far beyond the need for companionship. The fragmented nature of the Renaissance city and the Renaissance economy made recommendations, introductions, and access to networks of reliable third-party contacts and networks of friends of friends necessities.'. Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*, p. 28. Padgett and McLean, 'Economic Credit in Renaissance Florence'.

12 As McLean has conceptualized it: 'Friendship was a relation in which both affection and interest were implicated.'. McLean, *The Art of the Network*, p. 152.

13 Molho, *Marriage Alliance*. The contemporary Leon Battista Alberti talked about *coniugale amicitia*. See Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, p. 93.

14 Molho, *Marriage Alliance*, Index.

15 Eckstein, 'Neighborhood as Microcosm'. Ibidem, *The District of the Green Dragon*. Kent, *Household and Lineage*. Ibidem, 's and Neighborhood'. Klapisch-Zuber, 'Parenti, amici e vicini'.

Eckstein has put it: 'In Florence, sociability and the physical environment were symbiotically linked.'<sup>16</sup> Therefore, neighbourhood proximity might also be considered as an indicator of friendship ties among nuclear families, likely interwoven with other social ties, as well, like economic cooperation, marriage, and political alliance.

Finally, studies have revealed that political alliances often came about from neighbourhood proximity, which served as solid grounds for the formation of friendships among individuals and their nuclear families.<sup>17</sup> In today's societies, close links between political actors, business, and kin are sometimes related to the activities of corrupt underground organizations that aim to control, by their social network, local and even international politics and the economy. In early Renaissance Florence, these intersections, as we shall see throughout the analysis, were part of everyday practice.<sup>18</sup> In Florentine social units, actors worked in continuous interaction with each other, through economic, kinship, political, and neighbourhood ties, to create a multi-stranded multiple-network of friends.

Despite their innovative approach to the complex ways Florentines were linked to each other, scholars have not exhausted the possibilities in the analysis of these networks. Renaissance Florence, even for McLean, has provided only a case study for unveiling networking processes, rather than a historical subject itself.<sup>19</sup> Besides Padgett's studies, research that combines sources of social, economic, and political history and that make use of quantitative as well as qualitative methods, have not reached convincing conclusions so far. The fourth most important sphere in which Florence proved to be a centre of innovation in the early Renaissance period was the visual culture. This book, therefore, proposes to add artistic networks to Padgett's multiple-network array of kinship, economics, politics, and neighbourhood.

Therefore, by merging the scientific results of the studies mentioned above, the present monograph addresses the questions of network and migration on four levels: politics, economy, society, and the arts. It takes as

16 Eckstein, 'Neighborhood as Microcosm', p. 220.

17 Kent, *The Rise of the Medici*.

18 'Ties of friendship, residence, and kinship were absolutely necessary for social and psychic survival, but such ties were not without great hazard. The dense network of Renaissance social bonds placed great strain on such relations. One's brother, neighbour, or friend was also likely to be a business partner, competitor, client, fellow district taxpayer, and potential challenger for communal office or local prestige.' Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*, p. 29.

19 McLean, *The Art of the Network*, Chapter 1.



a starting point the hypothesis that Florentine elite society was a network of friends of friends, constituted primarily by merchants who belonged to the 410 families established by Molho. They formed business partnerships, marriage ties, neighbourhoods, and political alliances among each other and also turned into the most important patrons of the visual culture.

## Sources and Structure

In a way similar to Peter Burke's comparative study on the social elites in Venice and Amsterdam, this book adopts a prosopographical approach.<sup>20</sup> Its narrative is composed of short histories of single Florentine families and organized into chapters according to their social relations to catalytic figures of the network. The genealogies themselves are structured around brief biographies of those family members who established social links to the Scolari or to their most immediate relatives and who were related in some way to the Kingdom of Hungary. Family histories include factors like provenience, political status and political participation, trade, neighbourhood, as well as wealth of the lineage.<sup>21</sup> This information has helped me reconstruct the social status of the individuals studied, along with their political influence, and the spatial connectedness to the families they allied with. The genealogies also mention if the family had any previous connections to the Kingdom of Hungary. The biographies address the same issues on the level of individuals, emphasizing also possible career models they might represent.

The book opens with a chapter on Florentine networks in early Renaissance Europe, particularly in the Kingdom of Hungary, to provide the reader with a short comparative history of Florentine businessmen abroad and to place the Scolari's social network into a broader historical context. The next chapters deal with the four possible circles of the social network, centred on the catalytic family. The centre of the network, that is, the history of the Scolari family, provides the subject of the second chapter. Meanwhile, the third chapter links those families that shared either blood or marriage ties with them. The subsections discuss those families related to Scolari relatives

<sup>20</sup> Burke, *Venice and Amsterdam*, p. 14.

<sup>21</sup> As Burke has pointed out, merchant-entrepreneurs tended to continuously invest their money into business, instead of keeping it safely in immovable properties, like feudal lords. Therefore, assessing their wealth based on their tax declaration may not entirely represent the reality. *Ibidem*, pp. 48-49.

by marriage or kinship ties. The fourth chapter examines the existing ties between the Scolari and those families whose members became the Scolari family's trusted men in the Kingdom of Hungary, but with whom they might not have shared any blood ties.<sup>22</sup> In the fifth chapter, we follow the development of personal ties between the Scolari and some of the leading artisans of the time who carried out commissions for them either in Florence or in Hungary. The book concludes with some remarks about the correlation between network and migration.

The terms *amico* ('friend') and *amicizia* ('friendship') are rarely present in sources concerning the history of Florentines in the Kingdom of Hungary. One obvious explanation might be that only a very limited number of documents of private interests survived from the persons being studied. Because of this and because of the availability of well-researched studies on the subject, more theoretical discussions about friendship will be omitted. However, the book discusses several conceptual problems with setting the case study of Florentines in Hungary within a broader framework that embraces key questions of the early Renaissance historiography.

By doing so, the present study intentionally exhibits signs of literal-mindedness, and builds its claims on a massive quantitative and qualitative data set, obtained from primary written documents. The archival sources cited in the analysis are predominantly housed in the National Archives in Florence (*Archivio di Stato di Firenze*). A smaller number of archival materials came also from the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest (*Magyar Országos Levéltár*), the National Archives in Venice (*Archivio di Stato di Venezia*), the National Archives in Treviso (*Archivio di Stato di Treviso*), the Vatican Secret Archives (*Archivio Segreto Vaticano*), the Archives of the Ospedale degli Innocenti in Florence, and from the Archives of the Fraternità dei Laici in Arezzo.

I incorporate into the present study the results of more than a decade of research in the Florentine Archives, occurring between 2004 and 2017. During this period, I systematically went through all the major archival units, which included material regarding the so-called Albizzi period (1382-1434). Information on the political participation of Florentines and the diplomatic relations of the Republic with foreign powers come mainly from the fonds of *Consulte e Pratiche, Signori, Dieci di Balìa*, and the *Otto di Pratica* and *Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica*. The secret councils of the *Consulte e Pratiche* were the most important forum for members of the political elite

22 For the definition of first and secondary network zones, see: Boissevain, *Friends of Friends*, p. 24.

to discuss the foreign policy of the city. The 31 registers, which cover the period, have been retained as sources of primary importance in determining the political activity of the studied families and other noted individuals by providing an extensive database of all the speakers in the history of the secret councils, starting from 1348. The fonds of the Signori, like the volumes of the secret councils, called the *Consulte e pratiche*, was produced by the Florentine chancellery, and it is divided into various sub-fonds, including several sections dedicated to the letter exchanges between the chancellery and the outgoing ambassadors. Similarly, three separate fonds of the Signori, *Dieci di Balìa*, and the *Otto di Pratica* and Signori, *Dieci di Balìa*, *Otto di Pratica* deal with foreign policy and ambassadorships.

Besides the registers of the secret councils and the various materials on Florentine embassies, the matriculations of the five major guilds – Merchants' (*Arte di Calimala*), Por Santa Maria, later Silk (*Arte di Por Santa Maria*), Wool (*Arte della Lana*), Moneychangers' (*Arte del Cambio*), and Doctors' (*Arte dei Medici e Speziali*) – helped me analyse political activity and influence, as well as create a list of those who held guild offices. However, out of the five, only four guilds have surviving statutes, matriculations, and registers of the guild consuls. Most of the persons in this study belonged to the Merchants and Por Santa Maria Guilds, but only the Wool Guild has more diverse archival material, which includes court cases (*Atti e sentenze*) as well.

I have also used the corresponding volumes of the Merchant Court (*Mercanzia*) to see the elections for the consuls of the Court. These documents have proven to be essential in the reconstruction of business activity. The hundreds of volumes produced by the Merchant Court during the time period will not be studied thoroughly in a project of this size. Nonetheless, I have sporadically checked the most promising sections of its collection, including the correspondence of the Merchant Court, acts produced in ordinary (*Atti in cause ordinarie*) and extraordinary cases (*Atti in cause straordinarie*), and the money deposits made by individual merchants and companies (*Libri di depositi*).

The image of individual business activity will also be drawn based on original tax declarations of Florentine citizens, including the two earliest complete city censuses of 1427 and its corrections in 1429/31 and in 1433. Thanks to the groundbreaking quantitative work of David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch, the first *Catasto* has been the subject of numerous studies over the decades; the second *Catasto*, no less important and accurate, has remained marginal to the historiography.<sup>23</sup> By creating a database

23 Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans et leur familles*.

comparable to the 1427 Catasto, I have managed to obtain statistical information on the entire population of the city as well as on the single families and individuals included in the present study.<sup>24</sup> The database comprises information on the total assets (*sustanze*) of the households, their tax (*catasto*) or stipulated tax (*composto*), household size (*bocche*), and their location (*gonfalone, popolo*). The data will be compared to a similar database on the 1378 Estimo, one of the earliest complete tax records. I have completed the three databases: the speakers of the secret councils, the 1433 Catasto, and the 1378 Estimo, in the framework of John F. Padgett's research projects between 2007 and 2013.

Similarly, it was part of his project to catalogue the companies listed in the 1433 Catasto. With this, I could reconstruct business ties as well as establish the total number of partnerships mentioned as operating in Buda, compared to the number of Florentine companies set up in other cities.<sup>25</sup> The various family archives also offered material of considerable quantity on business and inheritance. From this point of view, the fragmented Scolari archives, located among the documents of the Badia firolana (*Corporazioni Religiosi Soppressate dal Governo Francese*), the Del Bene, the Guadagni, the Pitti (*Ginori-Conti*), the Medici (*Mediceo avanti il Principato*), the numerous documents regarding the Buondelmonti family (*Diplomatico, Rinuccini*), and the Carte Stroziane are probably the most significant collections.

In several cases, I could identify the notaries who worked for various members of the network and the documentation (*Notarile Antecosimiano*), which mainly concerns inheritance, marriage, and dowry. For questions of inheritance and legal rights, the registers of the city officers supervising the inheritance of minors (*Magistrato dei Pupilli avanti il Principato*), as well as the repudiations (*Repudie di Eredità*) and emancipations (*Notificazione di Atti di Emancipazione*) proved to be crucial.

Because of the scarcity of documents regarding the Por Santa Maria Guild, into which silk manufacturers were most commonly enrolled, I have also consulted the surviving account books of those silk manufacturing companies that are housed by the collection of the *Ospedale degli Innocenti*. In this way, I have managed to piece together fragments that show the ways silk manufacturers, entrepreneurs, and goldsmiths worked together in producing high-quality silk fabrics for the domestic and the international market.

<sup>24</sup> *Online Catasto of 1427*.

<sup>25</sup> Earlier, a similar database was created by Paul McLean which catalogues companies of the first Catasto.

Primary written sources of a lesser number came also from the Venetian National Archives regarding those Florentine merchants who had business interests both in the *Stato da Mar* and in the Kingdom of Hungary. Venetian documents of an economic nature are far less varied and voluminous than their Florentine counterparts. The only collection that might shed some new light on Florentines' trade is that of the court cases of the *Giudici di Petizion*.

The Vatican Secret Archives and especially the collections of the *Registri Vaticani* and *Registri Lateranensi* have preserved sources on Hungarian-Florentine dignities of the Church. This collection also includes documentation on Florentine businessmen who served popes as collectors of ecclesiastical revenues and worked as bankers in the papal court. Some of these references have already been published by Pál Lukcsics, covering the period between 1417 and 1431; meanwhile others remain only in manuscript, inaccessible to the wider public.<sup>26</sup>

Most of the sources located in the Hungarian National Archives have already been edited by the research team of the Magyar Medieviztikai Kutatócsoport, currently based in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Their indispensable series, titled *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár*, includes all the documents produced during the period between 1387 and 1426 of Sigismund of Luxembourg's reign in Hungary. These documents were issued mainly by the royal chancellery and other *loca credibila* and are limited to topics concerning property ownership, royal privileges, and office holdings. For the remaining eleven years of Sigismund's reign, until 1437, I have used the database that incorporates the indexes and guides of the Hungarian National Archives about the archival material produced before the Ottoman Occupation (1526).<sup>27</sup>

Besides the already mentioned unpublished Italian documents, a considerable number of quantitative and narrative sources have appeared in printed form, which provided me with further details on the lives of some of the individuals in this study. Among the databases, the one of Florentine office holders, edited by David Herlihy, Robert Burr Litchfield, Anthony Molho, and Roberto Barducci, provided additional information on political participation and, in some cases, even on births.<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, the documentation on Venetian privileges, obtained by strangers and collected

26 *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*. In the nineteenth century, Vilmos Fraknói conducted research in the Vatican Secret Archives concerning our period. Tumor, *Magyar történeti kutatások a Vatikánban*.

27 *A középkori Magyarország levéltári forrásainak adatbázisa*.

28 *Online Tratte of Office Holders*.

by Reinhold C. Mueller, proved to be useful in the reconstruction of the circle of the Florentines who settled in Venetian territory.<sup>29</sup> Among the narrative sources are various Florentine and other north Italian chronicles as well as the already lost travel accounts of Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi, ambassador to Sigismund of Luxembourg in 1426.<sup>30</sup>

While the book draws mainly on a wide range of primary archival material, it also uses, to the extent possible, visual sources ranging from decorative arts to architecture, located either in Tuscany or Hungary. These objects might allow us to get a sense of the role the Scolari network played in cultural exchange between early Renaissance Florence and Sigismund's Hungary.

## Centres and Peripheries

Because of the impressive social-structural, scientific, and artistic novelties that emerged precisely during the decades when the story of this book takes place, I will use as a key chronological term the 'Early Renaissance', emphasizing the importance of these innovations in the narrative.<sup>31</sup> In this period, Florence is undoubtedly considered to be a major innovative centre, which may allow it to claim some importance in world history.<sup>32</sup>

Peter Burke argues that the terms 'centres' and 'peripheries' should be applied within the context of the European Renaissance only by referring to a given historical context, for example, to the spread of a style. From this particular point of view, the Tuscan state was, without question, the centre and the Kingdom of Hungary constituted a remote periphery.

However, by using a more global understanding of the relations between the Florentine Republic and the Kingdom of Hungary during the Early Renaissance period, many aspects beyond artistic innovation could be considered, including diplomacy and international politics, so the question of centre and periphery might seem an anachronism. It might project back onto the unbalanced political-economic power relations between contemporary eastern and western Europe. The terms 'East' and 'West' often appear in scientific discourses on the Renaissance in the modern sense – the central West and the peripheral East.

29 *Civesveneciarum*.

30 *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*. III. The manuscript has various fragmented copies, produced in a consecutive period. ASF, CS, 79; 81.

31 On the scholarly debate about the use of the terms 'Late Medieval' and 'Early Renaissance', see Burke, *Changing Patrons*, pp. 2-3.

32 Padgett, 'Transposition and Refunctionality', pp. 168-169.

Linguistic and archival limitations might also explain why the Kingdom of Hungary, despite its important role in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century European politics, is underrepresented in Renaissance European historiography. Martyn Rady, in his book on medieval Hungary, underlines: 'Hungary's medieval greatness is hardly matched by its documentary *Nachlass*.'<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, the Hungarian language of most of the secondary literature is inaccessible to many, making it complicated for outsiders to get a more accurate sense of the history of medieval Hungary.

Even though the present study is unquestionably Florence-centred, it discusses relations with the Kingdom of Hungary as politically non-egalitarian and culturally ambiguous, since they were built between a Tuscan republic, which was governed by merchants, and a major European kingdom, which was ruled by the soon-to-be Holy Roman Emperor. By framing the relations with Hungary in this way, this study reflects a compromise between Burke's centre-periphery concept and Rady's definition of Hungary's importance in European history.

## Names of Individuals and Places

In most of the scientific works dealing with Renaissance history, it might purely be a technical question how names of individuals and places appear within the text. In studies discussing the history of the Carpathian basin before the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1918), however, such a seemingly minor issue always carries with it another notion, the nationalization of the story to be told. The territory of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary today forms an integrated part of various neighbouring nation-states, so historians use the names of medieval places and persons according to their own linguistic traditions, which might lead to misinterpretations and inaccuracy.

Martyn Rady, one of the very few scholars of medieval Hungary, who could hardly be accused of being partial in his nationalistic sentiments, consequently uses Hungarian names for places that fall beyond the actual borders of the present-day Hungary, but he excludes those located in what is now Croatia, which then was a subject of the Hungarian crown through a personal union. In the case of places located in contemporary Hungary, the reader will find their names as they appear in specialist scholarship

33 Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service in Medieval Hungary*, pp. 8-9.



dealing with the medieval Kingdom.<sup>34</sup> As for the others, which fall beyond the borders of today's Hungary, I retain their current names only if we have written information at our disposal that they already existed as early as Sigismund of Luxemburg's reign.<sup>35</sup> The rest of the names will appear in Latin, the administrative language used in the Kingdom, denationalizing in this way the issue as much as possible.<sup>36</sup> Their current names will be mentioned in brackets, facilitating their identification in the secondary literature.

As for personal names, Rady has translated kings' names into English, which I am going to follow. However, he also converted the names of Hungarian noblemen into English, adding the 'of' to their family names in place of the Latin *de* or the Hungarian *I* or *Y* suffixes.<sup>37</sup> This step may considerably facilitate reading for the English-speaking audience, but it may also make it challenging to find these persons in scholarly literature. To avoid this, I am going to write their names in Hungarian, except those who originated from either the Kingdom of Croatia or the Dalmatian Coastline.<sup>38</sup>

Finally, I shall call the state that existed in the Middle Ages the Kingdom of Hungary, distinguishing it from the current national state of Hungary. Although Florentine merchant society during the studied period was ethnically and linguistically far less varied than Hungarian society, tracing layers of identity in the case of Florentines living in Hungary is highly problematic. Therefore, discourse on identity will also be omitted. The terms 'Florentine' and 'Hungarian' appearing in the book will always refer to political belonging rather than to ethnicity. In the second case, the category shall include all subjects of the Hungarian crown, regardless of their ethnicity and linguistic traditions: Croats, Germans, Hungarians, Serbs, Slovaks, and Vlachs, in order to produce a story of inclusion.

34 For example, *Fehérvár* and not *Székesfehérvár*.

35 See, for example, the town of Kremnica (Körmöcbánya in Hungarian) in Upper Hungary, today in Slovakia, inhabited mostly by Slovaks already in that period.

36 Medieval Oradea (today Romania), named *Várad* by the Hungarian-speaking population, will be mentioned by its Latin name; *Varadinum*.

37 For example, Lawrence of Ják and John Hunyadi. See Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service in Medieval Hungary*, pp. 99, 116.

38 For example, instead of Tallóci Matkó, who was of Ragusan origins, the reader will find Matko Talovac.





# I Florentine Networks in Europe

‘A Florentine who is not a merchant,  
Who has not traveled through the world,  
Seeing foreign nations and peoples and  
Then returned to Florence with some wealth,  
Is a man who enjoys no esteem whatsoever.’<sup>1</sup>

## Florence During the Albizzi Regime (1382-1434)

Robert Sabatino Lopez described twelfth-century Italian communes as ‘Governments of the merchants, by the merchants, for the merchants’, which accurately reflects the most important characteristic of the Florentine state and society in the studied period: the predominance of merchant culture and its manifestations in the overlaps between various private and public spheres.<sup>2</sup>

According to John Najemy, the period of the Albizzi regime, marked by political consolidation after the unskilled wool workers’ revolt (1378) and Cosimo de’Medici’s return to the city (1434), witnessed important changes in social structure, economy, politics, and culture.<sup>3</sup> In politics, the most remarkable novelties occurred in the electoral system, when the number of elected city officers, who belonged to the major and the minor guilds, was established. Political participation and office holding were based on guild membership, and therefore guilds were part of the political system. Members of the five major guilds possessed an absolute dominance within city magistrates, even though, in theory, the reforms following the *Ciampi* revolt meant to weaken their positions by giving more seats to members of the minor guilds. The five major guilds: Merchants’ (*Calimala*), Por Santa Maria (later, Silk), Wool (*Lana*), Moneychangers’ (*Cambio*), and Doctors’ (*Medici e Speciali*), were headed by their elected consuls and were the guilds into which merchants of various ranks traditionally enrolled. Furthermore, the six consuls of the Merchant Court (*Mercanzia*), the supreme court for merchants residing inside and outside the city, were elected among members of the five major guilds. The elections for the most important city offices,

1 For the translation of Goro Dati’s words see: Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, p. 102.

2 Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages*, p. 70.

3 Najemy, *A History of Florence*, Chapters 7-9.

the governing *Signoria*, were organized instead according to the four city quarters and sixteen gonfalons. A gonfalon was, in the sense of domestic politics and settlement, the most important organizing structure in the city, having the function of a neighbourhood.<sup>4</sup> The eligibility for city offices started at age 21, and two priors of the government were elected from each of the quarters. The Standardbearer of justice (*gonfaloniere di giustizia*), that is, the ninth member of the *Signoria*, was of foreign origins. While guild consuls covered their offices for four months, members of the *Signoria*, rotated in every two months to avoid the possibility of one member of the government gaining a leading position. Because of these rapid changes in the composition of the government, the priors were accompanied by members of the Colleges (*collegi*), which included the Twelve good men (*dodici buonomini*) and the sixteen Standardbearers of the urban militia (*gonfalonieri di compagnia*), who were elected, in a similar way, from the sixteen gonfalons.

The priors had the decisive role in domestic as well as in international politics; meanwhile, the Colleges, together with a restricted group of citizens who were the core of the politically active elite, could express their opinion in two distinct political platforms. The legislative councils, the Council of the Popolo and the Council of the Commune, were registered in the *Fabarum volumes* and during the Albizzi period comprised about 360 active members who spoke at the meetings.<sup>5</sup> However, the number of voting participants varied; the Council of the Popolo included around 240-260 voting members at a time and the Council of the Commune considerably less, maybe around 117-170 voting members.<sup>6</sup> Discussions at these two councils were limited to domestic politics; its registers give us an idea of the nature of the proposals and the voting that took place before their enactment into the city provisions.<sup>7</sup> In 1349, the earlier role of the great councils in foreign policy-making had been taken over by another political

4 See Kent's definition of the gonfalon. Kent, *Neighbors and Neighborhood in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 1-23.

5 This is an approximate number based on the names of the speakers registered in the corresponding volumes. ASF, LF vols. 40-48. (1375-1406).

6 These numbers were calculated on the basis of the votes recorded at the meetings. For the Council of the Popolo see: 265 members. ASF, LF 40. fol. 283r. (29/01/1378) 264 member. LF 40. fol. 350r. (01/02/1380) 243 members. LF 65. fol. 95r. (29/04/1433) For the Council of the Comune see: 118 members. LF 40. fol. 284r. (30/01/1378) 177 members. LF 40. fol. 285r. (23/02/1378) 147 members. LF 65. fol. 90r. (08/04/1433) 167 members. LF 65. fol. 92r. (22/04/1433).

7 For its fourteenth-century history see: Klein, 'Introduzione', pp. XXIII-XXXVII. Fubini, 'Prefazione'. For the fifteenth century see: Guidi, *Il governo della città-repubblica di Firenze*, pp. 133-149.

platform, the secret councils, called *consulta* and *pratica*.<sup>8</sup> The *consulta allargata* included, besides the Colleges, the various city officers, like the captains of the Guelph Party, the deputies of the four city quarters, the six consuls of the Merchant Court, and so forth.<sup>9</sup> The *consulta ristretta*, instead, was composed exclusively of the Colleges, sometimes aided by the captains of the Guelph Party or the Eight of Balie, these later ones appointed typically in times of war. The third type of meeting recorded in the registers was the *pratica*, a special commission put together by the *Signoria* with a specific mandate. Its activity was very often related to ambassadorial visits. Given the electoral system, which favoured the members of the five major guilds, that is, the international merchants and domestic entrepreneurs, political decisions of the Florentine government were very often shaped by trade interests.<sup>10</sup> The records of the discussions that took place at the secret councils provide testimonials to the fact that a high percentage of international merchants participated actively as speakers in the debates. Some of them were even sent out to foreign courts as ambassadors of the city, negotiating on behalf of the government and therefore representing Florentine merchants' interests. With their speeches, merchants were, in fact, able to effectively influence the decision-making of members of the government who were often inexperienced in foreign policy-making.

During these more than fifty years, the city magistrates were dominated by the supporters of the Albizzi faction, headed by messer Maso di Luca degli Albizzi (1343-1417) and Niccolò di Giovanni da Uzzano (1359-1431), and, following Maso's death, by his eldest son, Rinaldo. The faction included several magnate families, the members of which possessed an ancient noble heritage but were ineligible to hold any city offices. At the same time, the opponent faction, led by Cosimo di Giovanni de' Medici, constituted several of those new *popolani* families who acquired wealth and a name for themselves in the course of the fourteenth century, thanks to their involvement in long-distance trade.<sup>11</sup> However, in both factions, the presence of international merchants and domestic manufacturers was very high. Despite that, the Medicis' economic primacy was unquestionable.<sup>12</sup> Their

8 On the types of secret councils see: Conti, *Le 'Consulte' e 'Pratiche'*, pp. IX-XIX.

9 Among them were: the Ten of Liberty (Dieci di Libertà), the Eight of Balie (Otto di balia) and several other officers responsible for the surveillance of various taxes, and immobile properties of the city, like the Ufficiali della condotta, gli Ufficiali dell'abbondanza, gli Ufficiali della gabella del vino, gli Ufficiali della gabella delle porte e gli Ufficiali della gabella dei contratti.

10 Prajda, 'Trade and Diplomacy in pre-Medici Florence'.

11 One of the best documented cases is of the Serristori family. Tognetti, *Da Figline a Firenze*.

12 Padgett and Ansell, 'Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici'.

company branches in Florence and Venice continued to serve through the period as an important business partner and financial intermediary for Florentine merchants abroad.

In the 1370s, immediately preceding the Albizzi regime, magnates still suffered property confiscations by the Guelph Party, which exercised control over the properties of the Ghibellines as well.<sup>13</sup> At that time, exile to the Florentine countryside was also part of the punishment. Due to the loss of their political influence and properties in the city, these families were very often left without any economic potential. But by the first decade of the fifteenth century, this phenomenon was already in the past. Even though magnates were still not allowed to hold any major public offices, they could have applied for *popolani* status to restore their eligibility. The conditions for having their status restored included changing the name and coat of arms of the family. According to the studies of John F. Padgett, because of the lost economic potential, already in the second part of the fourteenth century these old families started to make marriage alliances with new men who had acquired some wealth and political influence by their participation in long-distance trade.<sup>14</sup>

The data drawn from the two most complete tax surveys, which were installed at the beginning and end of the Albizzi regime, mirror remarkable social changes that manifested in the evolution of these new lineages. The 1378 *Estimo* and the 1433 *Catasto* were two entirely different forms of taxation; yet, they are both a testament to the transformation of society that brought significant changes to the sensitive issue of taxation. Taxation, as political participation, was organized according to gonfalons, and the subject of taxes was most commonly discussed in the framework of the meetings of the secret councils. The tax reform, installed with the first *Catasto* in 1427, might be thought of as an indicator of the changed attitude the politically active mercantile elite exhibited, which pushed the reforms.

The *Estimo* was an old form of direct taxation, used since the thirteenth century, which was based on the assessment of the worth of each citizen's property.<sup>15</sup> In July 1378, the year of the unskilled wool workers' revolt, the officers of the *Estimo* registered about 12,759 households in the entire city.<sup>16</sup>

13 For the history of magnates, see: Klapisch-Zuber, C., *Retour à la cité*. Diacciati, *Popolani e magnati*. Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates*.

14 Padgett, 'Open Elite?'

15 For the various forms of taxes, see: Conti, *L'imposta diretta a Firenze nel Quattrocento*. On the 1378 *Estimo* see: Najemy, *A History of Florence*, p. 168.

16 A household in this case equals to a *capo famiglia*. ASF, Prestanze, vols. 367-369 (Santa Maria Novella, San Giovanni, Santa Croce.); ASF, *Estimo* 268 (Santo Spirito).

Among them, about 1982 households, a bit more than fifteen per cent, were recorded with family names or with some indicator of the provenience of the family.<sup>17</sup>

The 1433 *Catasto* includes only about 7970 households.<sup>18</sup> Among them, more than 41 per cent, that is, about 3280 heads of household, regarded it an important matter to establish a name or provenience for their families in the tax records. Despite the distinct nature of the two systems, these differences in the number of households indicate certain changes in the demography of the city. The population drop during the studied period has also been suggested by Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, who, based on the 1427 *Catasto*, stipulated the Florentine population to be around 37,000 inhabitants. Meanwhile, at the beginning of our period of study, this number was about 54,000-60,000.<sup>19</sup> According to the studies of Ann G. Carmichael, at least three plagues occurred during the Albizzi regime. The first one in 1400 is considered a major epidemic, which was followed by two minor ones in 1424-1425 and in 1429-1430.<sup>20</sup> Epidemics in between the two dates, as well as migration and internal economic depression, might have been at the core of these population changes. The incoming migration from territories outside Tuscany, and especially outside the Italian Peninsula, was insignificant at the time. Lorenz Böniger's studies have revealed that Germans, the most sizable foreign community, had little to do with international commerce or large-scale entrepreneurial activity.<sup>21</sup> Merchants of the city, unlike in many other Italian states, were typically born and raised in Florence or in its hinterland. It was mainly lower craftsmen and artisans who chose Florence for their new home.

The *Estimo*, though, considered both movable and immovable properties as the *Catasto* did, yet, the new men who might have invested primarily in their businesses rather than with the purchase of immovable property did not contribute to tax according to their wealth. The debates, which took place at the meetings of the secret councils prior to the installment of

17 Like Da Empoli, Da Peretola, Da Milano, da Signa, Da San Miniato, etc. In this number, those heads of households are also included who had three names registered in the document.

18 The number has been calculated on the basis of the *campioni*, prepared by the tax officials from the original declarations. Except the gonfalon of Vipera, Quarter of Santa Maria Novella, which does not have surviving *campioni*. In that case, I have used the *portate* as well as the *Sommari*, written by the *catasto* officials. For the *campioni* see: ASF, *Catasto* vols. 487-500. For the quarter of Vipera see: *Catasto* vols. 454, 455. For the *Sommari* see: *Catasto* vol. 503.

19 Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans et leur familles*, pp. 173-188.

20 Carmichael, *Plague and the Poor in Renaissance Florence*, Graphs 3-2, 3-2a (1400); 3-4 (1424-1425); 3-5 (1429-1430).

21 Böniger, *Die deutsche Einwanderung nach Florenz*.

the second *Catasto*, reflect these concerns. Several well-off international merchants, who were also active participants of the meetings, stressed that business activity should be measured by the *Catasto* officials.<sup>22</sup> However, in 1433, the percentage of frauds was very high and the countless number of companies operated by Florentine citizens inside and outside the city presented only 112 complete balances.<sup>23</sup> The senior partners most commonly submitted the balance of the company, extracting them from their various levels of account books.

An accurate study of the second *Catasto*, compared to the analysis of David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber on the first *Catasto*, gives us, however, an image that the two *Catasti* do not differ much from each other in terms of reliability.<sup>24</sup> In fact, the second *Catasto* seemingly includes a higher number and more detailed company balances than the first one, probably because of the pressure of several politicians. Among them, Florentine firms in Tuscany were registered in Pisa and Siena, and we find them in the major trade centres of the Peninsula: Aquila, Bologna, Genoa, Naples, Perugia, Rimini, Rome, and Venice. Meanwhile, outside Italy, they were mentioned in Avignon, Barcelona, Bruges, Buda, London, Paris, and Valencia.<sup>25</sup> The emergence of the credit market and the widespread use of

22 'E cc'è ancora una parte sotto la quale pensiamo vi sia mancamento assai al catasto. Et questo è che ci è molti mercatanti che mai in verità nel presente catasto dettono il bilancio del debito e credito del traffico, benché alcuni lo promettessono e mai lo dettono onde la sospitione ci è da pigliare non piccolo però che ci è tale che dà per creditore in migliaia e migliaia di fiorini forestieri e altri che non acatastano, che si dubita sia in tutto vero, però ci pare si debba per riformatione provvedere che ciascuno mercatante o trafficante sottoposto al catasto sia tenuto et debba dare il bilancio del traffico a decti ufficiali [...]’ ASF, CP 50. fol. 131v. (21/03/1432).

23 In this case, I consider only those headlines that refer to the document as *bilancio*. For the complete number of balances see: ASF, *Catasto* 484. fol. 601r; 483. fols. 106r, 156r, 201r, 274r, 333r, 346r, 429r-v, 510r; 482. fols. 330r, 333r, 381r, 382r, 420r, 469r, 534r, 598r, 611r, 623r; 479. fols. 2r, 173r, 394rr-v, 395r; 479. fols. 2r, 173r, 394r-v, 395r; 478. fols. 19r, 294r, 628r, 994r; 477. fols. 138r-v, 225r, 261r, 483r, 514r; 475. fols. 19f, 41r, 42v, 181r, 209r, 323v, 324v; 474. fols. 122r, 128r, 143r, 335r, 450r, 453r, 555r, 700r, 772r; 473. fols. 80r, 383v, 473r, 637r; 471. fols. 91r, 458r, 580r; 470. fols. 16v, 31r, 325r, 326r, 332v, 346r, 500r; 469. fols. 590r, 745v; 467. fols. 216r, 336r; 466. fol. 189r; 463. fols. 74r, 343v; 460. fols. 246r, 465r, 557r; 457. fol. 238r; 456. fol. 454r; 455. fol. 461r; 453. fols. 320r, 403r; 451. fols. 66r, 103r, 291r; 450. fols. 85r, 197r, 221r, 278r, 384v, 387r, 389r; 447. fols. 175r, 409r, 584r; 446. fols. 233r, 528r; 443. fols. 269r, 271r, 515r; 441. fols. 418r, 525r; 438. fol. 166v; 437. fols. 251r, 485r, 735r; 436. fols. 426r, 472v; 430. fols. 45r, 46r, 119r; 429. fols. 123r, 150v, 157r.

24 About the 1433 *Catasto* see: Conti, *L'imposta diretta a Firenze nel Quattrocento*, pp. 165-179.

25 For the various Florentine business enterprises abroad, *compagnia, ragione, bottega, accomandita, traffico* considered, see: Pisa: ASF, *Catasto* 429. fol. 416r; 453. fols. 423v, 834r; 445. fol. 122r (no more active companies); 482. fol. 177v; 478. fol. 19v; 475. fol. 31r; 429. fols. 157r, 262r; 470. fol. 325r; 457. fols. 449r, 495v; 460. fol. 210r; 466. fols. 556r-v; 430. fols. 52v, 230r, 310r; 433. fol. 98v; 438. fols. 166v, 522r; 445. fol. 630r; 463. fol. 338v; 443. fol. 367v; 436. fol. 124r. Siena: 446. fol.

bills of exchange instead of the precarious bullion, made considerable trade transactions possible.<sup>26</sup> Since 1408, the *accomandita*, that is, the limited liability partnership, gave rise to the holding companies created by the agglomeration of small firms.

Gene Brucker earlier claimed that international merchants' activity was not the main factor in the city's economic growth, although the upper anchor of Florentine society, which obtained political influence, was engaged in trade at various levels, and long-distance trade merchants put the elite inside this already elitist economic group.<sup>27</sup> As Richard A. Goldthwaite has put it: 'Its industry was completely dependent on the importation of raw materials and the exportation of finished cloth; and it was the city's merchants, not foreigners, who made this trade abroad possible.'<sup>28</sup> The two most important industries, wool and silk, which produced cloth for both domestic consumption and the international market, developed in different modalities.

By obtaining the finest English raw wool and extending its mercantile network further, in the fourteenth century wool became the leading industry of the city. Starting from 1406 with the capture of Pisa, Florence had direct access to the sea. Following that, in the 1420s, the city had started the construction of a fleet and sent galleys to Flanders, England, and the Levant. This important step guaranteed a regular supply of raw wool for the cloth industry and direct access to important foreign markets. The wool industry undoubtedly contributed to the greatest extent to the wealth of Florentine merchants by producing highly luxurious fabrics made from English wool, called San Martino, and lower quality Garbo cloth, made from raw material imported from the western Mediterranean.<sup>29</sup> In 1427, 127 functioning wool

415v. Aquila: 437. fol. 751v. Bologna: 473. fol. 473r; 470. fol. 326r; 457. fol. 91r; 445. fol. 91r. Genoa: 467. fol. 455v. Naples: 483. fol. 436r; 455. fol. 225v; 447. fol. 70r; 445. fols. 378v, 379v, 795r. Perugia: 474. fol. 741v. Rimini: 433. fol. 134v. (no more active) Rome: 471. fol. 369r; 429. fol. 129v (no more active companies); 479. fol. 499v; 478. fol. 19v; 450. fol. 148v; 460. fol. 528r; 453. fols. 276r, 288r, 379r; 467. fols. 60v, 62r; 466. fol. 628r, 450. fol. 387r; 436. fols. 197r, 447v. Venice: 474. fol. 5v; 471. fol. 124r; 450. fols. 148v, 520r; 453. fol. 825r; 467. fol. 455v; 466. fol. 438v; 437. fol. 745r; 436. fols. 227r, 260r. Avignon: 478. fol. 20r; 471. fol. 409v; 433. fol. 103v; 463. fol. 387r. Barcelona: 450. fol. 176v; 453. fol. 46v. (no more active companies) Bruges: 450. fols. 148r, 207r, 392v, 613r. Buda: 445. fol. 98r; 474. fols. 15r, 881r; 475. fol. 578r (no more active companies); 474. fol. 881r; 453. fol. 824r. London: 430. fol. 466v (no more active); 450. fols. 148r, 207r; 450, 613r; 451. fol. 3v; 460. fol. 532r; 436. fol. 472v. Paris: 478. fol. 20v. Valencia: 467. fol. 5v (no more active); 446. fol. 132v; 453. fols. 664r-v; 466. fol. 224v; 437. fols. 218r, 617r.

26 Padgett and McLean, 'Economic Credit and Elite Transformation in Renaissance'.

27 Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, p. 54.

28 Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, p. XVI.

29 Ibidem, p. 273.



workshops were registered in the Florentine city census.<sup>30</sup> Six years later, in 1433, at least 20 were running in the Convent of San Martino, located between the cathedral and the Palazzo Vecchio.<sup>31</sup> However, politicians at that time were aware of the fact that these numbers should be handled with caution, since many owners declared their workshops vacant, abandoned, or not in proper conditions; meanwhile, the city's economic growth suggests a slightly different picture.<sup>32</sup>

Not far from the wool workshops, several silk workshops were situated between the Palazzo Vecchio and the Mercato Nuovo, mostly in Via Vaccareccia and Via Por Santa Maria. The beginnings of the domestic silk industry in the first decades of the fourteenth century can be linked to the immigration of Lucchese silk manufacturers (*setaiuoli*) who brought their know-how from the centre of the sector.<sup>33</sup> The earliest silk manufacturers who acquired a name for themselves by participating in this rising sector established a cooperation with a few Florentine businessmen who had already accumulated some financial capital to invest. In 1378, 44 silk manufacturers' households were recorded in the census, including both manufacturers (*setaiuoli grossi*) and retail cloth merchants (*setaiuoli a minuto*).<sup>34</sup> By 1433, there were 25 citizens who indicated in their declaration that they worked as silk manufacturers.<sup>35</sup> In 1420, according to the statutes of the Por Santa Maria Guild, four entrepreneurs started to invest in the production of silk textiles of the highest quality, decorating them with threads made of precious metals. At this early stage, these threads were probably produced in the neighbouring goldsmiths' workshops, which also became centres of entrepreneurial activity.<sup>36</sup> Florentine silk cloth rapidly

30 Grossi, 'Le botteghe fiorentine nel catasto del 1427', p. 8.

31 For the wool firms in the Convent of San Martino see: ASF, Catasto 456. fol. 293r; 466. fol. 83r; 441. fol. 524r; 443. fols. 269r, 470. fol. 37v. (no more active firms); 482. fol. 611r; 478. fols. 19r-v, 969v; 471. fol. 280v; 447. fol. 510r; 453. fol. 47r, 58r, 90r, 173r, 320r, 462r; 467. fols. 140v, 336r; 466. fol. 584r, 441. fols. 523v, 525r; 436. fol. 329r.

32 The debates at the Consolte also concern this question: 'Un altro inconveniente ci troviamo, che molte botteghe e case che si dettono nel secondo catasto si trovano al presente murate, spigionate e disfatte solo per non darle a catasto.' ASF, CP 50. fol. 132r.

33 Tognetti, 'The Development of the Florentine Silk Industry'. Ibid., 'La diaspora dei lucchesi'.

34 ASF, *Estimo* 268. fols. 3r, 34v, 35v, 77r, 82r, 84v, 87r-v, 88r. *Prestanze* 367. fol. 5r. *Prestanze* 368. fols. 11r, 19r, 24v, 46v, 47r-v, 70v, 73v, 74r, 77r. *Prestanze* 369. fols. 2r, 3v, 4r, 8r-v, 14v, 17r-v, 18v, 19r, 22v, 24r, 34v, 38r-v, 40v, 59v, 68v, 73r, 83r, 86r, 128v.

35 This number includes most probably only *setaiuoli grossi*. ASF, *Catasto* 499. fols. 235v, 482v, 730v. *Catasto* 500. fol. 344r. *Catasto* 488. fols. 243v, 331v. *Catasto* 489. fol. 219v. *Catasto* 491bis. fols. 7r, 174v, 225r, 277v, 292v. *Catasto* 493. fol. 282v. *Catasto* 494. fol. 127v. *Catasto* 497. fol. 8r. *Catasto* 498. fols. 152v, 425v, 29r, 57v, 265v. *Catasto* 497. fols. 638v, 281r. *Catasto* 496. fol. 378v.

36 Prajda, 'Goldsmiths, Goldbeaters'.

gained popularity in foreign royal and princely courts. Already in the 1380s, there is information on silk being transported by Florentine merchants abroad, though the export of which might not have been significant until around the 1390s.<sup>37</sup>

Some international merchants, members of this socially endogamous elite, accumulated enough wealth to invest in voluminous building projects and to spend a considerable amount on self-representation. The wave of urban palace-building started sometime after 1400.<sup>38</sup> City palaces were often organized around square-shaped inner courtyards (*cortile*). The first floor of the typically two-or-three-story buildings was usually occupied by shops and workshops, while the second floor provided a home for the family and maybe also for other tenants. Rooms might have been decorated with various wooden objects brought by the wife with the marriage, such as marriage chests (*cassonne*) and table paintings. Palaces might have housed private chapels, but elite families were also eager to found their own family chapel in the nearest parish church, which might then become their burial site.

Well-off Florentine citizens also felt a moral obligation to make financial contribution towards the construction of the city's major building project, the Santa Maria del Fiore cathedral, run under the supervision of the five major guilds. The leading architect of the period, Filippo di ser Brunellesco Lippi, succeeded in developing an original method to construct a dome over the cathedral, the most grandiose of its kind. In the decorative arts, the names of Donato di Niccolò de'Bardi's (Donatello) public statues in base metals, Lorenzo Ghiberti's *Gate of Paradise* of the Baptistery, and Tommaso di ser Giovanni di Mone Cassai (Masaccio) and Maso di Cristofano's (Masolino) works on the private chapel of Felice di Michele Brancacci in the Santa Maria del Carmine Church, were retained as landmark objects of the new Florentine taste.

Some Florentine merchants, in addition to algebra and bookkeeping, even possessed good knowledge of Latin. This led, for example, Palla di Nofri Strozzi and Cosimo de'Medici to cultivate friendship ties with influential learned men of their time. In Florence, early humanism is traditionally linked to the name of Coluccio di Piero Salutati, a statesman who served as head of the Florentine chancellery for more than thirty years (1375-1406). The chancellery, the chief organ of state bureaucracy, which was responsible

37 In 1386, the count palatine of Hungary had purchased silk textiles of considerable value from a Florentine company. However, its provenience was not specified in the document. ASF, Mercanzia 11310. fol. 34r. I wish to thank Cédric Quertier for calling my attention to the volume. I am indebted to Carlo Taviani for sharing some of the results of his research on Florentine silk export.

38 Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, p. 14.

for the verbalization of the city councils's meeting as well as diplomatic correspondence, became the headquarters of these early humanists.<sup>39</sup> Beyond the chancellery, convents like the Benedictine monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli were developed into centres of humanist studies, where important miniators also worked. The cultural inventions that occurred in the city rapidly gained fame abroad, thanks to Florentine trade networks established through Europe.

## Florentines in Europe

By the beginning of the fifteenth century, Florentine merchants had already installed themselves in the most important trading hubs of the continent. As Richard A. Goldthwaite has pointed out, 'the strength of Florence in international commerce was in its network abroad.'<sup>40</sup> The firms were independent entities, but they worked through one another. Their most important businesses in foreign lands included the trade in bullion, textiles, and exotic goods, as well as banking, but they operated within the local administration as well.

In Europe, many precious metal deposits had already been exhausted; only silver was found in considerable quantity, mainly in Bohemia, the Kingdom of Hungary, the Balkans, and the Iberian Peninsula. Gold and copper were extracted overwhelmingly in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>41</sup> In search for new resources as well as for market possibilities, Florentines, already by the 1420s, established business interests in remote places like the Eastern Empire, Constantinople, Alessandria (Egypt), and the Kingdom of Tunis. Though, at this point, they did not settle there in large numbers.

According to the studies of Cédric Quertier, by the mid-fourteenth century Florentines had set up only a few independent *nazioni*, or consulates, mainly in the Italian Peninsula, in Bologna, Genoa, Naples and Salerno (all in the thirteenth century), in Pisa (1345), and Venice (1329? 1346?), but also in Bruges (1367?) and Avignon (1345), for instance. By the end of the Albizzi regime, their number had increased, and a few others were founded in the major trading hubs of the Peninsula and Europe, such as Rome (1391) and London.<sup>42</sup> Consulates were administrative-jurisdictional organizations of Florentine

39 Maxson, *The Humanist World of Renaissance Florence*.

40 Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, p. 38.

41 Batizi, *A középkori bányászat*.

42 Astorri, *La Mercanzia a Firenze nella prima metà del Trecento*, p. 165. For an overview of the history of Florentine consulates see: Quertier, 'Guerres et richesses des nations'.

merchants abroad and their primary focus was representing their interests in the host city. A consulate was typically headed by a consul who often acted as judge or legal representative of Florentine merchants, mediating between the merchants and the local society. Besides the independent Florentine consulates, joint ones operated in Valencia and Aragon, comprising not only Florentine but Genoese, Lucchese, Sienese, and Venetian merchants as well.<sup>43</sup>

The Kingdoms of Aragon, Catalonia, and Castile served for Florentine merchants as major sources of precious metals as well as raw wool. Maria Elisa Soldani's research has brought to light the modalities of Florentine merchants' social and political integration into the feudal structure of Barcelona. She has also shown, through the case of the Tecchini family, that Florentine merchants, through their service to European rulers, were even able to make a significant social step and to improve their social status from ordinary tradesmen to noblemen of the crown of Aragon.<sup>44</sup>

Similarly, in the course of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, a number of Florentines succeeded in entering into royal service in the Kingdom of England.<sup>45</sup> Some of them ventured there with the view of finding favorable economic conditions for their trade, while others arrived in the kingdom as refugees.<sup>46</sup> By the mid-fourteenth century, the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Durham employed a few among them as mint-masters.<sup>47</sup> For several years, the London mint was also headed by a member

43 In Valencia, Florentine, Genoese, Lucchese, and Sienese merchants belonged to the joint consulate; in Aragon only Florentines, Genoese, and Venetians did. Soldani, *Uomini d'affari i mercanti toscani nella Barcellona del Quattrocento*, pp. 61-62.

44 Soldani, 'A Firenze mercanti, cavalieri nella signoria dei re d'Aragona'.

45 Prestwich, 'Italian Merchants'. For extensive literature on the subject, see: Tognetti, 'Nuovi documenti sul fallimento della compagnia Frescobaldi'.

46 Initially, they had been arrested, because Pope Gregory XI placed Florence under interdict. But later, on 30 January 1377, they were released and received permission to trade as the King's serfs. 'In the same year (1376) some Florentines were excommunicated by the pope on account of their rebellion against the Roman church and unheard-of acts of disobedience. Among their other crimes and awful deeds of cruelty they had tortured with red-hot iron hooks a monk, sent to them by the pope with papal commands, while he was still alive, and had buried him in the ground before he was actually dead. Some of the Florentines later came to England. They asked for the king's peace and stayed in England, until the pope in his bulls revealed the enormity of the crimes in which they had been involved. When that happened, they actually became servants of the king, just as though they were English, with all their goods and chattels. This was because of the decision contained in a letter from the pope and his curia. The Florentines therefore chose what seemed to them to be the lesser of the two evils, namely to serve the king of England like his countrymen rather than to submit themselves to the judgement of the Romans.' *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham*, p. 28.

47 Allen, 'Italians in English Mints', p. 59.

of the Florentine Bardi family, who later, in 1380, was appointed master of the London exchange, combining the two offices for the first time in history.

Florentines were interested not only in the domestic market. For instance, English wool became one of the most important trade items for those residing in Flanders. Francesco Guidi Bruscoli has pointed out the density of Florentine commerce between England, Flanders, and the Italian Peninsula, which likely reached its peak around the middle of the fifteenth century. In the beginning, Bruges was considered as the centre of Florentines' settlement, which later was replaced by Antwerp.<sup>48</sup> In Bruges, the *nazione* dates only from 1427; they installed a lodge there, the grandest Florentines ever built abroad.<sup>49</sup>

Sporadic information also appears regarding Florentine merchants' business in the Kingdom of France. In the last decades of the thirteenth century, they still considered Avignon as an important exchange and bullion market.<sup>50</sup> Already in the 1330s-1340s, the most important Florentine companies traded in Paris, a major banking centre at that point.<sup>51</sup> Among them we find the firms of the Albizzi, the Alberti, the Bardi, the Peruzzi, and the Acciaiuoli.<sup>52</sup> Around the turn of the century, Francesco di Marco Datini, an important merchant from Prato, also kept agents there.<sup>53</sup> Later, in the 1410s-1430s, the correspondence between Averardo di Francesco de' Medici, Andrea di Lipaccio Bardi, and Andrea di Guglielmino Pazzi shows that Florentine merchants were still present at the local market.<sup>54</sup>

During the same period, references to Florentine merchants in German lands are very scarce; before the end of the fifteenth century, no German city had a sizeable Florentine community. However, a few Florentines ended up

48 Bruscoli and Bolton, 'When did Antwerp replace Bruges'. Bruscoli, 'I rapporti con il Nord-Europa'. See also: Watson, *The Structure of the Florentine Galley Trade with Flanders and England*.

49 In the fourteenth century, the Bardi, Peruzzi, Acciaiuoli, and Alberti families had agents in the city. In the fifteenth century, the Mannini, Medici, and the Pazzi companies traded there. Dini, *Manifattura e commercio*, p. 116.

50 Stouff, 'Une famille Florentine'. See also: Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 162-163.

51 It lost its positions because of the civil conflicts and the English occupation, which marked the last years of the reign of Charles VI (1380-1422). De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, p. 124. For Florentines in Paris see also: Farmer, *The Silk Industries of Medieval Paris*.

52 Hoshino, *L'Arte della Lana in Firenze*, p. 143. n. 78. Dini, *Banca e commercio*, pp. 108, 114. Saponi, *I Libri di Commercio dei Peruzzi*.

53 Arnoux and Bourlet and Hayez, 'Lettres parisiennes du Carteggio Datini'. See also: Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, p. 129.

54 Andrea Bardi's correspondence: ASF, MAP 2. fols. 385r, 386r, 405r, 411r. Andrea Pazzi's correspondence: MAP 2. fol. 31r. 1. fol. 43r. On the relation to the Medici firm, see also: De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, p. 38.

in the administration of mines and mints.<sup>55</sup> Meanwhile, others, according to Kurt Weissen, were engaged there in banking activity.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, in the Kingdom of Poland there is only very fragmented information at our disposal on Florentine merchants' presence at this early period. Some of them worked in royal administration, like an agent of the Medici firm residing in Krakow, who was employed as customs officer.<sup>57</sup> But their most important income might have derived from ecclesiastical revenues.<sup>58</sup> The Florentine *Signoria* had established some contacts to the Polish royal court by letters of recommendation, but following this period they were interrupted.<sup>59</sup> The marginality of Poland within the Florentines' settlement is also shown by the absence of any Florentine companies that might have been set up there.

Florentines typically traveled towards the central-eastern part of the continent by sea through Venice. The city and its hinterland were home to probably the most sizeable Florentine business community abroad. Not only the Rialto area and San Marco Square, most commonly associated with mercantile and banking activity, but also some of the subject towns, like Treviso, grew into centres of Florentine settlement. Reinhold C. Mueller has argued that banking services in Venice were in the hands of Florentine businessmen who brought their advanced record-keeping practices and company structures to the city.<sup>60</sup> Besides banking, much of their commercial interest was related to trade with Florentine as well as Venetian

55 Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 194-195.

56 Weissen, *Florentines Bankiers und Deutschland*.

57 In 1419, the Medici decided to send to the Kingdom one member of the family, Albizzo of Talento, as an agent. He settled in Krakow, where he died in 1439. In the 1420s, he worked as a customs officer. *Ibid.*, p. 133. Another member of the Medici family, named Matteo, in 1428, lived also in the Kingdom of Poland. *Ibid.*, p. 34. The Florentine Simone Talenti also worked as mint master there around the turn of the century. See also Bettarini, 'The New Frontier'. In 1430, there is also record of Antonio di Giovanni de' Ricci living in Krakow at that time. '[...] Antonius Iohannis de Riziis habitatorem ad presens in Chrachovia, Regni Polane [...]'. ASV, Giudizi di petizion, *Estraordinario nodai* 10. fol. 7v.

58 Since 1393, several Florentine businessmen with their companies participated in the collection of ecclesiastical revenues there. Among them were Doffo Spini, Giovanni de' Medici, Bartolomeo, Benedetto and Ilarione Bardi, and Carlo Tornaquinci. Saporì, *Studi di storia economica*, III, pp. 149-176.

59 On contacts with the Polish court up to the 1430s, see: Bettarini, 'The new frontier'. I have systematically researched the correspondence of the Florentine chancellery, which to my best knowledge, do not include references to either Florentine embassies sent to Poland or to official contacts between the two states. ASF, Missive, I Cancelleria, vols. 36-49; Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie vols. 10-21; Dieci di Balìa, Legazioni e Commissarie, vols. 4-10; Otto di Pratica, Responsive, vols. 1-5; Signori, Minutari, vols. 7-13.

60 Mueller, 'Mercanti e imprenditori fiorentini a Venezia'.

wool and silk textiles. The registers of the court of the *Giudici di Petizion* show their commercial enterprises.<sup>61</sup> Families like the Del Bene, Gaddi, and Velluti turned into significant actors of local and thus international trade. It is not surprising, therefore, that during our period more than 130 Florentines received citizenship in Venice.<sup>62</sup> Given the geographic proximity and the city's role as a major trading hub, Venice also featured as the major commercial-cultural mediator between the Italian Peninsula and the Kingdom of Hungary. Indigenous as well as foreign merchants took continuous advantage of Venetian resources through exchanging goods with merchants residing in Buda.<sup>63</sup>

Its nearest subject lands, Dalmatia, belonged formally to the Hungarian crown until 1409 when Ladislaus of Durazzo sold it to the *Serenissima*. Along the coastline, *Ragusa* (Dubrovnik, HR) also occupied a prominent place in Florentines' trade and settlement in the region. Francesco Bettarini has demonstrated that besides Florentines, several businessmen of the subject town of Prato arrived in the city for commercial purposes.<sup>64</sup> Their network, though, seems to have lived a life separate from the Hungarian hinterlands, which had direct access to the sea by the port of Segna (Senj, HR).<sup>65</sup>

## Florentines in the Kingdom of Hungary

Florentine merchants, indeed, might have arrived in the Kingdom of Hungary either by land, from the direction of Vienna, or by sea, fleeing from Venice to *Segna*. Despite the considerable distance between the two cities, Florence and Buda were well-connected to each other by commercial routes. The most important documents in this regard are the accounts of the brothers Rinaldo and Luca di messer Maso degli Albizzi, who travelled to the Kingdom of Hungary in 1426 and 1427.<sup>66</sup> The two distinct collections speak better than

61 ASV, Giudici di Petizion, Sentenze a giustizia, vols. 1-110.

62 The data is obtained by researching the provenience of those individuals registered in the database of the *Cives Veneciarum*. *Civesveneciarum*.

63 See the case of Michael Nadler, German citizen of Buda. ASV, Giudici di Petizion, Sentenze a giustizia, 22. fol. 77r. Prajda, 'Florentines' Trade in the Kingdom of Hungary'. See also the case of luchese Pietro Guerrucci, who, in 1390, sent a load of silk textiles to his correspondent in Buda, Marco Paruta. Molà, *La comunità dei lucchesi a Venezia*, p. 248.

64 Bettarini, *La comunità pratese di Ragusa*. For Florentines in fourteenth-century Dalmatia, see Raukar, 'I fiorentini in Dalmazia'.

65 Teke, 'Il porto di Segna'.

66 For the documents produced by Rinaldo during his trip, see: *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. For the complete edition of Luca's diary written during his trip to Hungary, see:



any other source about the itineraries and difficulties that occurred along the most frequently used land and sea routes that Florentine merchants took for business purposes. Even though the Albizzi brothers were heading to Buda as members of diplomatic contingents, they mention itinerant Florentine merchants in their travel accounts that prove that businessmen, indeed, used the very same routes.<sup>67</sup>

Both embassies followed the commercial route leading north from Florence to Bologna through the Apennines. In Rinaldo's case, the first segment of the trip included Ferrara and Padova as stops after Bologna; meanwhile, Luca went through Corticella, Torre della Fossa, Francolino, Crespino, Loreo, and Chioggia.<sup>68</sup> Generally, transport from Florence to Bologna was by pack animals over the Apennines, then over land or by canal and river after that from Bologna to the region of Ferrara and finally from Ferrara to Venice by river and sea. According to Luca's diary, he was travelling by land until reaching Corticella, located north of Bologna, and from there he continued his trip by river to Ferrara. From Ferrara, he traveled again on horseback to the nearby Francolino, a port on the Po river, where he took a boat. Turning to the north at Loreo, he left behind the Po and arrived in Chioggia, probably by river, and finally took another boat to Venice. Including the several stops during his trip, made both for relaxation and networking purposes, travelling from Florence to Venice took approximately one week.

Venice, as main hub for the redistribution of commercial goods, played a crucial role in the transportation of Florentines' merchandise. They typically stopped there for several days to purchase goods, socialize with their fellow citizens, as well as to arrange shipping. Arriving in Venice, Rinaldo continued his travel by land to the north, through Villach and Vienna, reaching Buda after 40 days of travel and diplomatic visits. At the same time, Luca took a ship in Venice and followed the coastline through Livenza (Caorle), Daira (Dajla), Parenzo (Poreč), Fagiana (Fažana), Vegli (Veli Brijuni), Pola (Pula), Medulino (Medulin), and Ossero (Osor), arriving at the port of *Segna* (Senj) after eight days.<sup>69</sup> Maritime navigation depended much upon weather conditions, which could shorten or lengthen the trip. Because of an illness, probably provoked by the harsh weather on the sea, Luca was forced, after

Prajda, 'Egy firenzei követjárás útinaplója'.

67 Also, Luca degli Albizzi's diary mentions three Florentine merchants who were traveling at that time from Venice, through *Segna* (Senj, HR), to the Kingdom of Hungary; two of them lived permanently in Buda. These merchants were: Tommaso di Piero Melanesi, Filippo di Giovanni del Bene, and Tommaso di Jacopo Schiattesi.

68 *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. pp. 607-608.

69 Prajda, 'Egy firenzei követjárás útinaplója', p. 10.



a long permanence in *Segna*, to return to Florence without ever reaching the royal court in Hungary. On the way back, Luca used the same sea route with small modifications. Rinaldo, instead arriving in Hungary from the northwest, left the Kingdom from the southwest and followed a different land route through to the Mura River, reaching Venice by following the road down from Vienna.<sup>70</sup>

Florence was not a major transit centre for commercial goods; it was the Florentine merchants who, by operating in the most important trade hubs, built up an international transport system for their goods.<sup>71</sup> Therefore, the cooperation between Florentine businessmen living in the cities situated on the commercial routes had a crucial role, given all the travel of Florentine ambassadors as well as merchants with their commercial goods. Florentines offered each other hospitality in their foreign home, like shelter and supplies for their horses and sometimes even accompanying servants. Their reliable and experienced servants carried messages, goods, and occasionally provided traveling Florentines with safeguard as well. The social network used by itinerant Florentine merchants was a business network of those fellow citizens who operated far from their homeland. Members of this network very often maintained not only business but social ties with each other, ensuring in this way the circulation of goods, messages, and people. Weather conditions, health issues that arose during a trip, as well as the security of their goods and of people were the major concern of travellers. So, it might have been common that merchants traveled together in order to guarantee their own safety and to share the otherwise elevated costs of toll and travel.<sup>72</sup> For the safety of their goods, they might have even signed an insurance contract with one of the Florentine banks operating either in Florence or in Venice.<sup>73</sup> Safe conduct, obtained from the Florentine or Venetian government or from King Sigismund himself, might have also offered traveling Florentine merchants a major sense of security.<sup>74</sup> Letters of recommendations were

70 *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. pp. 590-591.

71 Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, p. 119.

72 See the travel of Gianozzo Cavalcanti, Filippo Frescobaldi, and Matteo Scolari to Hungary: 'Tomaso Borghini mandò in Ungheria drappi in sino di marzo 1425 e mandò chon essi Gianozzo Chavalchanti e Filippo Freschobaldi e mandogli insieme e in compagnia chon messer Matteo Scholari che allora andò inbasadore in Ungheria. E questo fu perché andassono più salvi anche per non paghare ghabelle e passaggi.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 321. fol. 98r.

73 For example, the company of Niccolò Baldovini and Giovanni di Antonio di Santi of Buda appears in the insurance book of Piero di Gabriello Panciatichi's company. See the copy of the document in the tax declaration of the Panciatichi, in 1433: ASF, *Catasto* 477. fol. 471r.

74 See the safe conduct of the Florentine Signoria for Giambonino di Rinieri Scolari. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 318r. Antonio di Giovanni Panicatichi wished to obtain safe conduct from

also common means for Florentine merchants to secure their activity in the region and to seek the favor of foreign dignitaries.<sup>75</sup> The Florentine chancery continually received requests of this sort from its citizens.<sup>76</sup> In 1386, upon the coronation of Ladislaus of Durazzo as the King of Hungary, a Florentine politician suggested at the secret councils that ambassadors be sent to the King to recommend Florentine merchants who were trading in Hungary.<sup>77</sup> Several merchants, simply seeking political support or struggling with their credit claims in the Kingdom, were introduced in oral or written form to the royal court.<sup>78</sup> Ambassadors' mandates regularly included the names of those merchants whom they were supposed to mention at a specific royal audience.<sup>79</sup> During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, all these practices and factors contributed to the success of Florentine merchants, who constituted seemingly the most populous group of local merchants of Italian origins.<sup>80</sup>

Italians' penetration, though, into the Hungarian hinterland was not a new phenomenon. As early as the first part of the thirteenth century, for example, the remote town of *Varadinum* (Oradea, RO), subject of bishopric control, already had districts named after its Venetian and Latin immigrants.<sup>81</sup> The

King Sigismund. See Antonio's declaration in 1433: '[...] E itò dietro al'onperadore più tempo fa per avere salvo chondoto per potermi stare e tornare [...]'. ASF, *Catasto* 474. fol. 881r.

75 Paul D. McLean has analysed such letters of recommendation in connection with Florentine domestic politics. McLean, *The Art of the Network*. For a detailed analysis of letters of recommendations sent to the Kingdom of Hungary, see: Prajda, 'Trade and Diplomacy in pre-Medici Florence'. For letters of recommendation sent to the Kingdom of Poland, see: Francesco Bettarini, 'The New Frontier'.

76 Witt, *Coluccio Salutati*, p. 9.

77 ASF, CP 25. fols. 48r-v.

78 For cases see: Prajda, 'Justice in the Florentine Trading Community'.

79 'Ancora raccomandere al detto re i nostri cittadini e mercatanti che usano e trafficano nel suo regno. E in singolarità affectuosamente e strettamente raccomandere alla sua maestà Antonio Macigni e Domenico di Francesco Federighi nostri cittadini nelle loro faccende. Ancora raccomandere Arrigo Sassolini, il quale fa certe faccende di là di Inghilese d'Inghilese nostri cittadini [...] Et simile gli raccomandere pienamente Guido di meser Tommaso e Giovanni Tosinghi nostri cittadini carissimi.' ASF, Dieci di Balìa, Legazioni e Commissarie 2. fol. 17v. '[...] Et rispouose l'averli raccomandati tutti e i nostri cittadini che sono nel suo reame e spetialmente quegli che sono nominati nella detta commissione.' ASF, Dieci di Balìa, Relazioni di Ambasciatori 1. fol. 20v. In 1427, Bernardo di Sandro Talani, Filippo del Palagio, and Tommaso Corsi were among the merchants to be recommended by the ambassadors to the royal court. ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie 7. fol. 80v.

80 This hypothesis might be partly biased by the lack of sources of commercial nature in Venice and the absence of research in the Genoese archives.

81 Villa latinorum, Vicus Venetia, Vicus Bolonia, Vicus Padua. Balogh, *Az erdélyi renaissance*, pp. 20, 31.

literature on Italians' presence in the Arpads' Age also indicates that the migration of Italians from the various parts of the Peninsula was continual.<sup>82</sup> Charles Robert of Anjou (1308-1342), for example, gave offices to goldsmiths of Sienese origins.<sup>83</sup>

It is probably safe to say, though, that not many Florentines settled in the Kingdom prior to the reign of Louis I of Anjou (1342-1382). The earliest information on a Florentine merchant so far is dated to 1370 when a court case refers to a certain Taddeo Bettucci who was residing in the Kingdom for business purposes.<sup>84</sup> Meanwhile, the Florentine community during the reign of Louis I (1342-1382) and even until around the turn of the century, was characterized by the strong presence of a small business group of Vieri di Cambio de' Medici and the Panciatichi family. But by the first years of the fifteenth century, the business network of the Scolari family was dominant in the Hungarian-Florentine long-distance trade. In the years immediately following the Scolari brothers' deaths, in 1426, there were multiple power plays between the Scolari nephews and the Bardi brothers, old *familiares* of the Scolari. Following these conflicts, the leading position of the Bardi brothers, as well as other internal social dynamics in Hungary, likely led to the reorganization of key positions in the royal administration and within long-distance trade.

However, it should be acknowledged that besides Florence, Venice, and Rome, no other Italian cities have been studied in detail from the point of view of long distance trade with Hungary.<sup>85</sup> Because of the lack of written sources of an economic nature both in Rome and Venice, the picture of economic exchanges hardly could be altered or completed. In Venice, the picture drawn by Zsuzsa Teke, which made use of the best published sources, remains as a point of reference.<sup>86</sup> Similarly in Rome, besides the collectorial

82 Auner, 'Latinus'. Kristó, *Nem magyar népek a középkori Magyarországon*, pp. 167-177. Székely, 'A székesfehérvári latinok', pp. 45-72. Zolnay, 'Az esztergomi latinusokról', pp. 155-167.

83 Goldsmiths Niccolò and Pietro di Simone Sienese are mentioned in the specialist literature as *Petrus* and *Nicolaus Gallicus*. Marosi, 'A 14. századi királyi pecsétek művészettörténeti jelentőségéhez', p. 143. For a detailed analysis of their lives see: Zsoldos, 'Sienai ötvösből szepesi alispán'.

84 'Constitutes in iudicio dinanzi al decto ufficiali et alla sua corte, Taddeo Bettucci di Firenze il quale habita in Ungheria [...]' ASF, Mercanzia 185 s. f. (13/09/1370)

85 Since 2011 the author has also been conducting systematic researches in the corresponding archives of Rome and Venice. She has also visited the National Archives of Mantua, Modena, and Naples, where, because of the availability of sources, she did not find any significant new sources which might contribute to the already existing literature on long-distance trade with Hungary.

86 Teke, *Velencei-magyar kereskedelmi kapcsolatok*, Ibid., 'Zsigmond és a Dalmát városok'.

activities of the Apostolic see in Hungary, no other significant sources of an economic nature have come to light.

The economic exchanges between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Italian Peninsula were retained as rather diverse and intense into the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries. Starting from its origins, the Florentine trading community in the Kingdom of Hungary was built upon the export of wool textiles from Florence and the import of precious metal coins and bullions to the Italian Peninsula. In general, the various goods which typically circulated between the Peninsula and Hungary are scarcely documented.<sup>87</sup> There is some fragmented information at our disposal concerning the Hungarian leather trade to Italy.<sup>88</sup> Trade in livestock, recently examined by Andrea Fara, might have been one of the sectors in which Florentines seemingly did not actively participate.<sup>89</sup> On the other hand, copper, as Martin Štefánik has pointed out, was one of the metals that generated interest in Florence and Venice.<sup>90</sup> In some cases, besides written evidence, archeological findings, such as cloth seals, provide evidence for their commerce from Italy to Hungary.<sup>91</sup> Besides these goods, Florentines were occasionally involved in the administration and probably also in the marketing of salt, which was extracted in various parts of Hungary.<sup>92</sup> Few of the resident companies in Buda provided banking services, so the considerable part of money exchange and safe keeping, as well as selling trade insurances, might have gone through those Florentine companies that operated in Florence and Venice. In all that, the Medici of Venice might have played a key role. Since, to the best of our knowledge, account books of Florentine companies based in Buda did not survive, we have only fragmented information at our disposal regarding the quantity and the quality of these commercial goods mentioned above, as well as the transportation and marketing of them.<sup>93</sup> Because of the considerable distance between Florence and Buda, we can only suspect that profit-oriented Florentine businessmen sold mainly high-quality San Martino cloth in Hungary. This hypothesis is also supported by the business

87 For an overview of the historiography see: Nagy, 'The Study of Medieval Foreign Trade of Hungary'.

88 Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', pp. 195-214.

89 Fara, 'Il commercio di bestiame ungherese'.

90 On the copper trade with Italy, see: Štefánik, 'Kupfer aus dem ungarischen Königreich'.

91 Mordovin, *Textilvégek védjegyei*, pp. 211-222.

92 Draskóczy, 'Italiener in Siebenbürgen im 15. Jahrhundert'. For the salt monopoly of the Hungarian kings, see: *Ibid.*, 'Das königliche Salzhandelmonopol in Ungarn'.

93 There are about 2500 volumes of private account books, from the early fourteenth century up to 1500 which have survived. Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, XII. I wish to thank Richard A. Goldthwaite for sharing with me his unpublished list of account books.

profiles of some merchant-entrepreneurs who had an interest in selling their goods in Hungary.

Besides wool textiles, which had a vast circle of customers, silk textiles became the other important item of Florentines' trade. By the end of the fourteenth century, when some investors started to produce high-quality silk fabrics in the city for the international market, Florentine merchants had already initiated its export to Hungary. Silk, in the beginning, might have arrived in the Hungarian court as diplomatic gifts with the purpose of increasing the interest for Florentine domestic products.<sup>94</sup> Italian silk textiles preserved in various Hungarian collections complete the picture of their circulation in Hungary.<sup>95</sup> Besides textiles, luxury items like spices and exotic animals occasionally appear in the sources. Already in 1386, István Lackfi brought spices from the Panciatichi firm.<sup>96</sup> Bonaccorso di Neri Pitti, in his chronicle, details that as an apprentice he and his master Matteo di Scelto Tinghi took a load of saffron to Buda.<sup>97</sup> In 1422, Matteo Scolari, in his letters, mentions spices as well as exotic animals like Arabian horses, falcons, ostriches, and monkeys his agent imported from Tunis, probably with the intent to carry them to Hungary, to the royal court, and to his brother, Pippo Scolari.<sup>98</sup>

The significance of the Florentine community can also be measured by the fact that at least twelve Florentine trading companies were established in Buda during the first three decades of the fifteenth century. As far as we can tell, they were medium-size companies, mainly set up for the export of Florentine textiles to Hungary, in exchange for precious metals originating from the local mines. The senior partners of these companies were important to the business of Florentine long-distance trade and played a

94 In 1376, the politician and wool manufacturer Giovanni di Amerigo del Bene suggested to the government that the Florentine ambassadors heading to Hungary would carry as gifts three pieces of velvet and three pieces of silk, decorated with gold. Though, Giovanni did not specify if the silk textiles should have been made of domestic products, we can believe that such gifts might have meant to represent the city and therefore the domestic industry. However, we have no information on whether or not these diplomatic gifts reached the royal court. 'Iohannes Amerigi pro Gonfaloneriis dixit quod nota ambaxiatores Hungarie videatur per duos per Collegium et de Octo [...] Et quod portent ad filius regis tres petias velluti et tres drappi ad auri.' ASF, CP 14. fol. 38r.

95 See as examples: Wetter and Sipos, 'Kasel aus Kaschau', pp. 630-632. Ibid., 'Kasel aus Zipser Kapitel', pp. 632-633. Ibid., 'Kasel aus Bartfeld', pp. 633-634.

96 ASF, Mercanzia 11310. fol. 34r.

97 Pitti, 'Ricordi', pp. 366-367.

98 '[...] Magiori miei qui vi dirò apunto quello mi à rubato due chavalli barbereschi, 18 sparveri, 2 sori, 216 mudati, 2 bertuocchie, 2 struzoli [...] uno anno ch'io tenuto un fante per mandare queste frasche, salvo le sparveri alla reina, a messer Filippo [...]'. ASF, MAP 1. fol. 44r.

significant role in the Florentine textile industry. Some of them were also leading investors in the Florentine silk industry, both in terms of domestic production and in selling abroad. Besides the resident Florentine companies and autonomous partnerships, other merchants relied on their business networks or on independent agents in the marketing of their textiles in Hungary. The *accomanda* system, that is, limited liability contracts, was also used between Buda-based companies and silk companies or between silk firms and local agents.<sup>99</sup>

Florentines' commerce in Hungary was subject to amicable diplomatic relations between the two states, which was also the primary focus of Florentine diplomacy. The Florentine *Signoria's* attitude toward the Hungarian Kings had always been fundamentally conditioned by the contemporary political events in the Italian Peninsula and by Hungary's as well as Florence's relations to the major Italian powers. Since the reign of the Anjou dynasty, started in 1301, Hungary had been in the forefront of political and general interest in Italy. Enikő Csukovits claims that in the fourteenth century Hungarian domestic politics and the diplomatic contacts kept with various Italian states were an important subject for political discussions in contemporary Italy.<sup>100</sup>

By the first decades of the century, the Kingdom of Hungary grew into one of the most important powers in Europe, with its over 320,000 km<sup>2</sup> of territory, which covered the entire Carpathian Basin. By the 1330s, Charles I, as the first Anjou King of Hungary, was among the most influential monarchs of his time. Already in 1333, Charles I's younger son, Andrew, and Johanna, granddaughter of Robert of Anjou, king of Naples and uncle of Louis I, became engaged. After Robert of Anjou's death, the two of them would be the successors to the throne of Naples. In 1342, with Charles's death, the Hungarian crown was passed on to his son, Louis I, without any major opposition. In 1345, however, prince Andrew was killed in Naples, and using this event as a good excuse, in 1348 Louis I conducted a military campaign and conquered Naples, assuming therefore the title of King of Naples, Jerusalem, and Sicily. He did not manage to consolidate his power, though, and after a second military campaign, he signed a peace agreement with Queen Johanna I in 1352.

According to another agreement which resulted in a personal union between the Kingdoms of Hungary and Poland, in 1370, Louis I was also

99 For the history of Florentine companies during Sigismund's reign see: Prajda, 'Florentine Merchant Companies'.

100 Csukovits, 'Introduzione'.

crowned King of Poland. In 1356-1357, he re-conquered territorial control over Croatia and Dalmatia against Venice, which his father had previously lost. Two peace treaties signed with Venice reinforced his military successes in the area; in 1358, the *Zara* (Zadar, HR) treaty gave the Hungarian King control over the Dalmatian coastline from Rijeka to *Ragusa* (Dubrovnik, HR). Further, with the second treaty, concluded in 1381 in Turin, the Hungarian monarch was entitled to receive annually 7000 golden florins from the *Serenissima*.

Since Louis I did not have male heirs to succeed, his Hungarian crown was therefore passed on to his elder daughter, Mary, in 1382; meanwhile, the Polish throne was passed on to his younger daughter, Jadwiga. Because he had no male heirs, Louis also invited his distant cousin, Charles of Durazzo, to Hungary. He arranged Charles's marriage with his cousin and Queen Johanna's niece, Margaret of Durazzo, in 1370, making Charles Duke of Slavonia, Croatia, and Dalmatia. In 1382, Charles managed to occupy the throne of Naples over Johanna II, and three years later, in 1385, he entered also into Hungary and claimed Mary's throne as the eldest male Anjou alive. However, in 1386, supporters of the Queen arranged his assassination. And then Mary, who died prematurely in 1395, through her marriage gave access to the Hungarian throne to Sigismund of Luxembourg (1387-1437).

With this picture of Italian diplomacy, Florence stands as a small fish, always trying to navigate between the more powerful states. Records of political discussions, even in times of war, were filled with words of negotiation, ambassadorships, and the public good. The political elite might have viewed these bellicose situations as interruptions of fruitful trade relations and so remained in favor of peaceful solutions. In 1379, a Florentine politician observed at the secret councils that: 'Peace has always been the objective of the city of Florence and its merchants.'<sup>101</sup> Peace guaranteed undisturbed trade for Florentines and therefore offered prosperity and financial stability for the state as well as its institutions and trading communities abroad.<sup>102</sup> As Gene Brucker has demonstrated, the city provisions, which made possible the use of the *Signoria's* authority and public funds in order to protect Florentine

101 'Zenobius Marignolli pro Gonfaloneriis dixit quod pax semper fuit directio civitatis Florentie [...]. ASF, CP 14. fol. 6v. 'Alexander Benedicti dixit super litteris oratorum Ungarie eligatur oratores quot Dominorum placuerunt ad procurandum pacem Venetorum et utilitatem ac securitatem civium et mercatorum nostrum quod sunt Venetiis.' CP 18. fol. 9v.

102 'Quod pax procuretur, et pro mercatoribus procuretur quod possint facere per mundum suas mercantias et exigere debita sibi.' ASF, CP 15. fol. 90v. Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society*, p. 338.



mercantile interests abroad, received much support in the councils in the 1350s-1370s.<sup>103</sup>

Official contacts with the Hungarian royal court, had already been established by the first years of the 1350s.<sup>104</sup> The main aim was to form an alliance with Louis I in support of Florentine diplomacy in the peninsula. In 1359, the notary of the secret councils recorded for the first time a speech that addressed the issue of dispatching an ambassador (*oratore*) to the King of Hungary.<sup>105</sup> Following that, in the 1360s and 1370s, diplomatic contacts with the Hungarian King occupied an important place among the subjects of the meetings of the secret councils.<sup>106</sup> The earliest report on the arrival of a diplomatic contingent to the royal court in Hungary dates back to 1376, an important moment of the War of the Eight Saints (1375-1378), a conflict that arose between Florence and the Papacy.<sup>107</sup> Florence, during this period, considered the Hungarian King as a possible diplomatic ally, and so at the secret councils a large number of speakers addressed the issue.<sup>108</sup> The close and fruitful relations between the two states might have been the main reason that, in spite of Pope Gregory XI's interdict, published on 31 March 1376, Florentines never suffered expulsion from the Kingdom.<sup>109</sup> This was the very same reason the *Serenissima* refused to publish the interdict on Venetian territory, claiming that they wanted to preserve good relations with the Florentine merchants therein. The Venetian ambassadors to the pope explained that the city of San Marco would suffer great losses if Florentines were expelled.<sup>110</sup>

Coluccio Piero Salutati entered into the Florentine chancellery in April 1375, exactly at the beginnings of the conflicts with the Papacy. It might not be accidental that during his office, the number of state letters sent to the Hungarian royal court increased visibly. State letters were collected and copied into registers, kept very often by the chancellor himself. In our

103 In 1372, Filippo Giamori, one of the sixteen Standardbearers consulted that 'Favorentur mercatores circa recuperationem suarum mercaturarum.' ASF, CP 12. fol. 147r. Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society*, p. 91.

104 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 10. fol. 47r.

105 Though the earliest meetings date back to 1349, the record-keeping in the first ten years of the secret councils was not complete. ASF, CP 12. fol. 35r.

106 ASF, CP 4. fol. 113r; CP 5. fols. 66r, 79r; CP 10. fol. 31r. See also: Prajda, 'Trade and Diplomacy in pre-Medici Florence'.

107 The embassy was led by Simone di Rinieri Peruzzi and Bene di Jacopo del Bene. Prajda, 'Representations of the Florentine Signoria'.

108 ASF, CP 13. fols. 55v, 57r; CP 14. (c. 50 cases); CP 15 (c. 33 cases)

109 Trexler, *The Spiritual Power*, p. 80.

110 Mueller, 'I fiorentini', p. 8.



period, most of them were produced during the chancellery of Salutati (twelve registers), while the chancelleries of Benedetto Fortini (one register), Piero di ser Mino (one register), Paolo Fortini (three registers), and Leonardo Bruni (four registers) have considerably smaller correspondences left in the records.<sup>111</sup> Ronald G. Witt's hypothesis that the Florentine government would have relied significantly on state letters in diplomatic communication during Coluccio's time is also supported by the quantity and quality of *missive* sent to the King of Hungary.<sup>112</sup> According to the registers, before Coluccio entered into office, Niccolò Monachi, in the capacity of Florentine chancellor, addressed altogether three letters to Louis I.<sup>113</sup> At the same time, Coluccio's dispatches to Louis I, between 1375 and 1382, number 23, almost eight times as many as in the previous period.<sup>114</sup> Following Louis I's death, his daughter, Queen Mary, received six letters from the chancery.<sup>115</sup> Besides her, Elisabeth and Charles of Durazzo (in his capacity as Hungarian King) were among the correspondents.<sup>116</sup> During Salutati's term, the chancery addressed ten letters to Sigismund of Luxembourg.<sup>117</sup> After Coluccio's time, the accuracy of record keeping and the frequency of dispatching diplomatic correspondence, as well as its quality, decline. In the following eighteen years, there are no traces of correspondence with the Hungarian royal court, and the remaining eight letters were written in a relatively short period of time, between 1424 and

111 For the registers see: Monachi: ASF, Signori, Missive, Cancelleria I, vols. 9-14. Salutati: Signori, Missive, Cancelleria I, vols. 15-24, 26. Benedetto Fortini: Signori, Missive, Cancelleria I, vol. 27. Piero di ser Mino: Signori, Missive, Cancelleria I, vol. 28. Paolo Fortini: Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, vols. 29, 30, 31. Vols. 25 and 29 are mixed ones. Bruni: Signori, Missive, Cancelleria I, vols. 32-5. On Salutati's registers see: Langkabel, 'Due Staatsbriefe Coluccio Salutati's', pp. 8-9.

112 Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients*, p. 315.

113 ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 10. fol. 47r, 12. fol. 92r, 13. fol. 36v.

114 For the comprehensive list of missives sent by the Florentine chancery during Coluccio's office see: *Coluccio Salutati cancelliere della repubblica fiorentina*. For the missives sent to the Hungarian royal court see: ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 16. fol. 69r. (02/05/1376); 17. fol. 11v. (04/02/1376); 15. fol. 58r. (04/26/1376); 17. fol. 21r. (04/29/1376); 17. fol. 23r. (05/03/1376); 17. fol. 30v. (05/27/1376); 17. fol. 52v. (08/04/1376); 17. fol. 67v. (09/28/1376); 17. fol. 99r. (03/21/1377); 17. fol. 99r. (03/23/1377); 17. fol. 123r. (07/18/1377); 18. fol. 74v. (10/17/1379); 18. fol. 81v. (11/09/1379); 18. fol. 95r. (12/30/1379); 18. fol. 135v. (04/05/1380); 18. fol. 143v. (04/16/1380); 19. fol. 42v. (09/13/1380); 19. fol. 69r. (10/29/1380); 19. fol. 80r. (12/04/1380); 19. fol. 149v. (07/10/1381); 19. fol. 175v. (09/23/1381); 18. fol. 141r. (s.d.); 18. fol. 141r (s.d.) Besides these letters, Armando Nuzzo cites others as well of which there are no copies in the registers of the chancery. Nuzzo, 'Coluccio Salutati e l'Ungheria'.

115 ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 20.fol.82v. (03/15/1386); 20.fol.12v. (02/10/1388); 21.fol.27v. (05/16/1388); 21.fol.41r. (07/31/1388); 21.fol.85v. (03/06/1389); 24.fol.110r. (02/09/1395).

116 For a letter sent to the queen mother see: ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 17.21r (04/29/1376).

117 ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 21.fol.13r. (02/10/1388); 21.fol.39v. (07/25/1388); 21.fol.45r. (08/17/1388); 21.fol.131v. (09/28/1389); 24. fol.109v. (02/09/1395); 24.fol.121r. (03/28/1395); 24.fol.154r. (09/12/1395); 26. fol.28v. (02/06/1404); 26.fol.51v. (07/11/1404); 26. fol.136r. (12/05/1405).

1432.<sup>118</sup> Since the registers of the Florentine chancery seem to be consistent in this regard, we shall presume that besides the general decrease in the number of *missives*, record-keeping of the Florentine bureaucracy took a very inefficient and unsystematic form. Not only the quantity but also the quality of the dispatches was improved with Coluccio's entrance into the Florentine bureaucracy.

Ronald G. Witt has emphasized that the novelty of Coluccio Salutati's political writings lay in the fact that he developed a historical discourse, which made use of classical examples.<sup>119</sup> The salutations of Coluccio's state letters, addressed to greater powers, became elaborate, to the extent that sometimes they even reached exaggerated proportions.<sup>120</sup> The dispatches sent to the Hungarian ruler were seemingly no exception. Monachi's correspondence with the court contained short, straight-to-the point *missives*, and their *salutatio* was kept to the minimum, calling the Hungarian ruler 'illustrious King and single lord' and 'the most glorious and illustrious King.'<sup>121</sup> Coluccio's letters, instead, were characterized by the extensive use of superlatives, in a similar way to other *missives* addressed to his correspondents of the same rank. The rhetoric Coluccio applied to his correspondence with the Hungarian monarch followed a pattern similar to that found in his letters to other monarchs, for example, the French King.<sup>122</sup> Salutati's state letters had a tremendous effect at the French royal court, so we might expect the same reception in the *aula* in Hungary, which might also explain why Sigismund invited to Buda one of Salutati's followers, Pier Paolo Vergerio.<sup>123</sup> In Salutati's letters, both the Hungarian and the French sovereign were addressed as 'our most serene Father and Lord,' 'Prince, our Father and Lord',

118 ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 32 fols.65r-v (7/4/1429); 32. fols.178v-179r (07/02/1430); 33. fols.76r-78v (21/06/1432); 33. fols.78v-80r (03/07/1432); 30. fol.85v (30/10/1424); 30. fol.104r (1426); 30.fol.104v (1426); 30. fols.114v-115r (24/05/1427).

119 Witt, 'Florentine Politics and the Ruling Class', pp. 243-267.

120 On his style see: Daniela de Rosa, 'Coluccio Salutati notaio e cancelliere'. For an example of the *salutatio* in one of the letters addressed to the French king: 'Serenissime atque gloriosissime principum metuendissime domine nostrum ac populi Florentini columen et refugium singular.' Witt, *Coluccio Salutati and his Public Letters*, pp. 27-28.

121 'Regum illustris et domine'. ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 10. fol. 47r; 'Illustris rex et domine singularis'. Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 12. fol. 92r; 'Gloriosissimo et illutris rex'. Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 13. fol. 36v.

122 For correspondence with the French King see: 'Serenissime atque invictissime princeps.' in *Coluccio Salutati, Political Writings*, pp. 16, 46. For other dispatches to the French King see: ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 20. fol. 30v; 19. fol. 97v; 21. fol. 44; 24. fol. 132v; 24. fol. 93r.

123 On the reception of Salutati's letters at the French court see: Witt, *Hercules at the Crossroads*, pp.125-126. For the letters in which Vergerio refers to Salutati as his master see: *Epistolario di Pier Paolo Vergerio*, pp. 55, 33, 66.

and foremost 'singular benefactor' of the Republic.<sup>124</sup> In a similar way, Witt has also noted that while Niccolò Monachi made no distinction in his state letters between kings and queens, addressing them both as *Rex*, Coluccio was sensitive to the issue.<sup>125</sup> In fact, when corresponding with queens, such as Mary of Hungary and Margaret of Naples, the female versions of these *salutatio* were used, such as 'the most serene and glorious Queen' and 'our most singular Mother and Dame'.<sup>126</sup>

Besides the extensive use of father-son, lord-servant paradigms, Coluccio also frequently recalled the past relations between the Hungarian monarchs and the Florentine government. In Mary's case, he mentioned the amicable contacts the Signoria maintained with her father; while the rhetorical setting of Sigismund's letters followed the same logic: the good contacts with Emperor Charles IV, father of Sigismund, would have provided, in his understanding, the basis for fruitful diplomatic contacts.<sup>127</sup> Coluccio's letters, in spite of their innovative nature, were standardized in their formalities, making no distinction between correspondents of the same rank, and were composed with little to no intention for personalization in their rhetoric. Rigorous record-keeping, eloquence in composing letters, and the emphasis on *missive* over embassies as means of diplomatic communication all indicate that during Coluccio's time, state letters stood as the most important tools for setting Florence in the context of international diplomacy. As part of this view, the amicable contacts with the Hungarian ruler remained an important factor in shaping the foreign affairs of the Republic. The remaining eight letters, written during the chancery of Paolo Fortini and Leonardo Bruni, show little novelty on the rhetorical level and testify to certain changes in the functioning of the chancery.

Following Coluccio's time, state letters seem to have lost their importance in diplomatic communication, resulting in the fact that both Paolo Fortini and Leonardo Bruni put less emphasis on their improvement. State letters were consequently replaced by personal embassies assigned to foreign powers

124 For the letters addressed to Louis I see: 'Serenissime et gloriosissime princeps et benignissime pater et domine noster'. ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 17. fol. 99r; 22. fol. 81v.

125 Witt, *Coluccio Salutati and his Public Letters*, ch.3.

126 For a letter to Margaret see: ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 21. fol. 40r. 'Serenissima et gloriosissima regina, singularissima mater et domina nostra.' For a letter to Mary see: 'Serenissima et gloriosissima regina'. ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 21. fol. 26v.

127 ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 21. fol. 12r; 21. fol. 12v. Earlier, one of his letters addressed to Louis I recalled the memory of the King's great-grandfather, while praising the Angevins. Witt, *In the Footsteps of the Ancients*, p. 313.

with a specific mandate.<sup>128</sup> One of the explanations might be, as Ronald Witt has pointed out, that this was a general tendency throughout Italy, which also led to the transformation of diplomatic practices. Ambassadors such as Rinaldo degli Albizzi proved to be more effective representatives of the Signoria's interests abroad than state letters composed by Paolo Fortini.<sup>129</sup> If we consider the records of the diplomatic contingents assigned to the court of the Hungarian king, we might find inequalities in the quality and the quantity of sources housed by some of the north Italian archives. The earliest information about a diplomatic contingent dispatched by the Florentine government to the King of Hungary dates back to 1347, and was recorded in the Chronicle of Giovanni Villani.<sup>130</sup> This date almost coincides with the earliest report about a Venetian envoy sent to the Kingdom of Hungary in 1348.<sup>131</sup> It was not until 1376, just a year after Coluccio Salutati was nominated to the head of the chancery, that we receive a detailed account of a Florentine diplomatic contingent in Hungary.<sup>132</sup> Since most of the documentation produced by the Florentine chancery that deals with ambassadorships starts with his appointment, the number of Florentine diplomatic missions that precede this period is unclear. Ambassadorships, like state letters, were discussed at the meetings of the secret councils as early as the 1350s. They address the issue of an envoy to Hungary. But there is no evidence that the priors had actually approved the proposals. In spite of the fact that the corresponding registers of the Florentine chancellery starting from 1393 seem to be consistent, the total number of embassies to Sigismund's court remains low compared to the number of contingents which the *Signoria* sent to the neighbouring Italian powers.<sup>133</sup> One very plausible explanation might be the considerable distance and difficulties of the journey between Florence and Buda, which also made the missions extremely expensive. During Coluccio's time two embassies were recorded. The chancery led by Paolo Fortini registered four diplomatic missions and

128 De Rosa, in accordance with Ronald Witt, also emphasizes the inferiority of the style of Leonardo Bruni's state letters compared to Coluccio's. De Rosa, *Coluccio Salutati*, pp. X-XI.

129 Witt, *Coluccio Salutati and his Public Letters*, pp. 21-22.

130 In this particular case, the embassy reached the King in Verona. *Cronaca di Giovanni Villani*, III.12.108, pp. 161-162.

131 For a later copy of a register containing ambassadorships see: Venice, Archivio di Stato di Venezia (hereafter: ASV), Senato, Sindacati, Registri I.

132 For references regarding this particular ambassadorship see: Prajda, 'Egy firenzei sírköve a középkori Budán', pp. 29-35. Prajda, 'Trade and Diplomacy in pre-Medici Florence'.

133 ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive, vols. 1-10.

consequently during Leonardo Bruni's chancery, three more. Among these, only six were heading directly to the Kingdom of Hungary.

In the first case, in 1376, the *Signoria* was seeking alliance with Louis I against Pope Gregory XI. In 1396, the Florentine government dispatched another embassy in order to forge a marriage alliance between Sigismund and the house of Naples.<sup>134</sup> This happened the year after the Count of Mantua assigned his ambassadors to the royal court in Buda.<sup>135</sup> Nine years had passed since Sigismund's accession to the throne, without news about the sending of a diplomatic contingent from Florence. This is no wonder, since several sources underline that the Florentine political elite, during the struggle for the throne between Charles and Sigismund, was in favor of the former. In fact, in 1386, following the news of Charles of Durazzo's coronation as King of Hungary, Coluccio Salutati himself read aloud the letter of the newly made ruler and the Florentine government ordered public celebrations.<sup>136</sup> Instead, the Venetian *Serenissima* in 1387 decided to assign the Venetian nobleman Pantaleone Barbo to the court, accompanied by the notary Lorenzo Monaci, demonstrating their support for Sigismund.<sup>137</sup> By the Treaty of Turin (1381), once a year, a diplomatic contingent was dispatched from Venice to the royal court in order to hand over the 7,000 ducats the *Serenissima* was supposed to pay for the use of the Dalmatian ports.<sup>138</sup> Florentine contingents were surely less frequent than that, at least in the decades preceding the 1420s, which is considered the most active period of Florentine diplomacy in relation to the Hungarian ruler, with four embassies following each other

134 For the instructions to the ambassadors see: ASF, Dieci di Balia, Legazioni e Commissarie 2, fols. 17r bis-18r. In response to this, the ambassadors, messer Grazia Castellani and messer Andrea Da Montebuoni prepared a written report about what they accomplished during their stay at the royal court. In the document, they give a detailed account to the *Signoria* of how they performed their task and represented the Florentine government at the royal court. ASF, Dieci di Balia, Relazioni di Ambasciatori 1, fols. 20v-21r.

135 ASMA, Archivio Gonzaga, busta 533, n. 3, busta 531, n. 1. Thallóczy, 'Mantovai követjárás Budán 1395'.

136 Following the coronation, the news reached Florence by 20 January, when the Standardbearer, Dinozzo Stefani, suggested holding public celebrations in the city. ASF, Consulte e Pratiche 25,30r. For the diplomatic correspondence see: ASF, Signori Missive I, Cancelleria 19. For the detailed description of the celebrations see: *Alle bocche della piazza*, p. 61.

137 The ambassador met Sigismund on 7 April 1387 at the palace in Buda. E. Kovács, 'Mária királyné kiszabadítása', pp. 926-931. Sigismund proposed to Venice by the ambassador to forge an alliance for the release of Queens Mary and Elisabeth.

138 Until 1400, they were sometimes the ambassadors who brought money to Buda or brokers of a local bank; Vieri de' Medici, for example, took money to Hungary. For the payment in 1388 see: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, vol. I, docs. 762, 882.

in the years 1424, 1426, 1427, and 1428.<sup>139</sup> As for the 1430s, there are no cases known to us when Sigismund might have welcomed incoming Florentine ambassadors on Hungarian territory.

The richness of the Florentine National Archives regarding the diplomatic contacts between the Florentine Republic and the Kingdom of Hungary was discovered in the nineteenth century by the Hungarian Ernő Simonyi (1821-1882).<sup>140</sup> His work consists of complete transcriptions of documents, drawn from the collections of the Signori, the Dieci di Balìa, and the Carte Stroziane.<sup>141</sup> It has remained until now a manuscript, kept by the Manuscript Collection of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and provides fertile ground for research to scholars with limited access to the Florentine National Archives.

In the interwar period, Jolán Balogh (1900-1988), also Hungarian, started to publish a series of studies concerning the artistic connections between Florence and Hungary, but the period of Sigismund of Luxembourg's reign remained marginal to her studies.<sup>142</sup> One of her articles, dealing with Andrea Scolari's service as Bishop of *Varadinum*, describes in detail the fragmented family archives of the Scolari family, earlier mentioned by Cesare Guasti, which are located among the documents of the Florentine Benedictine Abbey (*Badia Fiorentina*).<sup>143</sup> Balogh's groundbreaking narrative, which put Hungarian art into the context of the development and spread of the Florentine Renaissance, won many followers, and consequent generations have been using her works as points of reference when studying Florentine-Hungarian relations.<sup>144</sup>

However, it was not until the 1980s that Zsuzsa Teke at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences initiated research on Florentines' trade in Hungary during Sigismund of Luxembourg's reign, benefiting mainly from the

139 For these diplomatic contingents see: Prajda, 'A Magyar Királyság és a Firenzei Köztársaság'. In 1428, the Venetian ambassador, Marco Dandolo visited the royal court. For a copy of a letter addressed to him see: ASMA, busta 2185.

140 The first part of the work was prepared in 1863, which was completed by further archival researches in 1864 and in 1866-1867. The timespan of the transcriptions ranges between 1380 and 1492. Lukinich, *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Történettudományi Bizottsága másolat- és kéziratgyűjteményének ismertetése*, pp. 15-16.

141 Simonyi, *Flórenczi Okmánytár*. MTA Kézirattára Mb 4994 I-II.

142 Balogh, *A művészet Mátyás király udvarában*. Its revised version: *Ibid.*, *Mátyás király és a művészet*. *Ibid.*, 'Néhány adat Firenze és Magyarország kulturális kapcsolatainak történetéhez'. For Jolán Balogh's activity see: Török, 'Jolán Balogh'.

143 Balogh, 'Andrea Scolari'. The Scolari family archives were earlier mentioned by Cesare Guasti. *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. p. 588.

144 For an exhaustive literature of the subject, see: Prajda, 'Florentine Merchant Companies'.

documents of the Simonyi collection and the first *Catasto*. The novelties of Teke's theoretical and empirical findings were summarized in two Hungarian-language publications, which have since been published in Italian.<sup>145</sup> Even though Teke had restricted access to Florentine sources, her chronology of Florentine merchants' settlement in the region, which considers as a turning point the consolidation of Sigismund's power in 1404, is underlined by more in-depth studies as well.<sup>146</sup> Following in her footsteps, Krisztina Arany has recently prepared an index of Florentine merchants who traded in Hungary and published a few articles on Florentine businessmen in Hungary.<sup>147</sup> Meanwhile, though the conceptual framework of her research mirrors Teke's hypotheses, the documentary evidence consists mostly of the 1427 *Catasto*, the *Zsigmond kori oklevéltár*, and Simonyi's manuscript.

As Teke has pointed out, it might be partially due to the increased number of sources, which have been preserved in the Florentine National Archives, that up to the turn of the sixteenth century Sigismund's reign seemingly witnessed the largest influx of Florentine merchants into the Kingdom of Hungary. Thanks to their business profile, Florentine merchants' migration was typically an urban phenomenon. Their settlement fell into two categories: they either installed themselves nearby mining towns or in royal towns, which were connected to the network of long-distance trade. In Transylvania, we find them, for example, in Dej (RO), *Hermannstadt* (Sibiu, RO), and *Varadinum* (Oradea, RO), locations that have salt mines and salt chambers. Among them, the Mannini, studied by István Draskóczy, operated in the region as Pippo Scolari's officers and their sons continued to work in the royal administration of salt until the mid-fifteenth century.<sup>148</sup> Florentines also received employment in royal minting; the case of Francesco di Bernardo da Carmignano (earlier noted as Francesco Bernardi) shows that the Hungarian florin, introduced by Louis I, was minted during Sigismund under the supervision of Florentine mint-masters.<sup>149</sup>

145 Her first work on the subject was published in 1984. Teke, 'Az 1427.évi catasto'.

146 Teke, 'Firenzei üzletemberek Magyarországon'. Ibidem, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok, kereskedők Magyarországon'. Ibid., 'Operatori economici in Ungheria'.

147 Arany, 'Firenzei kereskedők, bankárok és hivatalviselők'.

148 Draskóczy, 'Olaszok a 15. századi Erdélyben'. Ibidem, 'Italiener in Siebenbürgen im 15. Jahrhundert'.

149 Gyöngyössi, 'Zsigmond király aranypénz-verésének első korszaka'. Ibidem, 'Florenus Hungaricalis'. Draskóczy, 'Der ungarische Goldgulden'. Mályusz, 'Az izmaelita pénzverőjegyek kérdéséhez'.



Among the free royal towns, Buda, *Gradec* (Zagreb, HR), Košice (SK), and *Pressburg* (Bratislava, SK) surely had Florentine inhabitants.<sup>150</sup> So far, *Gradec* is the only known place where Florentines were elected to be members of the town council.<sup>151</sup> The town was bordered by the bishopric town of Zagreb and was on the main road that connected *Segna* (Senj, HR) to Buda and the Hungarian hinterland. The Kingdom of Croatia, a subject of the Hungarian crown since the eleventh century, surely had a good number of Florentines residing temporarily on her territory. Besides that, Buda, as a major trade centre and the seat of Sigismund of Luxembourg's court, can be considered as the centre of Florentines' settlement in the region. Back then, the town, which was constituted roughly of what is today the castle district and some nearby lands, was hardly comparable in size to contemporary Florence with a population about 15-20 per cent of the Tuscan city.<sup>152</sup> The local Florentine community was part of a more extended group of merchants of Italian origins, comprising also Genoese and Venetian citizens. The former had already been granted trade privileges by Louis I of Anjou, which were renewed by King Sigismund.<sup>153</sup> Besides members of the Sorba family, there is very little evidence of their presence in Hungary.<sup>154</sup> Only the Milanese ambassador, visiting the court in 1426, happened to be

150 In the 1390s, Jacopo di Francesco Ventura, an active member of the meetings of the secret councils lived in *Pressburg*. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár* I. doc. 2655. (25/10/1392), doc. 2880 (26/03/1391), doc. 3971 (08/05/1395). Probably his brother was Giovanni Ventura, who in 1375, submitted a proposal to the Council of the Popolo regarding the textiles sent by a certain Giovanni Gianni and others to the Hungarian King. ASF, LB, 40. fol. 179. Majorossy, 'A Krisztus Teste Konfraternitás'. *Ibid.*, 'Late Medieval Confraternities in Pressburg'. For his participation in the meetings of the secret councils, between 19 December 1391 and 6 May 1401 see: ASF, CP 29. fols. 9v, 155v, 156v, 158r, 160r, 168r, 169v; 30. fols. 2r, 5v, 6r. 31. 27v, 33v, 34v, 40v; 33. fols. 95v, 146r; 34. fols. 17v, 23v, 24r, 25r, 44v, 48v, 174v, 179r. He, as the research of Judit Majorossy has also underlined, became a respected member of the local community as well as remained actively involved in Florentine politics. In Košice, the Talenti brothers, Giovanni and Simone, received citizenship. Already in the 1380s, they appeared in the Kingdom where they covered several royal offices, such as count of the salt chambers, the royal chamber, and the *lucrum camerae*. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*. I. doc. 5645; II/1. doc. 4749. See also: Teke, 'Firenzei üzletemberek'.

151 Budak, 'I fiorentini nella Slavonia e nella Croazia'. See also: Škrebliin, 'Ethnic Groups in Zagreb's Gradec'.

152 András Kubinyi and József Laszlovszky estimated the population of late medieval Buda at about 6000-8000 inhabitants. Kubinyi and Laszlovszky, *Népességtörténeti kérdések a késő középkori Magyarországon*, pp. 37-40. Kubinyi and Laszlovszky, *Völker und Kulturen im mittelalterlichen Ungarn*.

153 Pach, 'A Levante-kereskedelem erdélyi útvonala'.

154 ASF, Signori, Missive, Cancelleria I. 13. fol. 36v.



mentioned as having Genoese origins.<sup>155</sup> Since there has been no systematic research in the Genoese archives, we must presume that their number, in comparison to Florentines, was limited. Similarly, the Venetian community might have been more sizeable in Dalmatia, but not in other parts of the state. Sporadic information about *cittadini originari* from Venice living in one of the free royal towns, such as Buda, *Pressburg*, or *Gradec*, during the reign of Sigismund does appear in sources.<sup>156</sup> One example from the 1390s shows that, like Florentines, they also cooperated with local citizens and sold their goods in Buda.<sup>157</sup>

Some of these Italian merchants kept their houses and shops in the street of *Platea Italicorum* (mentioned in Florentine sources as *Via dei Latini*), identified today as *Országház utca*.<sup>158</sup> Among them was Pippo Scolari himself.<sup>159</sup> In addition to Scolari, in 1390, Nofri di Francesco de'Bardi also owned a house in Buda.<sup>160</sup> Two decades later, around 1410, Francesco di Bernardo da Carmignano was registered in the already mentioned *Platea*.<sup>161</sup> In 1427, Simone di Piero Melanesi also rented a house there from the heirs of a Venetian citizen.<sup>162</sup> Furthermore, the four Florentine tombs found

155 Rinaldo degli Albizzi mentions Bartolomeo Mosca da Genova. *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. p. 580. Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*. XIII. doc. 386.

156 A tax declaration of the Melanesi mentions the house possessed previously by the Venetian Daniello Cini in Buda. ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 655v. In 1426, Rinaldo degli Albizzi refers to the factors of the Venetian Niccolò Sorger in Vienna. *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. pp. 579-580. On the basis of this, it is possible that Hans de Sorger, cited in a document issued by the city council of *Pressburg*, was also of Venetian origins. *Zsigmond-kori oklevéltár*. VII. doc.1294. Similarly, two other Venetians, Luca di Giovanni Bomolo and Zacaria de Gangioni, are mentioned in the town of Zagreb. E. Kovács, *Mária királyné kiszabadítása*, p. 934.

157 An example of Venetian textile trade to Hungary also suggests that Venetians might have used the same local brokers and retail cloth merchants in Buda as Florentines did. Michael Nadler, a German merchant and citizen of Buda, appears in Venetian sources in connection with textile trade: ASV, Giudici di Petizione 22. fol.77r. At the same time, he is also listed as debtor of the Melanesi company in Buda: ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 654v.

158 Among them were Pippo Scolari, Nofri Bardi, Tommaso Melanesi, Francesco di Bernardo da Carmignano, and Niccolò Sorger. For Sorger, see: *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. pp. 579-581. For Nofri Bardi: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 1379. For Francesco Bernardo, see: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II/2. docs. 7379, 7562. See also: Végh, *Buda. The Multi-Ethnic Capital of Medieval Hungary*.

159 Végh, *Buda város középkori helyrajza*. Ibid., *The Multi-Ethnic Capital of Medieval Hungary*.

160 The document also mentions a certain Bartolomeo da Padua who earlier lived there. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 1379. (27/02/1390)

161 '[...] In civitate nostra Budensi in platea Galicali [...]. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II. doc. 7379. (23/02/1410), doc. 7562 (06/05/1410)

162 'Una casa a pigione posta in Buda nella Via de latini, dall'erede di Daniello Cini da Vinegia [...]. ASF Catasto 46. fol. 655v.

during the excavations of the nearby Dominican Church suggest that in the fifteenth century this might have served as the Florentines' parish.<sup>163</sup>

It has been generally accepted, so far, that only Germans and Hungarians had legal representatives in the city during Sigismund's reign. However, lately several new pieces of evidence have supported that, at least as early as the 1390s, Italians maintained a joint consulate in the city.<sup>164</sup> Though the Hungarian National Archives lack documents of a commercial nature, the so-called Buda law book, a record of the laws and customs of the city, does not refer to the Italian consul either. However, the law book – probably written between 1405 and 1421, and in German, for personal use – would not necessarily record the existence of an independent organization of Italians.<sup>165</sup> Despite the fact that the city statutes strictly regulated the activity of non-indigenous merchants who did not possess citizenship in Buda, their business conduct was not the focus of the Buda law book. Since the book is mainly concerned with German merchants' privileges in the city, and if there was very little overlap between the two groups on organizational and jurisdictional levels, then there would have been no reason at all to mention the Italian consul. The four corresponding sources, surviving in four different archival units in the Florentine National Archives, point out that roughly between 1392 and 1431, the joint Latin consulate operated as the permanent jurisdictional and organizational system of Florentine merchants in the city. The dates are negotiable, since the earliest document refers to the ex-Latin consul and the last refers to the election of a new Latin vice judge.

The existence of this organization system cannot be thought of without the Florentines obtaining collective privileges. In 1375, the Florentine Signoria had already delivered a request to Louis I, an indicator that negotiations on that front might have started before Sigismund's time.<sup>166</sup> The Latin consulate in Buda was probably one of the earliest of such organizations that included Florentine merchants outside Italy, and its operation might have embraced the entire period of Sigismund of Luxembourg's reign.

The first consul known by name, Giovanni Saracino, was of Paduan origins, and was an important member of the royal administration, studied

163 For the description of the tombs, see: Lővei, 'Mittelalterliche Grabdenkmäler in Buda', pp. 353-354. For the study of the ambassador, Bene di Jacopo del Bene's tomb see: Prajda, 'Egy firenzei sírköve'.

164 Prajda, 'Justice in the Florentine Trading Community'.

165 For the German edition of the Law Book see: Mollay, *Das Ofner Stadtrecht*. For the Buda Law Book about selling Italian wine in the city: Blazovich and Schmidt, *Buda város jogkönyve*, p. 423, article 209. On commercial goods coming from Italy: ID., p. 525, article 405.

166 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 17. fol. 52v.

by Boglárka Weisz.<sup>167</sup> Giovanni's brother, Jacobo, appears in Hungarian sources as early as the 1350s, governing the chambers in Szerém (Srijem, HR) and Pécs. Before that, he had been working as a shopkeeper (*apothecarius*) in Buda.<sup>168</sup> Giovanni was first mentioned in 1371 as a *castellanus* in Nyitra County (Nitra, SK).<sup>169</sup> The Saracino brothers occupied various offices in Hungary, including the administration of salt, taxes, and mints. In 1382, Giovanni had already managed the thirties tax (*tricesima*) with a Florentine merchant named Francesco di Bernardo da Carmignano.<sup>170</sup> Between 1382 and 1387, the sources mention another officer of the thirties, the very same Nanni (Giovanni) Boscoli, whose case was brought before Giovanni as Latin consul.<sup>171</sup> In 1389, Giovanni and Francesco were still at their positions, at approximately the same time when Giovanni might have been elected to the consul's office. He was also promoted to noble rank by King Sigismund and died sometime before 13 June 1402.<sup>172</sup> Later, in the early 1430s, two Florentine brothers, Giovanni and Leonardo di Nofri de'Bardi, similarly royal officers, occupied the position. In their absence, which might have lasted only a relatively short period, a Siense was elected for Latin vice judge.<sup>173</sup> This vice judge, Sano degli Ugurgeri, was also mentioned in 1435 in the letter sent by Pope Eugene IV, urging the restitution of Antonio Popoleschi's goods by King Sigismund.<sup>174</sup> Antonio worked as a representative of the firm of Filippo di Simone Capponi and

167 A document issued by the chancellery of Ladislaus of Durazzo informs us that the brothers were of Paduan origins. Weisz, 'A szerémi és pécsi kamarák', p. 40. Giovanni Saracino worked also with another administrator of Paduan origins. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 4661.

168 He was also mentioned as *magistro Saracheno*. Weisz, 'A szerémi és pécsi kamarák', pp. 39-40.

169 Weisz, 'A szerémi és pécsi kamarák', p. 42.

170 Weisz, 'A szerémi és pécsi kamarák', p. 45. He was mentioned in 1387, together with Francesco as *Johannes Sarachenus*. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 8. In the 1370s, Francesco was also responsible for the transfer of ecclesiastical revenues from Hungary to the Apostolic Chamber. Renouard, 'Relations', p. 310.

171 Pach, 'A harmincadvám az Anjou-korban', 265-266. Weisz, 'A szerémi és pécsi kamarák', p. 46.

172 For Johannes' settlement in Buda, see: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II. doc. 2043. Already in 1389, he used the names of Mesztegynyői or Százdi. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. docs. 87, 4659. He also became proprietary of noble estates in Hungary. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 4762. For his death see: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II/1. doc. 1727.

173 '[...] Dinanzi a voi Sano degli Ugorgieri da Siena vice giudice de latini in luogo di messer Lionardo di messer Giovanni di Nofri da Boymoy [...]. ASF, Mercanzia 4379. fol. 98v. The document talks about the brothers, Leonardo and Giovanni di Nofri de'Bardi. Giovanni de'Bardi is mentioned as Latin judge: Mercanzia 7120. fol. 254v.

174 Sano was mentioned in the document as a Siense citizen, without any reference to his office. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri Vaticani 359. fol. 236v. For a short summary of the case see: *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*. II. doc. 393.

Zanobi di Giovanni Panciatichi in Hungary. He was among those detained in royal prison, and the mediation of the vice judge might have been necessary between local and Italian authorities.

Despite the existence of a Latin consulate, the administration of justice had a very complex path in the local Florentine community. In case of business misconduct, there might have been several competent judges and institutions that intervened. Consuls of the Florentine *nazioni* typically acted as judges for the merchants, a practice which might have been followed also in Buda.<sup>175</sup> Besides the Latin consul, other domestic Florentine courts had the right to settle disputes between the interested parties, including the corresponding guilds and the *Mercanzia* as supreme court. Several entries in the registers of the Wool Guild suggest that Florentines, with pending affairs in Hungary, often turned to its consuls for protection of their business interests against their fellow citizens. For instance, in two cases occurring in the late 1380s, wool entrepreneurs like Gabriello di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi and Zanobi di Neri Macigni sued their dealers because they had refused to pay them interest.<sup>176</sup> In the absence of similar court cases of the other major guilds, we can only assume that they similarly handled several appeals at the request of Florentines trading in Hungary. Even though guilds had the right to administer justice internally, businessmen frequently brought their claims also before the Merchant Court.<sup>177</sup> The story of the Boscoli-Portinari firm in Buda eloquently illustrates how the *Mercanzia* might have fulfilled its duties in such cases.<sup>178</sup>

175 Quertier has noted that in Pisa the notary (notaio-sindaco) acted as judge for Florentines. Quertier, 'Guerres et richesses des nations'.

176 In the first case, likely occurring on 13 May 1388, the wool entrepreneur Zanobi di Neri Macigni submitted a petition to the guild consuls because of 2400 Florentine florins that Nofri di Francesco dello Stanghetta owed him for wool cloth he had transported to Hungary. ASF, Arte della Lana 542. fol. 13r. Probably in the same year, on 12 February, Gabriello di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi also brought a case before the guild consuls. He accused Giovanni and Michele di Benedetto da Carmignano of failing to pay for the wool textiles that Gabriello had sent to Hungary, which were consequently sold by Maruccio di Pagolo Marucci in Zagreb. Arte della Lana 542. fol. 28v.

177 Recently, Cédric Quertier has published insights into the tribunal process the *Mercanzia* used to handle bankruptcy and tensions between Florentine and foreign merchants outside the walls of the city-state. Quertier, 'La stigmatization des migrants à l'épreuve des faits'.

178 Other cases involving Florentine merchants in Hungary were also brought before the merchant court. For example, Matteo Scolari, Fronte di Piero di Fronte, and Antonio di Santi established a company in 1406 in Buda. The liquidation of the firm was started on Fronte's initiative, while the Merchant Court mediated between the parties, since the debtors acknowledged the genuineness of the claims. ASF *Mercanzia* 11312. fols. 5r-v.

Initially, the Florentine merchant court set up a commission in order to settle a dispute between several parties, including Ardingo de Ricci, Gualtieri Portinari, and their firm on one side and Giovanni di Bandino Boscoli's heirs on the other side.<sup>179</sup> Giovanni, by his account book, left many debtors in Buda, among them the voivode of Transylvania, István Laczkfi, the Archbishop of Esztergom, Miklós priest of Kapus (Căpușu Mic and Căpușu Mare, RO), the Bishop of Eger, and Pál, the brother of the Bishop of Pécs.<sup>180</sup> Recuperating debts from dignitaries in Hungary was beyond the capacity of a Florentine firm; in cases in which they did not wish to pay, merchants had no other option than to complain to different authorities and continuously beg the debtors for payment. The *Mercanzia* also lacked authority and power against these Hungarian dignitaries, having no other tools at their disposal than to continuously send letters to them. Approximately three years after the commission had been formed, Gualtieri Portinari, in cooperation with the *Mercanzia*, dispatched an agent named Agostino di Pagolo Marucci to Buda to check Giovanni Boscoli's account books. His trip was also designed in such a way that he would recuperate the credits of the firm. On this occasion, the merchant court contacted the ex-Latin consul in an attempt to facilitate the agent's access to the account books and then wrote a letter to one of the major debtors, the Archbishop of Esztergom, asking him to settle his debt with the agent. Besides debtors in Hungary, the *Mercanzia* would have also dealt with the firm's other financial claims against some Italian business partners engaged in trade in Hungary. The heirs, along with the mother company, could fulfill the requests only by the complete liquidation of the branch in Buda and by selling Giovanni Boscoli's mobile and immovable properties in the city. Even under the supervision of the Merchant Court, the affairs were not settled for years.<sup>181</sup> The Court even used means of diplomacy in facilitating cases of this sort. On those occasions, the Florentine chancellery contacted the authorities in Hungary and took a stand, though a very humble one, against business misconduct. In some cases, diplomatic correspondence reached the highest level between the *Signoria* and King Sigismund himself.

179 ASF Mercanzia 11310. fols. 2r, 32v.

180 The priest was addressed as bishop in the letter. ASF Mercanzia 11310. fols. 75v, 43r-v, 45r.

181 The former agent Agostino Marucci's attempt to close Boscoli's business affairs in Hungary was not entirely successful when, in 1390, another agent, Giovanni Tosinghi, arrived in Buda. He was sent to Hungary, probably by the Merchant Court, in accordance with the two remaining partners for recuperating the company's credits and for making the account books available for inspection. ASF, Mercanzia 11310. fols. 35r, 44r-v.

Some Florentine merchants acquired citizenship in Buda, and therefore their jurisdictional cases might have fallen under the authority of the town court judges.<sup>182</sup> Furthermore, King Sigismund's order, introduced sometime before 1428, allowed the town court judges of Buda to act in cases of foreign merchants who were trading on her territory.<sup>183</sup> This might have considerably weakened the role the Latin consul played in the resolution of business conflicts. Maybe because of this new order, the Florentine Merchant Court also sent a letter to the town court judges of Buda, asking for their support in the Boscoli case.<sup>184</sup>

Becoming inhabitants of the feudally structured Kingdom of Hungary might have represented not insignificant challenges for Florentine merchants. Not only the jurisdictional circumstances were completely different from those in Florence, but also the centralized market might have limited international merchants' possibilities. For them, the royal and baronial courts were the most important markets in which to merchandize their luxury goods. Therefore, without any support in the royal court, they might have found themselves only on the margins of long-distance trade.

Some of these Florentines probably became involved in diplomacy in order to obtain favorable market possibilities. As we have already seen, the Florentine political elite kept a close eye on the domestic politics in Hungary and tried to maintain favorable diplomatic relations with its ruler. Following Louis I's death, the Florentine political elite had clearly expressed their wish to support Charles of Durazzo (1345-1386), King of Naples, in obtaining the Hungarian crown. In return for their support, Florentine politicians might have expected that Charles would provide them with a strong diplomatic alliance. Thanks to the opposing barons, headed by the Horváti brothers who did not wish to have Sigismund as their king, Charles was crowned King of Hungary in December 1385. Following the news of the coronation, Coluccio Salutati himself read aloud the letter of the newly made ruler and the Florentine government ordered public celebrations and decided to

182 Foreign merchants were not allowed to engage in any commercial activity without the consent of the town court judges and the local merchant community, and once arriving in Buda, they were required to sell their goods there. *Buda város jogkönyve*, pp. 348-355, articles 74-78. The city regulations also prevented domestic merchants from forming partnerships with foreign merchants. *Buda város jogkönyve*, p. 360.

183 Skorka, 'Levél a városháza tornyából'.

184 For the letter addressed to 'Judicibus juratis in Regno Hungarie'. see: ASF, Mercanzia 11310. fol. 75v.

assign ambassadors to Hungary.<sup>185</sup> Charles did not enjoy his reign for long, though, as he was killed two months later on the orders of the queen mother, Louis's widow, Elizabeth. It was only after the deliberation of her daughter, Queen Mary, from the prison of the Horváti, that the marriage between the Queen and Sigismund took place. The devotion of Horváti, János (d. 1394), and Pál (d. 1394), without any doubt, was at the core of Charles's success in obtaining the Hungarian crown. Following Charles's murder, the Horváti organized a rebellion against Sigismund and the queen, capturing and killing several participants, among them Miklós Garai, who was the count palatine, the queen mother, and two other barons. As a Florentine chronicle commemorates, the heads of the three barons who were responsible for Charles's murder had been exposed in Florence for two days before they were taken to Naples to Charles's widow.<sup>186</sup>

All these events emphasize that Florentine merchants, and with them Florentine diplomacy, might have played a significant intermediary role between the Horváti and the court of Naples. In fact, unlike the Venetians, who sent a diplomatic contingent to congratulate Sigismund on his accession to the throne, there is no information about a Florentine embassy to Hungary for nine years following the event. The Horváti's contacts with the Florentine diplomacy dated back at least to the 1380s, preceding Charles's arrival to the Kingdom.<sup>187</sup> At that time, Pál Horváti sojourned several times to the court of Naples. In 1388, in the Signoria's letter, dispatched to Joanna II of Naples, he was mentioned together with Luca di Giovanni del Pecchia, a Florentine merchant, who was simultaneously trading in the court of Naples and in Buda.<sup>188</sup>

Luca's family was completely new on the Florentine social and political scene. Their name originated probably from his father Giovanni's

185 Following Charles's coronation, the news reached Florence by 20 January, when the Standardbearer of Justice, Dinozzo Stefani, suggested holding public celebrations in the city. ASF, CP 25, fol. 30r. For the diplomatic correspondence, see: ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 19. For the detailed description of the celebrations, see: *Alle bocche della piazza*, p. 61.

186 'E a dì XXV d'aghosto (the *vendetta* took place on 25 July, a month before) furono rechate in Firenze tre teste di tre baroni che furono chaporali a ucidere il re Charllo, quella del gran conte (Miklós Garai) e di due altri baroni, e stettono in palagio de' Signori tutto uno dì e due dì nello albergho de Leone e videle chiuunque volle. A dì XXVIII si partirono di Firenze e furono portate a Napoli alla reina Margherita, donna che fu de re Charllo.' *Alle bocche della piazza*, p. 64. On Charles's death see: Stefani, *Cronaca Fiorentina*, pp. 440-442.

187 ASF, Missive, I Cancelleria 21, fol. 130r. The correspondence between the Signoria János Horváthi, in the first years of 1380: Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria 19, fols. 62v, 151r.

188 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 21, fol. 26v.



appellative.<sup>189</sup> Luca, a retail cloth merchant himself, and his two brothers were members of the Por Santa Maria Guild.<sup>190</sup> The earliest reference to him in Florentine politics appears in the minutes of the secret councils from 1380, when Bernardo di Sandro Talani, a merchant with a business profile in Hungary, advised the councils to send ambassadors to Charles of Durazzo, among them Luca del Pecchia.<sup>191</sup> However, it was not until 1383 that his first speech was recorded.<sup>192</sup> Following that, he spoke all together nineteen times at the secret councils.<sup>193</sup> On 21 March 1387, for example, he urged the Priors to dispatch ambassadors to Queen Margaret to convince her to go to Hungary.<sup>194</sup> Though the exact details of his service for the house of Durazzo remain unclear, in 1400 he was honored by Charles' son with the donation of six islands located on the Dalmatian Coastline.<sup>195</sup> Luca, as a respected international merchant and politician of his time, surely played some intermediary role between the Durazzo and the barons opposing King Sigismund in Hungary. However, Emir O. Filipović claims that Luca might have been employed by the Bosnian King as well in order to further his own ambitious plan in Dalmatia. Given the political climate in Hungary, Tvrtko Kotromanić attempted to turn the situation to his advantage and possibly expand the borders of the Bosnian Kingdom by gaining access to the revenues of the Dalmatian trade. In fact, ten years earlier, in 1390, a letter of the Florentine Signoria informs us that Kotromanić named Luca count of the islands of Korčula, Hvar, and Brač.<sup>196</sup> We hear about him for the last time in 1403, when Ladislaus of Durazzo, upon his arrival to Hungary, was

189 There is no trace of the family in the 1378 Estimo.

190 Jacopo del Pecchia and partners silk manufacturers (setaiuoli): AOI, Estranei 188. fol. 157v, ASF, Arte di Por Santa Maria, 7. fol. 146r, ASF, Arte dei Medici e Speziali 46. fol. 24v. His brother, Jacopo, was a retail cloth merchant. Arte dei Medici e Speziali 7. fol. 92v. In December 1386, Luca was elected to the guild consul. Arte dei Medici e Speziali 46. fol. 24v.

191 'Bernardus Sandri pro Duodecim dixit quod in consilio proponatur idem sicut Gonfalonerii [...] Lucas Pecchie remittantur ad campum ut explorentur et detur sibi negotia provisio.' ASF, CP 19. fol. 45r. 'Bernardus Sandri pro Duodecim dixit [...] Ambaxiata mittantur ad dominum Carolum ita quod fiat concordia et mittantur Lucas Pecchie cum eis.' CP 19. fol. 54r (09/10/1380).

192 ASF, CP 22. fol. 7v.

193 ASF, CP 26. fol. 163r; 31. fols. 49v, 57v, 86v, 95r, 105v, 127r; 33. fols. 49r; 35. fols. 102v, 120v, 129v, 151r, 159r, 162; 36. fols. 17v, 41r, 49v, 57v, 62r.

194 'Lucas Iohannis dixit quod mittantur duo oratores ad reginam [...]. ASF, CP 26. fols. 11r. On 15 January 1388, he raised the same issue. CP 26. fol. 163r.

195 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II/1. doc. 671.

196 For a detailed analysis of the letter see: Filipović, 'Pismo firentinske vlade kralju Tvrtku Kotromaniću'.



crowned King.<sup>197</sup> While Luca, following Ladislaus's unsuccessful attempt to obtain control over the Kingdom, disappears from the sources, his former apprentice, Pippo di Stefano Scolari, was raised to baronial rank by King Sigismund.

<sup>197</sup> 'Luca Iohannis del Pecchia dixit idem quod dominus Donatus et mictantur oratorum in Franciam et recomendatur ei fili regis Karoli.' ASF, CP 31. fol. 49r. He delivered his last speech on 3 January 1403. CP 36. fol. 17v. He might have spoken even in 1404; however, there are no verbalized meetings that survived from that year.



Figure 1 Pippo Scolari by Andrea del Castagno, Uffizi Gallery, Florence



The publication of the image was authorized by the Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali.

## II The Centre of the Network: The Scolari Family

According to the biography of Jacopo di Poggio Bracciolini, Pippo started his career sometime in the early 1380s at Luca del Pecchia's shop in Buda. In 1404, at the end of the struggle for the Hungarian throne, his name had already reached his native Florence as a favorite of King Sigismund.

The fresco cycle of *Famous Men*, painted by Andrea del Castagno, around 1450, for the private palace of the Florentine Carducci family in Legnaia, is composed of three distinct groups of biblical and historical figures: four women of the Old Testament, the literate triad of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, and three military captains of Florentine origins, Farinata degli Uberti, Niccolò Acciaiuoli, and Pippo Scolari.<sup>1</sup> Earlier scholarship did not establish any direct connection between the Carducci and the only near contemporary sitter of the painting, Pippo Scolari. However, according to the testimonies of archival documents, the Carducci and the Scolari knew each other very well.

Josephine M. Dunn claims that the frescoes were ordered by one of Giovanni Carducci's sons, most likely Niccolò, the possible owner of the villa.<sup>2</sup> Already before 1426, the buildings owned by the Carducci, Bartolomeo and Niccolò di Giovanni in Legnaia, were connected to the Scolari brothers. In 1417, Matteo's brother-in-law, Antonio di Catellino Infangati, rented a house there directly from Niccolò Carducci.<sup>3</sup> Niccolò was the

1 The frescoes are housed today in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Andrea del Castagno, *Ciclo Uomini famosi*, Galleria degli Uffizi, inventario San Marco e Cenacoli, n.173.

2 By analyzing the earlier tax declarations of the family, Josephine M. Dunn holds that only the brothers Filippo and Niccolò di Giovanni mentioned that they possessed lands in the parish of Santa Maria a Soffiano, Legnaia, location of the later Carducci villa. She has also mentioned that Giovanni Carducci spoke in the secret councils in favour of the alliance with King Sigismund against Ladislaus of Naples. Dunn, 'Andrea del Castagno e i Carducci', p. 260. However, she has also showed that the property of Filippo, listed in the 1427 catasto is not identical with the one purchased later by the Pandolfini, as earlier scholarship suggested. But rather, it was the property of Niccolò Carducci, given in his 1427 tax declaration. Ibid., 'Andrea del Castagno's Famous Men and Women', pp. 264-265.

3 Antonio Infangati wrote in his account book: 'Ricordo chome Antonio sarto che ssta alla volta a Legnaia tolse per me proprio affitto un luogho cio'è una chasetta e chon un orto al lato a Bernardo d'Ugholino di Bonsi di sopra la volta a Legnaia per la strada d'andare a Schandici per pregio di fi. quindici per l'anno da Nicholò di Giovanni Carducci [...]. ASF, Corp. Rel Sopp. 97. fol.112r. In 1421, Baldinaccio di Catellino Infangati also appears in a trade involving Niccolò Carducci. Their father, Giovanni Carducci earlier bought the Torre del Leone from messer Andrea

son-in-law of Matteo di Scelto Tinghi, a merchant with a business profile in Hungary.<sup>4</sup> Later, Bartolomeo Carducci (b. c. 1371) bought another house in Legnaia, which earlier belonged to the Bishop, Andrea Scolari.<sup>5</sup> The Carducci brothers also appear as merchants doing business with members of the Scolaris' inner circle.<sup>6</sup> But, most importantly, in 1426, Bartolomeo di Giovanni Carducci was named by Pippo as one of the executors of his brother Matteo's testament. In 1427, he had even rented a house in Florence from one of Pippo's heirs, Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari.<sup>7</sup> Bartolomeo, therefore, was surely a member of the tight group of Florentines who worked in close cooperation with the baron and enjoyed his support and friendship.<sup>8</sup> It was therefore far from accidental that Pippo Scolari received a place on Andrea del Castagno's cycle as the sole contemporary sitter for the composition. The image, in fact, may represent the gratitude or admiration that members of the Carducci family nurtured for the baron. Many Florentines who worked in the Kingdom of Hungary might have developed similar sentiments for Pippo, who was seemingly generous in providing political support for his fellow citizens and in securing secular and ecclesiastical offices for them.

Pippo Scolari's figure in Andrea del Castagno's painting represents the mixed identity traits that a Florentine-born baron of the Hungarian King and the would-be Holy Roman Emperor might have possessed. His look is nothing like that of a Florentine merchant, though his physical traits evoke the classical male beauty of his time, like long curly hair. But he has a beard and is dressed in complete tournament armor, holding a curved Turkish sword in his hands. The image, in fact, suggests that Pippo succeeded in getting fully integrated into the Hungarian nobility from being a social outsider. His rise to the tight-knit group of barons was part of Sigismund's plan to build a new elite in Hungary, following the rebellion in 1397. To accomplish this, besides a few Hungarian dignitaries, he gave preference

di messer Lorenzo Buondelmonti, which later on became the property of Matteo di Scelto Tinghi. ASF, CS. ser. II. 128. fols. 5r.

4 ASF, CS. ser. II. 128. fols. 5r-v.

5 See the tax declaration of Zanobi di Tommaso di Zanobi di ser Gino, submitted in 1433: 'Messer Andrea di Filippo Scolari, vescovo di Valadino dovea avere danari fiorini novantatre incircha per resto di una casa venduta, el quale resto s'aspetta a llui, perché la comprò più anni fa Bartolomeo Charducci [...]. ASF, Catasto 473. fol. 611r.

6 See the list of creditors and debtors of the Carnesecchi-Fronte company. ASF, Catasto 381. fol. 90r. In the late 1420s, Niccolò was running an important retail cloth company. See the numerous entries in the registers of the Merchant Court: ASF, Mercanzia vols. 7121, 7122, 7123.

7 ASF, *Catasto* 38. fol. 327r.

8 ASF, CS. IV. fol. 635r. Niccolò's company, as creditor of wool textiles, is mentioned in the tax declaration of the three Scolaris' heirs. ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 875r.

to foreigners or locals of modest social background. The case of II Stibor of Stiboric (1347-1414), a nobleman of Polish origins, may well exemplify this geographical, social, and political mobility.<sup>9</sup> Besides the political factor aimed at weakening the potential of the opposing barons, like the followers of the Lackfi (rebels in 1397) and the Archbishop of Esztergom, János Kanizsai's faction, there were other advantages in favor of these new men. Unlike most of the Hungarian barons, they possessed skills useful either in battle or in administration, which made them soon indispensable for the King to run his country. Peter Burke argues that, in connection with Renaissance artists, social outsiders were most likely to become catalytic figures in developing inventions as well as in building a remarkable career.<sup>10</sup> The rise of Pippo di Stefano Scolari, Sigismund's baron of Florentine origins, clearly exemplifies this social phenomenon.

## The Lineage

The Scolari family by the time of Pippo's birth had been reduced to social outsiders even in the city of Florence. Their ancestral lineage, the Buondelmonti, had obtained a noble title in the eleventh century from the local lord, Mathild of Canossa.<sup>11</sup> The lineage took its name from their tower, called Montebuoni, located in the Florentine countryside close to the Abbey of Passignano, where members of the family grew into the most important landlords.<sup>12</sup> Dino Compagni wrote in his Chronicle that in 1216, the rivalry connected to a Buondelmonti's engagement caused the hundred-year-long conflict between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines.<sup>13</sup> The Buondelmonti had

9 Engel, 'Stiborici (I) Stibor vajda és fia, (II) Stibor'.

10 Burke, *The Italian Renaissance*, Chapter 2.

11 For the history of the Buondelmonti see: Herlihy, 'Santa Maria Impruneta'.

12 In fact, several documents in relation to the Buondelmonti family came from the collection of the Abbey. For example, see: ASF, Diplomatico, Badia di Passignano, 20/11/1190; 19/08/1198.

13 'Dopo molti antichi mali per le discordie de'suoi cittadini ricevuti, una ne fu generata nella detta città, la quale divise tutti i suoi cittadini in tal modo che le due parti s'appellarono nimiche per due nuovi nomi, cioè guelfi e ghibellini. E di ciò fu cagione in Firenze che un nobile giovane cittadino, chiamato Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti, aveva promesso torre per sua donna, una figliuola di messer Oderigo Giantruffetti. Passando di poi un giorno da casa i Donati, una gentildonna...stando a'balconi del suo palagio lo vide passare, e chiamollo, e mostrogli una delle dette figliuole [...] (Buondelmonte) tolsela per moglie, lasciando quella aveva tolta e giurata. Onde messer Oderigo dolendosene co'parenti ed amici suoi, deliberarono di vendicarsi e di batterlo e di fargli vergogna. Il che sentendo gli Uberti, nobilissima famiglia e potente, e i suoi parenti dissono voleano fusse morto [...] Onde di tal morte i cittadini se ne divisono, e trassersi insieme i parentadi e l'amistà d'amendue due parti, per modo che la detta divisione mai non

been originally Ghibellines, supporters of the Holy Roman Emperor, but they changed their political party and turned into Guelphs. Meanwhile, one member, named Scolaio, remained a trusted Ghibelline. In 1293, by the Ordinances of Justice, which excluded all magnates from communal and guild offices, penalties and restrictions were introduced against both the Buondelmonti and the Scolari.<sup>14</sup> In the political conflicts the white Guelphs obtained major influence in the city; as a consequence, the government started to take measures against the Ghibelline families, including the Scolari. The Scolari, like the Buondelmonti, originally lived in the sestiere of Borgo, but with the confiscation of their urban properties, they were exiled to the Florentine countryside.<sup>15</sup> The sequestration of their houses and lands went on until the 1380s when it was disrupted by the new political regime of the Albizzi.<sup>16</sup> By then, the Scolari had completely lost their economic potential, social connections, and political influence. Therefore, we do not find their names in the city census of 1378, in the guild matriculations, or in the registers of the secret councils. Consequently, by the 1370s, several male members of the family immigrated to places located outside of Florentine dominance. Three of them, uncles of Pippo Scolari, worked as military captains (condottieri), serving various lords in Italy.<sup>17</sup> Probably thanks to their merits, they became acquainted with Sigismund of Luxembourg's father, the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles IV, who in 1355 demanded from the Florentine government the restitution of some of the Scolaris' estates.<sup>18</sup> They had also established connections to the royal court in Hungary by fighting together with the voivode of Transylvania, István Lackfi, in northern Italy.

fini: onde nacquero molti scandoli ed omicidi e battaglie cittadinesche.' Compagni, *Cronaca fiorentina*, pp. 29-30. For a detailed study of the case, see: Faini, *Il convito del 1216*.

14 See the legislation in question: *La legislazione antimagnatizia a Firenze*.

15 Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates*, Appendix.

16 Several entries in the registers of the Guelph Party, which supervised the confiscations, testify to this process. In 1329, the widow of Durante di Cecce Scolari's properties were subject to confiscation. ASF, Capitani di Parte Guelfa, Numeri Rossi 42. fol. 4v. In 1380, Rinieri di Rinieri and Bartolomeo di Lippi Scolari. Capitani di Parte Guelfa, Numeri Rossi 54. fol. 2v. In 1336, Branca and Bindo di Brancaleone Scolari. Capitani di Parte Guelfa, Numeri Rossi 43. fol. 78v. In 1376, six other Scolaris' properties were confiscated. Capitani di Parte Guelfa, Numeri Rossi 51. fols. 9r, 14r, 14v, 15r, 15v, 16r-v, 86r.

17 In the 1370s, Bernardo di Ciupo Scolari was in the service of Francesco Carrara, lord of Padua. His two sons, Francesco and Rinieri, were later employed by Venice. Gatari, *Cronaca Carrarese*, p. 481.

18 Linacher, *Il tempo degli Scolari*, p. 5.

## Pippo di Stefano Scolari, called Lo Spano (1368/1369-1426)

The first decades of Pippo's life and career did not show anything unusual that might have distinguished him from any other young Florentine merchants of modest, but not humble, origins. He was born c. 1368-1369 in a small settlement called Tizzano, located south of Florence, in the Greve valley. His father, Stefano di Francesco, had been living there with his family at least since 1363. The settlement back then included twelve taxpaying households, which were parishioners of the church of Santo Stefano, in the parish of Antella.<sup>19</sup> Years later, this number increased to 23, although only ten paid taxes, and among them Stefano paid some of the highest taxes. In 1371, his nuclear family was composed of his wife, Caterina, their daughters, Balda (14) and Ricca (7), and their sons, Francesco (6), Pippo (3), and Matteo (1).<sup>20</sup> Following that year, Stefano's name disappears from the censuses of Tizzano and we do not find it in the 1378 *Estimo* either.<sup>21</sup> It was more than twenty years later, in 1393, when the *Estimo* of Tizzano mentions that Stefano had died three years prior to the census and that his sons had already gone to Hungary.<sup>22</sup> He might have joined his sons there, as Luigi Passerini suggested, which might explain why the census refers to him as poor.<sup>23</sup>

There is no archival information at our disposal about Pippo's whereabouts in those two decades. His life can be reconstructed exclusively based on his biography, which was completed by the humanist Jacopo di Poggio Bracciolini. Jacopo's father, Poggio, did meet the baron at the Council of Constance (1414-1418) and received first-hand details from him regarding

19 ASF, *Estimo* 205. fol. 87r.

20 ASF *Estimo* 206. fol. 133r.

21 The following census in the Florentine countryside, including Tizzano, was taken in 1383. ASF, *Estimo* 208. fols. 482r-484v. The brothers did not appear in the later censuses either. ASF, *Estimo* 210. fols. 125r-127v (1401), *Estimo* 213. fols. 1r-3r. (1402), *Estimo* 278. fols. 15v-16r. (1402)

22 'Stefano di Francesco è morto già anni iii. Non à nulla. I figliuoli sene sono iti in Ungheria. fiorini vi.' ASF, *Estimo* 209. fol. 124v.

23 The archivist Passerini (1816-1877), who constructed complete genealogies of several important Florentine families by extensive researches in the Florentine Archives, also studied the Buondelmonti-Scolari lineage. His works, however, are without any archival, bibliographical references. 'Stefano di Francesco: riconosciuto siccome nobile di contado e perciò posto a gravezze nel 1393 morì di 70 anni a Buda, dove era andato a trovare il figlio Filippo, aveva sempre vissuto povero ed oscuro nella villa di Tizzano.' For the volume, see: Newberry Library, Special Collection, Passerini, *Famiglie Celebri*, table III. For the manuscript see: BNCF, Manoscritti, Fondo Passerini, n.186. tavola XIV.



the beginnings of his career.<sup>24</sup> He arrived in Buda at the age of twelve as an apprentice of Luca del Pecchia. Florentine merchants, as part of their training, usually ended up at the foreign branch of a Florentine firm for a certain period of time. Luca, as we have seen, was surely acquainted with members of the royal *aula*, which might have given Pippo the opportunity to meet the Archbishop of Esztergom, the most influential dignitary of the Church in Hungary. According to Jacopo Bracciolini, the Archbishop, János Kanizsai, took young Pippo into his service and made him castellan in Simontornya. Until 1397, the rebel István Lackfi owned the castle, and he was one of the main supporters of the Durazzeschi's aspirations in Hungary. However, in 1397, the two Lackfi cousins, both named István – the elder the voivode of Transylvania with whom Pippo's uncles fought in Italy and the younger, the owner of Simontornya – were beheaded and their properties were confiscated by the King.<sup>25</sup> Pippo likely was placed in Simontornya right after these events when Kanizsai received the castle from the King for his support. The office of castellan in Hungary, similar to their Florentine counterparts, not only served an administrative function, but, in case of an eventual military conflict, they were also responsible for arranging the defense of the castle. Pippo's nomination, therefore, may imply that he acquired some military skills from his uncles. The short time he spent in Simontornya enabled him to meet András Ozorai, the landlord of the nearby locality of Ozora, and learn about his only daughter, Borbála. He might have been in royal service when he married Borbála Ozorai in 1398, otherwise Ozorai might not have given him his only daughter's hand. However, the earliest document mentioning Pippo in Hungary is dated to 1399, when he had already been placed in charge of the chambers of the most important gold mines of the Kingdom, in Kremnica.<sup>26</sup> Jacopo di Poggio narrates that Pippo, by following his master, Kanizsai, to the royal court, distinguished himself in front of the King with his literacy and arithmetic skills.

Administrative positions taken by Italians in royal service, as we have seen, were not an entirely new phenomenon in Hungary.<sup>27</sup> It was a far more

24 Bracciolini, by his marriage with a Da Montebuoni, also became closely related to the Scolari's network, which might have further encouraged him and his son to complete Pippo Scolari's biography.

25 For the Lackfi family and their rebellion, see: Engel, 'A Lackfiak'. Ibid., *The Realm of St. Stephen*.

26 Though, he might have received it earlier, as the marriage with Borbála would suggest. The earliest document referring to him in this position is *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 6112 (05/11/1399)

27 For Florentines' involvement in minting activity abroad see: Day, 'Fiorentini e altri italiani'.

significant step that he managed to obtain a noble title from King Sigismund. In feudal Hungary, nobility came by birth or by royal donation, and the noble estates guaranteed financial stability and power for their owners. It is not clear when Sigismund bestowed the noble title on Pippo, but it should have happened before his marriage.

Borbála's father did not possess baronial rank and his lands were not sizeable. Yet, she was his only surviving offspring and had special royal permission, which in effect made Borbála the son and therefore legal heir of her father's estates, and so she and Pippo entered into the possession of the noble lands of Ozora.<sup>28</sup> He became a feudal lord, taking as his name Pippo 'vero nobilis de Ozora.'<sup>29</sup> In 1399, he had also obtained from Sigismund the right of the sword, which enabled him to act as judge over his subjects living on his feudal lands.<sup>30</sup> By the age of thirty, Pippo had already been in royal service and had received an office that secured him a fair income, a noble title, feudal properties, and the possibility of complete social integration into the local nobility as the first one among Florentines in Hungary.

His real career breakthrough, though, came during the struggle for the Hungarian crown between Sigismund and Ladislaus of Durazzo. Jacopo Bracciolini claims that in 1401 Pippo performed a notable service to the King, by liberating him from the prison of a handful of Hungarian barons, led by his former master, János Kanizsai.<sup>31</sup> Earlier that year, he was made count of the salt chambers in Hungary, exercising control over the royal monopoly in the entire Kingdom.

The Archbishop, after several years on Sigismund's side, finally turned against the ruler, inviting Ladislaus to the throne. According to Jacopo's story, in 1403-1404, following Ladislaus's leave, Sigismund gave an important task to Pippo in the process of consolidating his power. In fact, Pippo might have been the one to suggest the ruler give amnesty to several barons, including Kanizsai. Part of Sigismund's plan was to build a new political elite in the court, who grew into important pillars of his reign. As part of these politics, in 1401, Pippo received the office and title of the Count of salt chambers.<sup>32</sup> Three years later, in 1404, Sigismund also appointed him to be Count of Timiș (*comes Themesiensis*) to govern Arad, Canad, Kovin, and Carasova counties

28 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 5356 (10/06/1398). This was a common practice in medieval Hungary in case noblemen did not have sons to inherit. Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service in Medieval Hungary*, p. 107.

29 MNL, DL 87669.

30 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 6113. (05/11/1399)

31 Engel, 'Ozora Pipó', pp. 57-58.

32 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, II. p. 180.

in the southeastern part of the Kingdom, which bore strategic importance in the defense against the Ottomans.<sup>33</sup> In 1407, Pippo was mentioned as the royal treasurer and Count of Csongrád country.<sup>34</sup> As one of the most influential barons in the royal court, Sigismund also made him a member of the exclusive Dragon Order.<sup>35</sup>

By then, the news about Pippo's honours had reached Florence; his fellow-citizens looked up to him with admiration and some of them probably even with gratitude. On 3 July 1405, the Florentine Signoria congratulated him on his achievements in a state letter verbalized by Coluccio Salutati's chancellery.<sup>36</sup> His fame increased in Florence when, in 1410, Sigismund dispatched him to Italy as his ambassador to mediate between him and John XXIII (Baldassare Cossa, c. 1370-1419). Besides Bologna, back then the seat of the Pope, Pippo also visited his native Florence. His presence in the city provoked both fear and admiration, sentiments which can be traced in the discussions at the secret councils. According to the accounts of various Italian chronicles, Pippo arrived in Ferrara on 21 June 1410, and he immediately made his way to Bologna, where he had an audience with the Pope.<sup>37</sup> Two days later, we find him back in Florence. But it was not until 5 July that his name appears in the register of the secret councils.<sup>38</sup> The audience with the Signoria took place on 12 July, which was followed by a long debate at the secret councils.<sup>39</sup> Among the speakers were several of those merchant-politicians who knew the Scolari well and who also traded in the Kingdom of Hungary, like Antonio di Fronte, Matteo di Scelto Tinghi, and messer Filippo Corsini. In the end, the Signoria decided to honour him with celebrations in the city, where he stayed for seven weeks, until around 16 August.<sup>40</sup>

33 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I, p. 98.

34 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I, pp. 52, 125. The Signoria's letter sent to Pippo mentions him as royal treasurer. ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 25. fol. 11r.

35 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I, p. 33.

36 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 26. fol. 108v. Published: Mellini, *Vita di Filippo Scolari*.

37 *Diario Ferrarese dal 1409 al 1502*, pp. 177-181. *Annales Estenses Jacobi de Delayto*, pp. 901-1096.

38 Bartolomeo di Michele del Corazza, a Florentine winemaker, commemorated the event in his diary in the following way: 'Negli anni Domini millequattrocentodieci passò di qua un nostro cittadino, il quale ebbe nome messer Filippo Iscolari, il quale venne per imbasciadore del re di Ungheria, addì 23 di giugno; il quale cittadino venne come grande signore, e così si diceva che'egli era in Ungheria. E venne forse con centocinquanta cavalli, tutti cavagli grossi ungheri.' Corazza, *Diario fiorentino (1405-1439)*, p. 26.

39 ASF, CP 40. fols. 180r-187r.

40 On Pippo's arrival in Venice: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II. doc.7878 (21/08/1410) doc. 7892. (28/08/1410). According to Jacopo di Poggio, Pippo spent forty days in Florence. Bracciolini, *Vita di messer Filippo Scolari*, pp. 163-184.

Not long after his return to Hungary in 1411, Sigismund sent him to Italy again as the head of his military contingent against the Venetian *Serenissima*, established with the intention of reconquering Dalmatia. The Hungarian army led by Pippo was composed of 12,000 cavalries and occupied some territories on the *Terraferma*; but in April 1413, Sigismund decided to discontinue the war with Venice.<sup>41</sup> The Venetian National Archives lack any detailed account of Pippo's participation in the conflicts.<sup>42</sup> Only his relatives' settlement on Venetian territory raises the questions of whether and how he managed to serve the interests of both his master, King Sigismund, and his Florentine relatives trading in Venice.

Whether or not he was loyal to his king, there is no possibility of proving it; either way, Pippo's career was uninterrupted, and we find him on Sigismund's side at the Council of Constance (1414-1418).<sup>43</sup> The event represented another important milestone in his career; since following the execution of Jan Hus in the Council, the fight against his followers ensured that Pippo was constantly occupied in Sigismund's service. After his nomination to Count of Timiș, besides the Hussites, another crucial role of his was to organize defense systems along the Ottomans on the southeastern border of the Kingdom.<sup>44</sup>

Thanks to his merits on the battlefield, upon his return to Hungary in 1416 he received the royal privilege of building a castle in the centre of his estates in Ozora, a settlement which he improved significantly with further building projects and privileges.<sup>45</sup> This gesture of the King clearly shows the full support Pippo enjoyed among the barons and shows that he grew into an indispensable pillar of Sigismund's power in Hungary. Pál Engel has demonstrated that Pippo, in selecting his *familiares*, gave preference to his wife's Hungarian relatives.<sup>46</sup> Engel also claimed that Pippo's Florentine

41 Mallett and Hale, *The Military Organisation of a Renaissance State*, pp. 26-28.

42 A chronicle of Belluno, one of the towns conquered by Pippo on the Venetian *terraferma*, informs us about Pippo's moves as captain general of Sigismund's troops. *Cronaca bellunese*, pp. 223-234.

43 Jékely, 'Armorial and Grants of Arms'.

44 There is very little evidence at our disposal both from archival and archeological points of view on the construction of a defense system during Pippo's office. Engel, 'Ozora Pipó', pp. 66, 71. However, Ioan Hațegan provides some insights into how Pippo might have contributed to the building of a number of fortifications in the Temes (Timiș, RO) region. Hațegan, *Filippo Scolari*, pp. 70-78. *Ibid.*, 'Das mittelalterliche Schloss von Temesvár'.

45 On 22 April 1426, he allowed the inhabitants of Ozora to elect their own judges, a privilege similar to the one enjoyed by the inhabitants of the free royal towns. Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár XIII*. doc. 475.

46 Engel, 'Ozora Pipó'.

kin did not contribute significantly to his success in the royal court. On the contrary, the career paths of his most intimate relatives illustrate that by the first decade of the fifteenth century, he had reached a position on Sigismund's side, which empowered him to place his relatives in charge of bishoprics and archbishoprics, influential positions that came with feudal rights, lands, wealth, and rank as members of the royal *aula*.

### Matteo di Stefano Scolari (1370/1371-1426)

Pippo's career in Hungary was inseparable from the life of his younger brother, Matteo, who accompanied Pippo when he left their home in Tizzano for the Kingdom of Hungary. The phenomenon of brothers sharing offices and properties was nothing unusual in Florence or in Hungary. The Strozzi brothers' collaboration, which produced businesses in Florence and in Naples, may well exemplify this.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, in Hungary, the brothers of Ragusan origins, Matko (†1445) and Jovan Talovac, worked together in administrative positions.<sup>48</sup> The division of labor between Pippo and Matteo shows an analogous pattern. After years spent together in Hungary, Matteo decided to return to Florence. Following that, Matteo kept his family home in Florence; Pippo, instead, settled for the rest of his life in Hungary. This gave the brothers the advantage of being present in both places at the same time.

Their marriages were part of this strategy as well. While Pippo chose a Hungarian noblewoman for wife, Matteo married a Florentine girl of merchant origins. He tied the knot with Piera di Catellino Infangati sometime before 1408.<sup>49</sup> His in-laws, as we shall see later, did not belong to the richest strata of the merchant society, but some of the family members possessed generational experience in local moneychanging and trade. Piera's dowry of 1000 florins was of significant size and exceeded the average dowry of merchant girls of the time.<sup>50</sup> She and Matteo had three

47 Crabb, *The Strozzi of Florence*, p. 127.

48 Süttő, 'Idegen kereskedőkől magyar hadvezérek'. In 1429, Antonio di Bonaccorso Strozzi writes about Matko that he followed Pippo Scolari in his office of comes of Timiş. 'Árai sentito chome Maticho de Raghugia a questo re gli vuole grandissimo bene per modo lo fatto signore e chosi si chiama stimasi áre lo spanato de Timiscivare chome aveva messer lo Spano e molte altre chose e persone che llo merita conperé e uno beningnio signore. Tiene una bella chorte, è grande chome da Tomaso Melanesi sarei avisato.' ASF, CS, III. filza 132. fols. 287r-v.

49 Their eldest daughter married in 1420, and the minimum age for marriage was 12. The marriage would have taken place before 1408.

50 See Piera's declaration, submitted in 1431: 'Item pretende avere ragione nella heredità di messer Mattheo di fiorini 800 resta avere per la dote sua che all'altro catasto dette la scripta

girls: Caterina (1407?-1445), Francesca or Checca (c. 1424-1481), and Mattea (1425?-1427/29), but there is no information about any male heir who might have survived.<sup>51</sup>

Even though Matteo did not establish any social connection to Hungarian nobility, like Pippo did, his name was always associated with a noble title in documents produced in Florence and in Hungary. The family did not give priors to the city, and Matteo himself did not cover any important offices which would have allowed him to use the *messer* title. Nevertheless, in Florentine documents, he was mentioned as *messer* or *magnificus miles dominus*, while in Hungarian sources as *nobilis*.<sup>52</sup> The coat of arms which appeared on the Scolari palace was composed of the family insignia with a helmet, indicating the noble title and the emblem of the Dragon Order, most likely referring to Pippo as joint owner of the building.<sup>53</sup> We know, however, that Matteo received an administrative office together with Pippo in 1411, when they were granted the customs of Cenk and were appointed as officers of the tax of woods in Rába and Farkaserdő.<sup>54</sup> Most importantly, two years later in 1413 he was mentioned as Sigismund's *familiares*, a sign that he might have had some title in Hungary.<sup>55</sup>

Matteo's main business profile, though, remained long-distance trade, in which he benefited considerably from his connections to the Hungarian royal court. His business network, according to the testimonials of his correspondence, included places like Tunis, Genoa, and Buda. He traded mostly in luxury goods: silk textiles, spices, Arabian horses, and other exotic animals.<sup>56</sup> In addition, he was involved in several business

di dovere avere fiorini 1000 denari perché ella era tuteice della heredità di messer Mattheo, vende più arienti per fiorini 200, siché resterei avere i detti fiorini 800, i quali mi sono messi in questione perché detta heredità è di poi venuta nelle mani dell'Arte di Calimala [...]. ASF, *Catasto* 386. fol. 859v.

51 See the tax declaration of the heirs: 'La detta redità di messer Filippo e messer Matteo Scholari sono due fanciulle femine, cioè Checcha deta d'anni 5, Mattea deta d'anni 3. Anchora s'appartiene alla donna di Francesco di Vieri Guadagni, cioè monna Chaterina, sirocchia delle dette di sopra [...]'. ASF, *Catasto* 59. fol. 876r.

52 See for example: MNL, DL 87669. ASF, NA, 5814. fol. 28r.

53 For mentioning the coat of arms: Lővei, 'A Sárkányrend fennmaradt emlékei'. Prajda, 'The Coat of Arms of Fra Filippo Lippi's Portrait'.

54 Zsigmondkori oklevéltár, III. doc. 165.

55 Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', p. 201.

56 The correspondence, which centred on a fraud that happened to him while one of his trusted men was transferring Arabian horses from Tunis to Florence, reveals how cooperative the Florentine merchant society was in case of needs. Fellow Florentine merchants raised their voice to help Matteo Scolari against a Genoese captain named Jacopo Fornari, who was accused of piracy by several other Florentine merchants. For Matteo's correspondence, see: ASF, MAP 1.

**Figure 2** The coat of arms of the Scolari family, Scolari palace, Florence



companies during his life. In 1406, he set up a business partnership with Fronte di Piero di Fronte and Antonio Santi, which traded in Hungary.<sup>57</sup> In the 1420s, he operated a firm with the silk manufacturer, Tommaso di Domenico Borghini, for silk textile trade in Hungary. He also founded a wool workshop with one of his brothers-in-law, Baldinaccio di Catellino Infangati. In 1410, Matteo provided credit to Pope John XXIII in exchange for papal revenues in Hungary, which suggests a sort of banking activity in the papal court.<sup>58</sup> Another of his in-laws, Vieri di Vieri Guadagni, maintained a banking profile in the papal court in Rome, and he also acted as a banker for Matteo, providing him with commercial credit for his businesses.<sup>59</sup>

fol. 44r-v., 1. fol. 50r-v., MAP 68. fol. 410r-v. For Vieri Guadagni's letter in Matteo's case, see: MAP 98. fol. 29r-v. The exotic animals, among them Arabian horses, monkeys, and hawks, as well as spices, were meant to reach the royal court Buda and even Pippo Scolari's residence. MAP 1. fol. 42r-v. For the claim of other Florentine merchants against members of the Fornari family, see: ASF, Mercanzia 7114bis. fol. 178v.

57 ASF, Mercanzia 11312. fol. 3v

58 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II/2. doc. 7968.

59 See their sentence at the Merchant Court against Matteo's heirs. ASF, Mercanzia 7114bis. fols. 69v-71r, 136r-142v, 264v-266v.



Properties owned by Matteo and Pippo together can be accepted as explicit signs that the two of them cooperated closely in private and business lives. Their first family home in Florence, purchased sometimes before 1403 and located in Via Panzano (today Via Panzani), parish of the Santa Maria Maggiore Church, was a joint property.<sup>60</sup> By that time, they had already been mentioned together as possessors of various lands in Hungary.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, the coat of arms on the façade of the Scolari palace, imitating the emblem of the Dragon Order, supports the idea that the building belonged to the two brothers.

In spite of his business success, Matteo, like Pippo did not extensively enrich the family patrimony in Florence. He conducted a luxurious life, though, documented by an inventory that listed all the jewels and silver accessories found in his palace. He and his wife also had luxurious garments, servants, and fine horses at their disposal. Yet, Matteo's wealth, according to the 1427 *Catasto*, was not commensurate with the wealthiest citizens.<sup>62</sup> Besides the city palace, he had a workshop and two other houses in the same parish.<sup>63</sup> In the Florentine countryside, he owned several pieces of lands, among them Santo Stefano at Campi, located northwest of Florence, and Santo Stefano at Tizzano, which constituted the core of his estates. As the latter was his native village, Matteo made considerable acquisitions there. In 1419, he purchased some lands from Curradino d'Apardo Alamanni, probably with the intent of extending or even restoring their paternal inheritance and turning Tizzano into his most extended estate in the *contado*.<sup>64</sup> Its centre,

60 We find them together in the tax documents, registered in Via Panzano. ASF, Prestanze 1989. fol. 111v.

61 In 1403, they were registered as owners of Szokol and Endréd. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II/1. doc. 2689. In 1400, they had also had some lands together. Engel, Ozorai Pipo, p. 87. They received joint estates in Fejér and Tolna Counties (05/12/1407). *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II/2. doc. 5828.

62 Piera Infangati's tax declaration, submitted in 1431, mentions three slaves (*schiave*) for her personal use. ASF, *Catasto* 386. fol. 86or.

63 'Una bottegha atta a malischalcho a lato alla deta chasa di sopra che da primo via, da secondo e terzo detterede, da quarto chiasolino. Tiella a pigione Andrea di Francesco malischalcho, dame l'anno fiorini 7. Una chasa posta in detto popolo, a lato alla sopradetta bottegha, che da primo via, da secondo e terzo dette rede, da quarto chiasolino. Tiella a pigione Bartolomeo albergatore, dame l'anno fiorini 8. Una chasa posta in detto popolo, a lato a questa di sopra che da primado via, da secondo Bandino di Bonachorso Boscholi, da terzo chiasolino, e da quarto dette rede. Tiella a pigione Mellino di Giovanni Maghaldi, dame l'anno fiorini x.' ASF, *Catasto* 59. fol. 871r.

64 See the corrections of Curradino's declaration, submitted in 1427: 'Io vendei a messer Matteo Scholari a di xx di marzo 1420 certi poderi avevo nel popolo di Sancto Stefano a Tizano per pregio di fiorini 1500 d'oro e fummo d'acordo che in sul Monte di Pisa e pose conditione a fiorini 1700 e il decto obrigho fece il sopradecto di 20 di maggio 1420 per tempo d'anni 7 prossimi e obrighagli per me a consoli del'Arte di Chalmala riceventi per l'ospedale di messer Bonifatio Lupi [...]'. ASF,



the *Palagio*, was probably built in various stages, and Matteo might have enlarged the building into a *casa da signore*.<sup>65</sup> He also considered it his duty to support the local parish church of Santo Stefano, his father's name saint.<sup>66</sup>

The lack of other extended immovable properties suggests that Matteo, like several new men in Florentine trade and industry, preferred to invest in his business enterprises. These investment practices might have resulted in his outstanding debts, which were so voluminous that at the time of his death, one of his former business partners took some of his lands, located in San Piero a Ema, in exchange for some commercial credit.<sup>67</sup> Matteo passed away on 14 January 1426, only days before his cousin, Andrea Scolari, in the episcopal palace of *Varadinum*.<sup>68</sup> The fact that both died in *Varadinum* (Oradea, RO), within a couple of days of each other, suggests that the cause was a local epidemic. Even though earlier Matteo wished to be buried in Florence, in the Observant Franciscan Monastery of San Salvatore al Monte, their funeral, organized by Pippo, took place in the cathedral of *Varadinum*, according to Andrea's wishes, where King Sigismund was also placed.<sup>69</sup>

*Catasto* 297. fol. 245r. For his declaration in the same year, see: *Catasto* 15. fol. 464r. See Matteo's deposit in Currado's name: ASF, Monte Il. 1806. fol. 147r.

65 ASF, NA 5814. fol. 272r. The map of the Captains of the Guelph Party, prepared in the 1430s, already shows the building with the annexes on the two sides of the tower. Stopani, R. *Medievali case da signore*, p. 45.

66 His testament left 50 Florentine florins to the parish. 'La chiesa di Santo Stefano a Tizano de'avere per suo lascio fiorini 50.' ASF, *Catasto* 59. fol. 875v. See his testament, made in 1423: ASF, NA 5814. fol. 267v.

67 'Una tenuta in parte rovinata, posta nel poplo di San Piero a Ema, lughò detto Al Prato [...] Una fornaccie da mattoni e calcina posta in detto poplo, presso a detta tenuta [...] Uno podere posto in detto popolo [...] Uno podere posto in detto poplo di San Piero a Ema, lughò A Canpigliano [...] Uno podere posto in detto popolo, luoghò La Lastra [...] I sopradetti 3 poderi colla fornacie à preso Giovanni del Bellaccio per fiorini 700 dice avere, egli n' à la rendità [...] Giovanni del Bellaccio e compagni banchieri deono avere fiorini 700 che n' à presi 3 poderi e una fornacie apare in questo a carta 4, che sono al Ponte a Ema, ragioniamo la spesa circha a fiorini 100.' ASF, *Catasto* 59. fols. 972v-873r, 875r.

68 Andrea, according to the inscription of his tomb, died on 18 January. Matteo, on 13 January, had reinforced his earlier testament in the episcopal palace. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 284v-285r. Published: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. docs. 35, 36.

69 '[...] Noi avemo a fornire le bandiere e drapoloni de mortorio di messer Matteo Scholari e del veschovo di Varadino.' Simone Lapo Corsi's letter to Lodovico di ser Viviano. ASF, CS, I. 229. fol. 55r. (04/07/1426). For the description of Andrea's tomb, found in the area of the cathedral in Oradea, see: Lóvei, 'Síremlékszoírászat', pp. 278-279. Because of the possible joint funeral, Matteo might have also been placed there.

## Andrea di Filippo Scolari (d. 1426)

Since Pippo and Matteo's elder brother, Francesco, had died before their success in Hungary, their closest male relative was Andrea, the son of Filippo di Renzo di Durante Scolari, first cousin of their father, Stefano di Francesco di Durante. The close ties maintained between the two branches might explain Pippo's strategy in helping Andrea to build a church career in Hungary.<sup>70</sup> Andrea's mother was a Gherardini, Pippo and Matteo's distant relative, since their aunt, Ghetta di Francesco Scolari, married into the same family. The Gherardini were similarly of magnate origins and lived in the Florentine countryside.<sup>71</sup> The date of Andrea's birth is unknown. At that time, the family lived in the *contado*, probably in Sant'Andrea a Fabbrica, not far from the Abbey of Passignano, where Andrea's father possessed some lands.<sup>72</sup> He had four brothers: Bartolomeo, Bernardo, Rinieri, and Costanza. He probably received education somewhere in northern Italy, perhaps in Bologna.<sup>73</sup>

There is no information about Andrea before 1407, when the Pope nominated him to the position of Bishop of Zagreb.<sup>74</sup> Placing a Scolari relative in Zagreb might have carried strategic importance for both the ruler and Pippo. On the one hand, it was the former bishopric of the rebel Pál Horváti (until 1397), headed later by Eberhard (†1419), Sigismund's trusted cleric, who originated from the area near the Rhone River. On the other hand, Zagreb and the neighbouring *Gradec* were important local trading hubs, thanks to their location on the commercial route linking *Segna* with Buda.<sup>75</sup> *Gradec*, as we have seen, had one of the most sizeable Florentine communities in the Kingdom of Hungary. Thus, Andrea obtained a detailed picture of

70 In a document prepared in favour of Filippo di Renzo, Ghetta di Francesco Scolari, Pippo's and Matteo's aunt, sister of their father, acted as witness. 'Presente donna Ghetta filia di Franceschi de Scholaribus et ux Ugolini Noldi de Gherardinis, populi Sancti Georgi alle Mose alla Strada.' ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 04/07/1366. Ugolino di Noldo Gherardini's daughters received 200 Florentine florins by Andrea's testament. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 288r-v.

71 See the confiscation of Ugolino di Noldo Gherardini's properties, which occurred in 1380. ASF, Capitani di Parte Guelfa, Numeri Rossi 53. fols. 39v-40r. Andrea Scolari's testament left a considerable sum of money for Ugolino's offspring. ASF, CS, II. 134. fol. 117r.

72 In 1366, Filippo di Renzo Scolari possessed several lands, as paternal heredity in Fabbrica. Among the witnesses of the document was his aunt, Francesca di Renzo Scolari, wife of Mannone di Meo da Lucca. ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 04/07/1366.

73 Two members of his court, named Giovanni and Antonio, were of Bolognese origins. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 288v-289r.

74 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I, pp. 77, 80.

75 On the importance of Zagreb in art history see: Marosi, 'Zágráb, az internacionális gótika szobrászatának központja'.

**Figure 3** The tomb of Andrea Scolari, Roman Catholic Cathedral, Oradea



the market possibilities and Florentines' trade in the region. This was the ideal setting for the start of Andrea's ecclesiastical career in the Kingdom of Hungary. Although two years later in 1407 the King gave Eberhard the bishopric of *Varadinum* in exchange for Zagreb, for reasons unknown to us, so Eberhard and Andrea changed places.<sup>76</sup>

*Varadinum* (Oradea, RO), Andrea's new bishopric, was found just north of the territories governed by Pippo, where the Transylvanian salt chambers operated. The local cathedral might have been commensurate in size to the one in Zagreb.<sup>77</sup> The episcopal palace, mentioned both in Matteo's and

<sup>76</sup> Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri Lateranensi, 142. fols. 271v-272v. (03/08/1410); Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*.

<sup>77</sup> Takács, 'Bátori András 'másocik temploma'".

Andrea's testaments, served as the centre of the bishopric.<sup>78</sup> Like *Gradec*, *Varadinum* had already become a destination for immigrants of Italian origins. Similarly, it was on an important trade route, which connected Buda with Transylvania and its mines. This might have been among the reasons why the episcopal palace, from time to time, accommodated Florentine businessmen and clergymen who stayed for certain periods in Andrea's court. Among them were Matteo's brother-in-law Baldinaccio di Catellino Infangati, Simone di messer Andrea Da Montebuoni, and other important members of the Scolari's business circle in Hungary, like the Melanesi and the Lamberteschi brothers.<sup>79</sup> Besides merchants, Andrea's palace provided home for educated men originating from Florence and Bologna; among them were Girolamo di Giovanni da San Miniato, doctor of law, and Alessandro di messer Antonio, doctor of medicine.

Beyond the incomes of the bishopric, which were by no means of insignificant size, Andrea grew into a serious businessman during his years in *Varadinum* (Oradea, RO). Through his agents and business partners, he was engaged in trading precious metals and textiles. He set up a business firm with the canonic of *Varadinum*, the Florentine Currado di Piero Cardini, which they operated in Hungary, Florence, and in the papal curia, in Rome. At the same time, Andrea also kept agents, like Giovanni del maestro Niccolò Falcucci, who sold precious metals for him like silver and gold extracted in Transylvania. In Florence, local bankers, like Massaiozo and Jacopo Gigli, and moneychangers in the Mercato Nuovo provided him with commercial credit.<sup>80</sup>

Andrea, therefore, was not completely detached from his native Florence even after he had become a bishop in Hungary. Though he did not have many occasions to visit the city, he retained strong personal and economic

78 Balogh, *Varadinum*. Matteo mentioned in his last will that the document was made at the episcopal palace: 'Acta sunt hec Varadini, in palatio episcopali [...]'. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 285r. In an earlier document, issued in the name of Andrea, the building was referred to as palatio nostre habitationis'. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 2. (01/01/1426).

79 They were mentioned as witnesses of Andrea's testament, issued in his episcopal palace, in *Varadinum*. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 290v-291r. Published: Balogh, *Andrea Scolari*, pp. 185-188. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 42. Piero Lamberteschi figured as a witness also in 1422, in a document issued for the Bishop. Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 331r.

80 See Niccolò Serragli's letter to the Bishop, addressed in 1416. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 327r. (02/02/1416) See also Massaiozzo and Jacopo di Giglio Gigli's letter to the Bishop, written in 1420, in which they mention Checca's account at their bank. Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 329r. (12/05/1420) For the activity of the Gigli brothers as money changers in the Mercato Nuovo, see several entries in the account book of Lazzaro di Giovanni di Feo Bracci, a merchant based in Arezzo. AFL, 3340. fols. 8v, 12v, 13r, 17v, 25v. (*libro grande di debitori e creditori* of the Florentine firm, 1415).

connections there. His mother Checca still lived in Florence, and she received constant financial support from him. He also cared for his sister, Costanza (c. 1361-1433), wife of Jacopo di Giovanni Nardi, and her daughter, Margherita, providing her with a dowry and negotiating her marriage to one of Pippo's nephews. In 1423, he had even applied for *popolani* status, a step which might have been connected to his maternal inheritance.<sup>81</sup> These changes might have gone unnoticed. Unlike other magnate families, like the Della Tosa, who were supposed to change their name to Tosinghi and to alter their coat of arms, after their admission to the *popolani*, Andrea's family did not go through the same transformation. In fact, the document states that he had the right to retain his coat of arms and family name. He even received an exemption from appearing in front of the priors, which suggests that he did not, or at least not often, return home.

In his absence, his manager, named Jacopo di Geppo da Monterinaldi, the Cavalcanti's relative, ran his businesses and probably even his estates in Florence.<sup>82</sup> His significant incomes enabled him to purchase a house next to the Scolari palace in Borgo degli Albizzi, which had an estimated value of 1500 Florentine florins. The building was inhabited by his family: his mother and later his widowed sister.<sup>83</sup> In addition, Costanza was also entitled to use some of Andrea's smaller lands and to receive an annuity.<sup>84</sup> The Bishop's most sizeable property, Vicchiomaggio, was probably of maternal inheritance, which he improved significantly.<sup>85</sup> The small settlement, located in the valley of the Greve River, back then was inhabited by about twelve families

81 ASF, Provvisioni 113, fols. 252r-152v. See also Klapisch-Zuber, *Retour à la cité*, p. 248.

82 Following the Bishop's death, Jacopo enjoyed the incomes of estates in Vicchiomaggio for years. See Jacopo's tax declaration, submitted in 1431: 'E debo avere dell'eredità di messer Andrea di Filippo Scholari, veschovo che fu di Varadino nel reame d'Ungheria per mio salario [...]'. ASF, *Catasto* 390, fol. 37v. The case at the Merchant Court: ASF, Mercanzia 4363, fol. 384r. On behalf of the heirs the procurators were: Tommaso di Piero Melanesi and Simone di messer Andrea da Montebuoni.

83 See the tax declaration of the heirs of the three Scolari, in 1427: 'Una chasa a alato a questa, nel detto popolo che da primo via, da secondo Spina d'Azolino, da terzo dette rede, de quarto chiasolino di dietro. Nella detta chasa vi sta mona Ghostanza, sirocchia fu di messer Andrea Scholari veschovo di Varadino, non dà niente di pigione.' ASF, *Catasto* 59, fol. 871r.

84 See her declaration in 1431: 'Habita la detta monna Gostanza in una casa la quale è delle'rede di messer Andrea degli Scholari, el quale fu veschovo di Varadino, la quale casa el detto messer Andrea lasciò per testamento alla detta monna Gostanza a vita alla detta monna Gostanza, posta nel popolo di Sancto Benedetto di Firenze che da primo via, a secondo sopradetta casa, a terzo le redi di Bernardo Gili, a quarto chiassolino.' ASF *Catasto* 385, fol. 99or. Costanza received an annuity of 2000 Florentine florins. See also the testament: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78, 326, fols. 288r-v.

85 There were no Scolari registered in the fourteenth-century censuses in Vicchiomaggio. ASF, *Estimo* 205 (1363), 208, fols. 542r-552v (1383), 209, fols. 614r-615r. (1393)

and was composed of a *casa da signore*, houses for the workers, a mill, and several lands, which was valued at 4000-5000 Florentine florins.<sup>86</sup>

In 1419, he received the permission from the Pope to make his last will.<sup>87</sup> With this, Andrea left part of his properties, including his house in the Borgo degli Albizzi and the estate of Vicchiomaggio, to his brother Rinieri's sons, who were the only heirs of the two branches on the male line.

### **Filippo (c. 1385/95-1442/46), Giambonino (b. c. 1395), and Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari (1398/1407-p. 1478)**

Originally, both Andrea's and Matteo's general heir was Pippo, but he likely had been suffering from gout for a while, and by the end of November 1426, it was clear he would not make a full recovery.<sup>88</sup> When he died on 28 December 1426, he might have thought that their inheritance as well as that of his nephews were all set by the document which reinforced Andrea's and Matteo's donations.<sup>89</sup> A year later, on 31 December 1427, the King had seemingly approved Pippo's will and the nephews' inheritance.<sup>90</sup>

However, the reality for the Scolari nephews was far from ideal. Months following Pippo's death, we learn from the Florentine ambassador visiting in the royal court that they had lost control over the salt chambers.<sup>91</sup> In

86 See the 1412 *Estimo*. ASF, *Estimo* 213. doc. 144. fols. 1r-3. Earlier, in 1402, there were only nine households registered there. *Estimo* 278. fol. 104r.

87 'Nos itaque tuis parte supplicationibus inclinati, ut de bonis cuis undecunque, non per Ecclesias seu Ecclesias, tibi commissis alias tamen licite acquisitis, que ad te pertinere omnimode dinnoscuntur, libere testari valeas, ac de bonis mobilibus ecclesiasticis tue dispensationi sive administrationi commissis, et que tamen non fuerint altaris seu altarium Ecclesiarum tibi commissarum ministerio seu alicui episcopali earundem ecclesiarum divino cultui seu usuri deputata, necnon et quibuscunque bonis mobilibus a te per ecclesias seu ecclesias licite acquisitis pro decentibus et honestis expensis tui funeris ac pro remuneratione illorum qui tibi viventi servierint, sive sint consanguinei sive alii.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 287r-v.

88 See the document issued on 13 February 1426, in which Pippo accepts Matteo's inheritance: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 286r. Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 134. See the document issued on 7 March 1426, in which Pippo accepts Andrea's inheritance: Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 294v-295v. Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 273.

89 For the original see: ASF, Diplomatico, Lunghe, Badia di Firenze 30/11/1426. For the copy see: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 278r-279v. Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 1432.

90 ASF Diplomatico, Lunghe, Badia fiorentina 31/12/1427

91 '[...] A Filippo e Lorenzo Scholari è tolto le chamere del sale.' Letter of Piero Guicciardini, ambassador to the Dieci di Balìa. ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fol. 9r.

June 1427, the ambassadors received instructions from the Signoria to help Filippo and Lorenzo Scolari to remain in the favour of the King.<sup>92</sup> However, there were several competing members of the royal court who might have wished to obtain Pippo's offices and place. In August 1427, we find the most significant members of the Florentine community in Hungary in the King's camp were set up against the Ottomans, including: Filippo di Giovanni del Bene, Leonardo di Nofri Bardi, Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari, Simone di Piero Melanesi, as well as the Archbishop, Giovanni di messer Andrea da Montebuoni.<sup>93</sup> That same year, we know of several measures taken against Florentines, which were characterized by King Sigismund's general mistrust of members of that community.<sup>94</sup>

The imprisonment of Florentines had started in 1427, but the peak point was probably in 1432, when Sigismund ordered for their general arrest on Hungarian territory.<sup>95</sup> The combination of the power play inside the Florentine community and the king's changed attitude might have been responsible for the Scolari nephews' unsuccessful attempt to keep Pippo's offices and make the most of their inheritance in Hungary.

There were originally six nephews. The two eldest, Branca and Carnino, had died by 1426, and the youngest, Donato, followed them shortly after that date, probably under the legal age of inheritance. Branca had settled in Treviso by the first years of the fifteenth century, where he was probably engaged in trade.<sup>96</sup> Carnino served as the canonic of *Varadinum* before 1420.<sup>97</sup> In 1420, Pippo made him Archbishop of Kalocsa, but he died two years later.<sup>98</sup>

Among the surviving three brothers, Filippo was the eldest. He was probably born in 1395 and would have been already in his thirties at the

92 '[...] Conservarsi nella gratia del re et seguire le vestigie del magnifico Spano [...]. ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie 7. fol. 80v.

93 ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fol. 5v.

94 On 14 July 1428, the ambassador, Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini, wrote to the consuls of the Calimala Guild: 'In mattina si cominerò e volere spacciare de prigionì fiorentini sono in questa terra e credo finerò tutti questi processi come è tutto [...]. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 337v. For some details on the arrests, see a description of a document in the inventory, which has consequently been lost. ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Firenze Santa Maria Nuova 04/02/1427.

95 Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok'.

96 In 1410, he had already been living in Treviso. The document mentions him as 'Brancha quondam Rainieri di Scolari bus de Florentia cives et habitator Trevigi [...]. ASF, Diplomatico, Normali 08/10/1410

97 *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, I. doc. 241.

98 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Camera Apostolica, Obligationes et solutiones, 58. fol. 173v. (26/11/1420); Camera Apostolica, Introitus et exitus, 379. fol. 60r. (11/1421),



time of his uncles' deaths.<sup>99</sup> In 1427, Filippo and his brothers, Giambonino and Lorenzo, lived in Treviso. They shared businesses and immovable properties in Florence.<sup>100</sup> Two years later, Filippo had already settled back in Florence, where he kept himself busy closing his uncles' business obligations.<sup>101</sup>

In the beginning, the brothers' immovable properties in Florence were quite modest. In 1427, they possessed only one sizeable and two smaller estates in the Florentine countryside, but no house or other immovable properties in the city.<sup>102</sup> In 1431, Filippo declared a smaller estate and some lands of insignificant size.<sup>103</sup> Regarding their inheritance, after the clearance of Andrea's debt with his manager, Jacopo da Monterinaldi, the estate of Vicchiomaggio was left in Filippo's hands.<sup>104</sup> Tizzano, instead, became part of Francesca di Matteo Scolari's dowry, but her mother was the one

99 In 1430, he said he was 36 years old. ASF, Catasto 296. fol.160v.

100 They submitted their tax declaration together, which also suggests that the brothers lived in the same household. The declaration was submitted in the name of Giambonino and his brothers. ASF, Catasto 20. fols. 112v-115v. But it was not Giambonino who submitted the declaration: 'La donna di Gianbonino, non so il nome.' Catasto 20. fol. 113r.

101 In March 1430, he submitted a correction of their earlier tax declaration: 'Filippo di Rinieri Scolari al tempo di terzi ufficiali del catasto a die 4 di marzo 1429, fece la infrascritta portata cioè. Questa è la portata che si fa per Filippo di Rinieri Scolari di mia propria volontà e consentimento [...]'. ASF, Catasto 296. fol. 160r. Some of his pending businesses reported in the catasto were connected to his uncles' inheritance. 'Anchora petende avere ragione sopra i beni che rimasono nella heredita di messer Mattheo Scolari, di messer Andrea vescovo di Varadino che quanto r tanto riachatasterà quando gliara rittatti. Ancora petende avere ragioni contra a Gianozzo Cavalcanti per uno scripto [...] Ancora petende avere da figliuoli et heredi di ser Ghuido di messer Tommaso certo quantità di danari di che sono in differenza che come saranno gli acatastera. Ancora petende avere ragione contra a Francesco di Vieri Ghudadagni di fiorini mille, toltogli et di che ne scripto creditore Bernardo di ser Ghuido di messer Tommaso di che sono in differenza che come gli ora o sara chiarito gli abbia avere gli acatastera. Ancora petende avere ragione di cierta quantità di danari da messer Churrado et da Giovanni di Piero di Currado stanno in Ungheria che quello si ritraesse l'acatastare. Ancora pretende avere ragione contro altra compagnia di Medici overo a Gianozzo Cavalcanti di certa quantità di denari di che ne differenza che quello si chiarirà tanto na chatastare. Anchora pretende avere ragione contro Giovanni di Niccholo di Lucha sta in Ungheria di cierto quantità di denari che non sono chiari che chiariti gli achatastare.' Ibid.

102 See their declaration, submitted in 1427. ASF, Catasto 20. fol. 114r.

103 'In primo uno potere con terre lavorative e vignate posto in Val di Pesa, luogo detto Sancto Stefano al Vagnano [...] Item uno pezzo di terra lavorativa, posta luogo detto Al Santo a Frati, appartenente al sopradetto podere [...] Item più pezzuoli di terra lavorativi in parte e in parte sodi con casetta da lavoratore che è guasta e non si habita, posta a San Martino a Bagnuolo in Val di Grieve [...]'. ASF, *Catasto* 385. fol. 800r.

104 In 1431, Vicchiomaggio was already listed among Filippo's properties. ASF, *Catasto* 385. fol. 1087r.



who enjoyed its incomes.<sup>105</sup> In Hungary, the estate of Ozora was returned to Pippo's widow; therefore, no lands ended up in the Scolari nephews' ownership.

Filippo, in the absence of a proper family home, was forced to move to his in-laws'. The marriage took place before 1431, probably right upon Filippo's return to Florence.<sup>106</sup> The Aldobrandini were of modest popolani origins; they did not belong to the Medicis' circles. Filippo's father-in-law, Luigi di Giovanni Aldobrandini, promised a dowry of 500 Florentine florins for Margherita's hand (1415-), which would have been commensurate with dowries of girls of middle-rank merchant families.<sup>107</sup> However, he had serious problems in paying the sum, so Filippo might have never completely received it. His modest living conditions stood in sharp contrast with the circumstances of Matteo Scolari's widow and daughters, who continued to live according to their rank. Piera Infangati retained the right to keep the Scolari palace for her personal use and stayed there with her daughters until around 1433, when Filippo Scolari was forced to put the building on sale.<sup>108</sup> Filippo, therefore, never had the right to occupy the palace, and its sale might have been connected to Matteo's pending business debts as well as to his wish to give part of his inheritance to the Church.

105 This might explain why her husbands appear as owners and co-owners of the estate. See Piera's tax return, submitted in 1431. 'Un podere con casa da llavoratore, posto nel popolo di Sancto Stefano a Tizano, luogo detto Alla Torre, aprimo via, a secondo Boccaccio Alamanni, a terzo rede di Simone de Nerli, a quarto via [...] Uno podere con casa da llavoratore, posto in detto popolo, luogo detto Al Borghetto, confinato da primo via, secondo Boccaccio Alamanni, a terzo e quarto Madonna detta [...] Uno podere posto in detto popolo et luogo, casa da llavoratore, confinato da primo via, secondo la Compagnia di Bindo Piaciti, a terzo Madonna, a quarto via [...] Uno podere chon casa da ssignori et lavoratore, posto nel popolo di Sancto Stefano detto, luogo detto Al Palagio, confinato da primo via, secondo le rede di Bernardo Quaratesi, terzo Checcho d'Andrea Quaratesi, quarto strada [...] Di tutti I sopradetti poderi è usufructaria detta Madonna Piera asua vita, e la proprietà è delli heredi di messer Mattheo Scolari detto.' ASF, *Catasto* 386. fols. 859r-v. See also Francesca's second husband, Bonaccorso di Luca Pitti's declaration, presented in 1480. *Catasto* 996. fols. 302r-304r.

106 In 1431, his wife was already included in the tax return. ASF, *Catasto* 385. fol. 800v.

107 'Luigi di Giovanni Aldobrandini fiorini cinquecento di possessioni per la dota della Margherita, donna del detto Filippo e figliuola di detto Luigi. fiorini 500.' ASF, *Catasto* 385. fol. 800v. For Florentine dowries of the time: Chabot, *La dette des familles*.

108 See Piera Infangati's tax declaration, submitted in 1427: 'E usufrutaira delle casse e delle masserizie rimasono di messer Matteo, insieme colla figliuole, le quali tiene per suo uso.' ASF, *Catasto* 59. fol. 775v. Her declaration, presented in 1431: 'Detta madonna Piera torna nella casa rimase di messer Mattheo Scolari usufructaria di detta casa a sua vita chon le masserizie che sono in detta casa a suo uso e la proprietà è delle heredi di messer Mattheo detto.' *Catasto* 386. fol. 860r. Filippo sold it to the Monte officials. *Catasto* 466. fol. 427v.

Besides the family business in Florence, Filippo's obligations as *capo famiglia* included choosing a spouse for his niece. The important political changes of 1434 with Cosimo de' Medici's accession to power forced Filippo to alter the earlier political strategy of the family. Until Francesca did get married, he acted as her ward together with the *Magistrato dei Pupilli*, an office established for the surveillance of the heredity of orphans.<sup>109</sup> Francesca, as we shall see later, was originally engaged to Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi's eldest son. However, in 1434, Rinaldo and his family were exiled outside the territory of Florence, losing their social and political influence. Filippo, therefore, was forced to dissolve the engagement and find a suitable match among the Medici's supporters. Earlier, his marriage to a *popolano* girl also shows this intention to get closer to the Medici faction, but Francesca's other three engagements are clear signs that Filippo, in fact, considered Francesca's marriage ultimately as a way to get acquainted with the highest circles of Cosimo de' Medici. Francesca might have been a true asset in his hands; her extraordinarily high dowry of 3000 Florentine florins, the noble coat of arms, and name of the family made her the most eligible girl in Florence at the time.

At first, Filippo had an eye on the Pitti as possible in-laws; and engaged Francesca to Gianozzo di Francesco Pitti's eldest son, Amerigo.<sup>110</sup> Because of the groom's premature death, however, the marriage was never celebrated, and Francesca instead married Tommaso di Neri di Gino Capponi, another politician among Cosimo de' Medici's most intimate friends.<sup>111</sup> The marriage, though, did not last long, since Tommaso died shortly after, in 1442. Within maybe a year or two, Filippo Scolari managed to conclude a marriage agreement with one of the wealthiest citizens of Florence, messer Luca di Bonaccorso Pitti (1395-).<sup>112</sup> Francesca and Bonaccorso Pitti, who were probably commemorated on one of the portraits of Fra Filippo Lippi, Luca's and Cosimo's favorite painter, ended up in the newly made Pitti Palace,

109 In 1437, Filippo petitioned the *Magistrato dei Pupilli* to declare Francesca his debtor with the sum of more than 333 Florentine florins. ASF, Magistrato dei Pupilli, 57. fols. 32r-v See the same case: ASF, Guadagni 14. doc.13. fols.1r-4r.

110 In 1435, a deposit made in the Monte Comune indicates the transfer of Francesca's dowry from the Albizzi to the Pitti. ASF, Monte II. 2416. fol. 338r.

111 In 1439, the dowry was transferred from the Pitti to the Capponi. ASF, Monte II. 2416. fol. 338r. See other documents connected to Francesca's dowry and negotiations with the Pitti and the Capponi. ASF, NA, 689.

112 One of Luca's godfathers was Niccolò di messer Luigi Guicciardini, Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini's brother, who was the Archbishop, Giovanni di messer Andrea da Montebuoni's in-law. Pitti, 'Ricordi', p. 345.

which was built by Luca for the newlywed couple.<sup>113</sup> The celebration of their marriage was the peak of Filippo's role as *capo famiglia*, as he died sometime between 1442 and 1446.<sup>114</sup>

Since he did not have any surviving heirs, his youngest brother, close to him in age, took over his role in managing the family affairs in Florence. Lorenzo was about ten years younger than Filippo. He and their third brother, Giambonino, remained in Treviso even after Filippo had resettled in Florence.<sup>115</sup> Initially, among the three of them, Lorenzo had the task of dealing with their uncles' businesses in Hungary and trying to remain in Sigismund's favour.<sup>116</sup> However, Lorenzo did not manage to complete this task successfully and maybe within a year or two he and his brothers lost everything in Hungary, including some of their uncles' business credits as well. Yet, he remained in Hungary until the late 1440s, when the unfavourable economic conditions and Filippo's death forced him to return to his native city.<sup>117</sup> His financial conditions are best shown by his marriage to a girl of popolani origins, Agnola di Bernardo Sapiti, and his decision to live with his in-laws in the parish of San Jacopo Sopr'Arno.<sup>118</sup> Vicchiomaggio and three smaller estates might have provided him with fair income, though this was surely not commensurate with his uncles' living conditions.<sup>119</sup> However, he might have had enough money to improve the buildings at Vicchiomaggio, as the tabernacle, showing the coat of arms of the family and datable to the second part of the fifteenth century, would suggest.<sup>120</sup> Lorenzo died sometime after 1478, leaving his inheritance to three sons.<sup>121</sup> But because

113 Prajda, 'The Coat of Arms on Fra Filippo Lippi's Portrait'. Earlier, it was the groom, Bonacorso's (1419-), grandfather, who traveled as an assistant with his master, Matteo di Scelto Tinghi to Buda.

114 In 1446, the tax declaration of the family was submitted in Lorenzo's name, indicator that his elder brother, Filippo, had already died by then. ASF, *Catasto* 650. fol. 856r.

115 In 1430, Filippo wrote on the correction of his declaration: 'Che vada per fino a Trevisi a sapere da suoi fratelli se essi vogliono esser acatastati a Firenze o no.' ASF, *Catasto* 296. fol. 160v.

116 Thanks to Pippo, he might have developed connections in the Hungarian court well before 1426. According to Mellini, in 1415 he was in Buda. Mellini, *Vita di Filippo Scolari*, p. 50.

117 See his letter, dated to ASF, MAP 16. fols. 35r-v. (10/02/1448) The Archbishop, Giovanni di messer Andrea da Montebuoni, also died in 1446; therefore, Lorenzo might have been left in Hungary without any powerful support.

118 He presented a tax declaration in 1446. ASF, *Catasto* 650. fols. 856r-857v.

119 In 1446, Andrea Scolari's house was already in his property. Additionally, he had a smaller estate in Santo Stefano a Lucignano, another in Santo Stefano a Campoli, and a third in San Martino in Valle and Vicchiomaggio. *Ibid.*

120 The tabernacle is found in the parish church of Vicchiomaggio.

121 In 1478, Lorenzo was still alive and might have kept some connection to his niece, Francesca Scolari. See a transaction (piato) between Francesca and Lorenzo: ASF, Ginori Conti, Pitti 104.

of his outstanding debt, one of his sons, Giovanni, sold his part of the estate to one of his in-laws, Alessandro e Geronimo di Antonio Gondi.<sup>122</sup> At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the last descendants of the family were desperate in trying to recover it.<sup>123</sup>

Their third brother, Giambonino, who spent the rest of his life in Treviso, seemingly did not receive part of the inheritance. Probably his uncles' outstanding debts forced him to repudiate them in order to avoid legal punishment.<sup>124</sup> In 1428, when the situation between Tommaso di Domenico Borghini and the three Scolari nephews escalated, Tommaso had even requested Giambonino's capture at the Merchant Court. They refused it, though, claiming a lack of competency on their side and a lack of evidence on Tommaso's.<sup>125</sup>

Giambonino might have figured in the role that Branca originally held in the family business, acting as an agent in Venice.<sup>126</sup> In 1436, his name frequently appears in the account book of the Medici of Venice, which suggests a close cooperation with them.<sup>127</sup> His marriage to a certain Ermellina, which occurred before 1429, did not produce any surviving male offspring. Therefore, the Trevisan branch of the family, which lasted at least until the seventeenth century, was founded by Branca's descendants.<sup>128</sup>

fol. 37v. Originally, they had three sons, Rinieri, Francesco, Giovanni, and seven daughters, Maria, Antonia, Filippa, Margherita, Caterina, and Costanza. ASF, *Catasto* 785. fol. 1184v. (1458) Maddalena. ASF, Monte Comune o delle Graticole, II. 1391. fol. 86r. (1462).

122 The contract mentions both the estate and the palace. ASF, NA, 15786. fol. 107v. (23/12/1496). I wish to thank Alexander Röster for calling my attention to the source.

123 ASF, CS. II. 50. doc. 32. fols. 183r-185v. (30/05/1639), CS. II. 50. doc. 31. fols. 179r-181v. (14/02/1660).

124 For the conditions of repudiation, see: Kuehn, *Heirs, Kin, and Creditors in Renaissance Florence*, p. 159.

125 '[...] giudice et ufficiale predefecto [...] vedute e considerate una presera facta in decta corte del decto Giambonimo Scolari in sino a di cinque del presente mese di marzo per anno passato ad petitione del decto Tommaso Borghini pro eius et pro eius nome di Gianozzo di Giovanni di messer Amerigo Cavalcanti et di Lorenzo di Giovanni de' Medici per se e pe suoi compagni et compagnie di Vinegia et di Firenze per fiorini dumilla settanta quattro denari [...] Et la detta captura facta del decto Giambonino ad petitione del decto Tommaso a detti modi e nomi non essersi dovuti ne potuti fare et facte non valide e doversi rinvocare, cassare e annullare et riporre il decto Giambonino nel suo pristino stato e liberta per le sopradette ragioni e cagioni.' ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Firenze, Santa Maria della Badia, 12/04/1428.

126 Before 1427, the Scolari brothers bought some lands from a Florentine expatriate living in Venice, Giovanni di Cenni Ugolini. ASF, *Catasto* 20. fol. 113r.

127 ASF, MAP 134. Filza 1. fols. 10r, 46v, 70v, 77v, 143v. (1437).

128 In the seventeenth century, Giovanni di Giovanni Maria Scolari and Giovanni Donato di Brancaccio Scolari, inhabitants of Treviso, wished to trace back their ancestry in Florence and commissioned a genealogical tree of their family. ASF, CS, ser. II. 125. doc. 20.



### III The Core of the Network: Friends of Blood and Marriage

In modern societies, kinship and marriage might be considered weak factors in establishing economic cooperation among individuals. In medieval Florence, though, blood ties as the building blocks of business firms are well-illustrated by the case of companies founded by potential families (*consorterie*) like the Alberti and the Peruzzi at the beginning of the fourteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

Richard A. Goldthwaite claims that the role of kinship relations in the formation of business firms had considerably weakened by the early fifteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The sizeable fourteenth-century firms, which lasted through several generations, were replaced by partnerships that survived only for a couple of years, while their partners invested simultaneously into other companies as well. The phenomenon should have been closely related to the changing practices in inheritance strategies, altering the inpartible properties with the division of patrimony.

However, the importance of in-law ties in the formation of smaller business partnerships and networks has never been widely studied. As the example of the Scolari shows, their in-laws and the in-laws' in-laws grew into the most significant social units of their business network, a pattern which might have characterized trade networks throughout the period. The *consorteria*, that is, the kinship network as well as the *parentado*, the network of in-laws, occupied a central role in the Scolari's success in the Kingdom of Hungary as well as in their involvement in the Florentine economy.

In the city statutes of 1415, the *consorteria* was described as a unity composed of 'consortes sint de eadem stirpe per lineam masculinam etiam superius usque in infinitum', that is, a patrilineal lineage.<sup>3</sup> That the Scolari

1 Saporì, *I libri di commercio dei Peruzzi*. Goldthwaite and Settesoldi and Spallanzani, *Due libri mastri degli Alberti*. Boschetto, 'Leon Battista Alberti e Firenze'.

2 Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 64-77.

3 Per il significato del termine *consorteria* vedi lo Statuto del Comune di Firenze del 1415: 'De compromissis fiendis inter consortes. Si aliqua quaestio, differentia vel controversia oriretur vel esset inter patrem vel matrem et filium vel filiam fratres vel sorores carnales vel uterinos vel uterinas patruum nepotem vel neptem vel alios consanguineos coniunctos seu consortes qui consortes sint de eadem stirpe per lineam masculinam etiam superius usque in infinitum.' *Statuta populi et communis Florentiae*, Liber II, Rubrica LXVI. According to Kent, the *consorteria* '[...] Kent, *Household and Lineage*, p. 6.

still at the beginning of the fifteenth century were thinking in terms of their own *consorteria* is highlighted by a short reference found in Andrea Scolari's correspondence, in describing one of his brothers as 'nostri consors de Scolaribus'.<sup>4</sup> The *consorteria*, in another sense, was also an economic unit of which members owned immovable properties jointly.<sup>5</sup> In the Scolari's case, the castle of Ozora was a shared property between the two Scolari brothers and their nephew, Leonardo di Caccia Altoviti. The studies of Francis W. Kent and Lauro Martines, among others, have pointed out that the *consorterie* might have also been extended to the female line, which might explain why their nephew, son of their sister, became their divisional kinsman.<sup>6</sup> Members of the *consorterie* patronized religious places together and their unity very often was formalized even by a notary act.<sup>7</sup>

The *parentado*, that is, the matrilineal extension of the *consorteria*, was based on marriage alliances between in-law families. Anthony Molho's analysis of marriage strategies of the Florentine elite has revealed the high endogamy that characterized nuptial ties in merchant families throughout the period. The importance of such family bonds is clearly underlined by the employment of marriage brokers, whose role was to find the perfect match for their commissioner's offspring.<sup>8</sup> The Scolari probably also relied on such intermediaries when trying to marry off their female relatives.<sup>9</sup>

4 Andrea mentioned his late brother, Bernardo, in this way. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 324r.

5 Kent, *Household and Lineage*, 1977, p. 121.

6 'Drawing upon a strong sense of clan and consanguinity, noblemen clustered into tight-knit associations and built fortified towers so as to defend themselves or to expand their rights and privileges. Each such *consorteria* was a sworn corporate grouping, consisting of males descended from a common male ancestor. It was therefore a male lineage, although, when extinction threatened, the line might be transferred via a woman. In time the *consorteria* entered into sworn association with other like neighbourhood groups.' Martines, *Power and Imagination*, pp. 35, 37. See also: Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates*, p. 30.

7 *Consorterie* were sometimes so formally structured that members of the family needed to supplicate to the Signoria for liberating them from their *consorteria* ties, as for example in the case of Piuichese Brancacci, in 1374. Pandimiglio, *Felice di Michele vir clarissimus e una consorteria*, p. 14. See also the case of the heirs of messer Giovanni di ser Ristoro, who died in 1414. Tognetti, *Da Figline a Firenze*, pp.45-53.

8 See the example of the marriage between Marco Parenti and Caterina Strozzi. Musacchio, *Art, Marriage and Family*, p.2.

9 See the example of Giovanni di ser Cacciotto Cacciotti, a marriage broker, who was probably employed by Andrea Scolari to find a husband for his niece. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 288r. See also Giovanni's tax declaration, submitted in 1427, in which he cites the money he expected from the Scolari for his service: ASF, Catasto 15. fol. 841r. For the fragments of Giovanni's account book, referring to certain marriages he facilitated see: ASF Carte Strozziiane II. 76. fols. 648r-649v.

Among the families studied in this chapter, four – the Albizzi, the Altoviti, the Infangati, and the Guadagni – were bound to the Scolari by marriage ties. Though the marriage between the Albizzi and the Scolari was never celebrated, according to Florentine customs, as soon as the marriage agreement took place and the negotiations about the dowry were set, the two families regarded each other as future in-laws.

The present chapter also includes a discussion of four families that probably did not share any blood or marriage ties with the Scolari, but were intimately connected to members of their inner circle. Among them, the Del Bene and the Cavalcanti were bound by marriage ties to the Da Montebuoni. Two other families, the Borghini and the Della Rena, had an even more distant place in the Scolaris' network; the Borghini were in-laws of the Cavalcanti, and the Della Rena figured as in-laws of the Infangati. Yet, their intimate connections to the Scolari reflect upon the significance of such ties in business and social life.

## 1 The Buondelmonti/Da Montebuoni Family

Up to the thirteenth century, the Scolari belonged to the Buondelmontis' *consorteria*.<sup>10</sup> Since the eleventh century, their estates were concentrated at the nearby Abbey of Passignano in the Chianti area, where their earliest base was the castle of Montebuoni. By the twelfth century, the Buondelmonti lineage turned into the leading patron of the parish church of Santa Maria Impruneta, which they developed into the most significant place of pilgrimage in the Florentine countryside.<sup>11</sup> Its miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary gained such popularity that it was brought to Florence every year on the day of the Nativity in a procession, which went from Impruneta to the Santissima Annunziata Church.<sup>12</sup> By the reputation of its precious relic, the incomes of the parish grew exponentially, which the Buondemonti, as the ones also electing priests to the parish, enjoyed for centuries.<sup>13</sup> Until the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Scolari, as descendants of the lineage, were among those electing the parish priest.<sup>14</sup> The ancient patronage and the

10 Bizzocchi, 'La dissoluzione di un clan familiare'.

11 Herlihy, 'Santa Maria Impruneta', Pinto, 'L'Impruneta e Firenze', *Ibid.*, 'L'Impruneta' *Ibid.*, 'Toscana medievale'.

12 *Priorista*, p. 189.

13 For a more general overview of the history of the settlement see: *Impruneta, una pieve, un paese*.

14 Bizzocchi, 'Patronato dei Buondelmonti sulla pieve dell'Impruneta', p. 128.



prestige of Imprunta might have inspired even Pippo Scolari himself to donate a votive cross to the church.<sup>15</sup>

The Buondelmonti, unlike the Scolari, were of Guelph loyalties, so they did retain their urban properties, including the family tower located just next to the palace of the Guelph Party, constructed at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Several of them even served as captains of the party and took an active part in the confiscation of the Scolari's properties. However, those branches that did not give up their magnate status were also subject to the confiscations.<sup>16</sup> In 1378, the *Estimo* officials registered eighteen households of the lineage, who lived overwhelmingly in the gonfalon Vipera quarter of Santa Maria Novella.<sup>17</sup> Thanks to the fact that some of these branches applied for *popolani* status, the 1433 *Catasto* contains ten Buondelmonti households and six Da Montebuoni households.<sup>18</sup> While the Buondelmonti households were dispersed in various parts of the city, the Da Montebuoni households, instead, were in the gonfalon of Vipera, Quarter of Santa Maria Novella.<sup>19</sup>

The Buondelmonti households reported 39 family members, and they had 5837 florins of total assets. Four did not possess any taxable assets and one was listed as *miserabile*. The Da Montebuoni counted 66 family members and they declared 1059 florins of total assets. But in their case, four of them paid only *composto* and one household did not pay at all, which shows their unbalanced financial situation.

In the fourteenth century, the Buondelmonti and the Scolari still owned properties nearby each other in the Florentine countryside, an indication of their former social and economic integrity.<sup>20</sup> This left a strong impact on the historical memory of the family. By the end of the fourteenth century, one of the *popolani* branches, headed by Andrea di messer Lorenzo, had already

15 Tarchi, 'Una lettera di Maria Maddalena d'Austria'.

16 See the case of Giovanni d'Agnolo Buondelmonti, in 1380. ASF, Capitani di Parte Guelfa, Numeri Rossi 52. fol. 85r.

17 They were very extended, but by 1378, they counted only eighteen households, mainly located in the gonfalon of 31, with the one exception of Ghino di Manente's household, which lived in the Via San Ambrogio, gonfalon of Chiavi. ASF, Prestanze 369. fol. 95r. All mentioned as *Buondelmonti*.

18 Da Montebuoni: Francesco di Teghiao. ASF, *Catasto* 449. fol. 268r; Alessandro di Teghiao. *Catasto* 455. fol. 23r; Lorenzo di messer Gherardo. *Catasto* 455. fol. 263r; Simone di messer Andrea. *Catasto* 455. fol. 478r; Sandro di Pepo. *Catasto* 455. fol. 484r; Simone d'Andrea. *Catasto* 455. fol. 500r.

19 The Buondelmonti households were located in the gonfalon of Vipera, quarter of Santa Maria Novella, gonfalon of Chiavi, Quarter of San Giovanni, gonfalons of Nicchio and Drago, quarter of Santo Spirito, gonfalon of Drago, and gonfalon of Carro, quarter of Santa Croce.

20 The notary registers of Giovanni Pacini provide an eloquent example for this phenomenon, being filled with cases of the Buondelmonti and of the Scolari. ASF, NA, 15880.

established a connection with the Kingdom of Hungary. In 1396, he led the earliest Florentine contingent sent to Sigismund of Luxembourg following his coronation as King of Hungary. Andrea had been made *popolani* in 1393, which enabled him to run for city offices as well as to serve the Signoria in diplomatic capacities.<sup>21</sup> He was an active politician, a frequent speaker of the secret councils.<sup>22</sup> In 1401, he served the Signoria as head of a diplomatic contingent sent to the pope; later, he also led an embassy to Ladislaus of Durazzo.<sup>23</sup> In 1410, making his testament, he did not fail to mention that he was heading abroad to take care of some business.<sup>24</sup>

### Giovanni di messer Andrea da Montebuoni: The Archbishop (1390-1447)

In that year, it is possible that Andrea's businesses brought him back to Hungary, when his son, aged 20, appeared for the first time in Hungarian sources as the newly appointed abbot of the Benedictine monastery in Pécsvárad. Given his young age for such an office, we suspect that his nomination was facilitated by Andrea's connections. Previously, Giovanni was living as a Benedictine monk in the Abbey of Praglia, bishopric of Padua.<sup>25</sup> He most probably studied law at the University of Padua, where he later served several times as witness of the exams.<sup>26</sup> In 1410, Pippo Scolari made an official visit to Bologna to negotiate with Pope John XXIII on Sigismund's behalf. In fact, Giovanni's vow, which also included obedience to Pope John XXIII, took place in September 1410 upon Pippo Scolari's return from his embassy.<sup>27</sup>

The abbotship at the monastery of Pécsvárad, a place of authentication (*loca credibilia*) nearby the prestigious bishopric of Pécs, should have been considered as a good start for the church career of the young Giovanni, who remained there for fifteen years. In 1420, Pope Martin V expressed his support for the young prelate by addressing two recommendations on his behalf to Hungary, one to the King and another to Pippo Scolari.<sup>28</sup> He left the Abbey

21 He was made *popolano* on 30 November 1393. Litta and Passerini, *I Buondelmonti*.

22 Andrea died before 1420. His sons and heirs made a deposit in his name. ASF, Mercanzia 11779. fol. 59v. He frequently served the Signoria as ambassador. ASF, Signori, Legazioni e commissarie 1. fol. 113v.

23 ASF, Signori, Rapporti e relazioni di oratori fiorentini 1. fols. 12v, 38v.

24 For his will, see: ASF, Diplomatico, Normali 29/09/1410.

25 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri Lateranensi 142. fols. 251r-252r. (12/09/1410), ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 12/09/1410.; Published: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II. doc. 7914.

26 Veress, *Olasz egyetemeken*, p.153. (in 1411)

27 For his vow, see: ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 12/09/1410.

28 ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini 13/01/1420; Mellini, *Vita di Filippo Scolari*, pp. 51, 52.

in 1425, when the Pope nominated him to the position of Archbishop of Kalocsa. He would have thanked the baron himself for his new appointment, who in the preceding three years had been governing the archbishopric.<sup>29</sup>

In the beginning, Giovanni might have relied much on his benefactor's help. But following Pippo's death, gradually he grew into the most powerful member of the Florentine community and he was in the position to help his relatives as well. His nuclear family, composed of his three brothers, developed connections to the papal court. Between 1412 and 1414, one of them, named Simone (b. c. 1387-), appeared as John XXIII's legate in Hungary.<sup>30</sup> In 1428, Pope Martin V conferred upon him the title of senator of Rome.<sup>31</sup> Earlier, another of the brothers, Lorenzo (b.c. 1392-), completed a diplomatic mission for Martin V.<sup>32</sup> They also built fruitful relations in Sigismund's court in Buda; in 1426 Simone became member of the King's *familia*.<sup>33</sup> Their third brother, Niccolò, even settled in the kingdom and integrated into the local society, by marrying a noblewoman, the daughter of Miklós Treutel.<sup>34</sup> Following his nomination, Giovanni's influence and power, as member of the *aula regis*, enabled him to defend his relatives also in serious matters, such as business misconduct.<sup>35</sup> This is clearly exemplified by his nephew, Gianozzo di Giovanni Cavalcanti's case, who, as we shall see later, was hiding from the effects of Sigismund's anger in the archbishopric. Like Andrea Scolari, Giovanni was also eager to provide financial help to members of his extended family who sojourned for certain periods in his court in Kalocsa.<sup>36</sup>

29 Engel, *Archontológia*, I. 65.

30 For the publication of the corresponding entries in the Registri Vaticani, Archivio Segreto Vaticano see: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, III. doc. 2139. (15/05/1412); *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, IV. doc. 2301. (26/07/1414) For the original see: ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 26/07/1412, Simone and Lorenzo served Pope John XXIII and Martin V several times as legates. ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 24/03/1421; Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 07/08/1415 (This last document is registered under the wrong date: 25/07/1415) He was also legate in 1421: Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 24/03/1421. For Simone, see: Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri Vaticani 346. fol. 155r. (1414) For the numerous documents regarding the lives of messer Andrea da Montebuoni's sons see: Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini.

31 Simple copy of the privilege, made on 16 January 1428. ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 05/02/1427.

32 For Lorenzo's service to Pope Martin V, see: ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 05/04/1428.

33 ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini 17/02/1426.

34 Arany, 'Apák, fiúk, fivérek, üzleti partnerek', p. 181.

35 In 1427, he obtained from the Pope the approval to issue a testament. ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 05/02/1427.

36 He provided his relatives with credit. We find him among the creditors of Amerigo e Baldassare di messer Albertaccio and Jacopo di Filippo del Bene. ASF, *Catasto* 450. fol. 4r. The

He had also three distant cousins, who were sons of Gherardo da Montebuoni. Among them, Manente (b. c.1392) obtained the canonic of *Varadinum* in 1426.<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile, Lorenzo (b. c. 1383) and Gherardo (b. c. 1396) already by 1413 were trading in Hungary, but they returned to Florence following the Scolaris' deaths.<sup>38</sup>

Giovanni da Montebuoni enjoyed his office uninterrupted for ten years, until 1435, when the Count of Cili captured him.<sup>39</sup> Following his liberation

ambassador Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini was also indebted to the Archbishop. ASF, *Catasto* 335. fol. 579v. He might have even served as guarantor for his brother Niccolò in business life. ASF, Guadagni 14. 10. fols. 1r-2v.

37 He was previously the rector of the Sant'Alessandro church in Giogoli (today Scandicci), patronized by the Buondelmonti. See: ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 22/09/1426. For the Buondelmonti in the Kingdom of Hungary, see: Prajda, 'The Florentine Scolari Family'.

38 Lorenzo, who lived for many years in Hungary, worked in close cooperation with Andrea Scolari. Andrea Scolari gave a credit of 500 Florentine florins to Lorenzo, which he was obliged to give back; however, Pippo Scolari, as heir of the Bishop, partly released him from his payment obligations. See the brothers' declaration from 1427: 'E più à uno debito Lorenzo in suo nome proprio colle heredi del messer lo vescovo degli Scholari, chef u vescovo di Valadino fiorini 500. I quali è più anni gli presto al decto Lorenzo dice con questi parti che è sia tenuto rendere e restituire i decti fiorini 500 allui proprio a suo procuratore o rede dal dì gli sono chiesti a sei mesi si veramente si veramente premise Francesco di messer Alessandro de Bardi per me che dove io non restituissi alla sua richiesta o di procuratore o di procuratore o rede il farebbe egli di suo proprio e così aparisce per una scritta s'ò scripta di mano di Francesco sopra decto e di me Lorenzo. La quale scripta ricevette il procuratore del decto vescovo e io aparisco creditore de decti fiorini 500 per libri del decto Francesco e di Bardo suo figliuolo vero. E dice nella partita non siamo pagati i decti denari senza la loro licentia. Di poi seghui che il decto messer lo vescovo morì e lasciò sua rede dopo certi legati fece in suo testament messer Filippo Spano degli Scolari di che io andai a lui in Ungaria del mese d'octobre passato e del mese di dicembre in Lippa. Il detto messer Filippo mi donò di detta somma di fiorini 500 a me Lorenzo, fiorini 300 il resto volle pagasse per tucto agosto prossimo che viene a certi suoi consorti a cui fece donagione di detta redità di messer lo vescovo e di questo aparisce una scripta di volunta del decto messer Filippo di mano di Ricoldo di ser Paulo che allora si trovò in decti paesi s'à scripta di mano della heredità cioè di suoi consorti detti e di me Lorenzo opure non ne seghuito conclusionè però non so come la cosa seghuirà, abiate buono righuardo.' ASF, *Catasto* 297. fol. 53v. Gherardo was imprisoned with Antonio di Piero di Fronte. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, IV. doc.730. In 1427, Lorenzo mentioned in his declaration that he had just returned from Hungary and did not even have a place to stay in Florence, because it had been a long time since he lived in the Kingdom. 'Una chasa chon due botteghe posta nel popolo di Sancto Stefano al Ponte, la qual chasa tiene a pigione Bartolomeo Carducci, dame l'anno fiorini venticinque. La qual casa è pigionata per l'adietro perché sono istato in Ungaria, ora sono tornato d'Ungaria e voglio tornarvi entro io e abitarvi, però non ò ove abitare altrove [...]'. ASF, *Catasto* 38. fol. 327r.

39 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri Vaticani 374. fol. 34r. (05/02/1435), 'Arissimo in Christo filio Sigismondo Romanorum Imperatori semper augusto: ac Ungarie et Bohemie regi illustri salutem ictum non possumus non admirari quod cum iam pluries scripserimus ad tuam serenitatem pro liberatione venerabilis fratris nostri Iohannis archiepiscopi Colocensis: qui nulla ex iusta

from the Count's prison, he managed to regain control over the archbishopric, where he stayed until his death in 1447.<sup>40</sup>

## 2 The Del Bene Family

The Da Montebuoni and the Del Bene were in-laws, since one of the Archbishop's brothers, Lorenzo di messer Andrea da Montebuoni, married the daughter of Filippo di Giovanni del Bene.<sup>41</sup> The two lineages had in fact been connected by marriage since the 1330s.<sup>42</sup> The Del Bene, studied by Hidetoshi Hoshino, attributed their ascension into the Florentine elite to their involvement in the domestic wool industry, and, by the early fourteenth century, they had turned into one of the most prestigious actors within that sector.<sup>43</sup> Their lineage was not extended, though. In 1378, they had five households, located in various parts of the city.<sup>44</sup> By 1433, the number of households increased to eight, which were all located in the gonfalons of Vipera and Drago, quarter of San Giovanni, and included 28 family members.<sup>45</sup> Two of the households did not possess any taxable assets, and the total assets of the households were only 2629 florins, which is surprisingly low given the family enterprises in the wool industry, trade, and politics.

Filippo's father, Giovanni di Amerigo, and his cousin, Jacopo di Francesco del Bene, as members of the political elite, were continuously called to the Palazzo della Signoria in order to join the meetings of the secret councils. In the 1370s-1380s, Giovanni, by his active participation as speaker, can be considered to be an influential politician of his time.<sup>46</sup> In the early 1380s, which they spent in exile, Giovanni and Jacopo built a business network

*causa tam diu contra deum et iustitiam carceratus fuit [...].* Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri Vaticani 359. fol. 151v.

40 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I. pp. 66, 515.

41 For the marriage between Lorenzo and Checca and the dowry see: ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 13/07/1419; ASF, Monte II. 3733. fol. 165r.

42 Ghetta di Francesco del Bene and Banchello di messer Manente Buondelmonti were married in the 1330s. ASF, Del Bene 27. fol. 8v.

43 Hoshino, *L'Arte della Lana in Firenze nel basso medioevo*, pp. 153-182.

44 Giovanni d'Amerigo. ASF, Prestanze 367. fol. 4r; Simone di Francesco. Prestanze 367. fol. 9v; Francesco di Tano. Prestanze 367. fol. 10v; Francesco di Jacopo. Prestanze 368. fol. 4r; Piero Prestanze 368. fol. 21v; Furthermore, the heris of Filippo. Prestanze 369. fol. 28r.

45 Amerigo di messer Albertaccio. ASF, Catasto 455. fol. 3r; Antonio di messer Ricciardo Catasto 455. fol. 32r; Borgognone di Jacopo. Catasto 455. fol. 55r; Giovanni di Jacopo. Catasto 455. fol. 193r; Vieri di Francesco. Catasto 455. fol. 729r; Agnolo Catasto 498. fol. 35v; Daniello del Gese. Catasto 498. fol. 202r; Nastagio di Niccolò Catasto 495. fol. 361v.

46 Giovanni d'Amerigo. ASF, CP vols. 11-19. (1370-1381); Jacopo di Francesco. CP vol.2. (1358).

in Padua and Venice. The family first appeared in the Kingdom of Hungary in 1376, when the Signoria dispatched Jacopo's son, Bene, juris doctor, as member of a diplomatic contingent, to Louis I's court. While on mission, Bene died in Buda and the commission of his tomb made it necessary for his family to establish the earliest contacts in Hungary.<sup>47</sup>

### Filippo di Giovanni del Bene (1372/1374-1427/1431): The Collector of Papal Revenues

Filippo's entrance into Florentine business life is dated to 1398, the year of his matriculation into the Wool Guild and that of his marriage with the daughter of Andrea di Tommaso Lamberteschi, who was one of the most influential members of the Guild. Filippo first appears in Hungary less than a decade later, in 1405, as an agent of Doffo di Nepo Spini's firm.<sup>48</sup> Doffo, according to his own *Ricordanze*, was appointed by Alexander V as a depository of the Apostolic Chamber and, following that period, John XXIII in the first years of his pontificate maintained the connection with the firm.<sup>49</sup>

Since Filippo's father and Jacopo del Bene were closely related, this might have helped Filippo find his way in Hungary as well as in the Apostolic Chamber. According to Arnold Esch, Jacopo di Francesco del Bene's activity in Rome dates back at least to 1401, when he was mentioned as local resident.<sup>50</sup> Two years later, in 1403, we hear for the first time about Filippo staying in Rome.<sup>51</sup> The functioning of papal collectors in Hungarian territory has been studied in detail by Tamás Fedeles, through an earlier example datable to the 1370s.<sup>52</sup> Meanwhile, due to the dynastic relations between the Anjou and the Piast and the personal union of the two countries, during Louis I's reign the Kingdoms of Hungary and Poland constituted one collectorial area; starting from Sigismund's time, however, the two were divided into two distinct areas of collectorial activity.

In 1410, Filippo was already serving Pope John XXIII in collection of the tithe. Back then, Filippo was transferring the revenues, collected by the

47 Prajda, 'Egy firenzei sírköve Budán'.

48 ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 26. fols. 136r-v. (05/12/1405) For Doffo Spini see also: Tripodi, *Gli Spini*, pp. 22-28, 33-34, 57-62.

49 Holmes, *How the Medici*, pp. 364-365. For Doffo's *Ricordanze* see: ASF, CS. II. 13.

50 Esch, 'Florentiner in Rom um 1400', pp. 510-511.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 507.

52 Fedeles, 'Petrus Stephani collector'.

papal legate, Branda Castiglione, to the Chamber.<sup>53</sup> His business partner in the enterprise was Matteo Scolari.<sup>54</sup> On 18 March 1411, the Apostolic Chamber made an agreement with Filippo's uncle, Jacopo del Bene, and Francesco di Giachinotto Boscoli that they would act as joint depositaries.<sup>55</sup> Basically, all the papal revenues, except for those from Bologna and Forlì, were supposed to pass through their hands. In 1412, Filippo was again heading to Hungary as legate of the Pope with the special mandate to mediate between Sigismund and Venice.<sup>56</sup> He cooperated closely with his brother, Albertaccio, and kept business relations with a number of other Florentine merchants belonging to the Scolari's network, among them, Piero d'Andrea Lamberteschi, the Archbishop of Kalocsa, Pagolo di Berto Carnesecchi, and Simone and Tommaso di Lapo Corsi.<sup>57</sup>

While in Hungary, Filippo made acquaintance with Sigismund who, in 1411, accepted him as one of his *familiars*.<sup>58</sup> In 1424, the king conferred upon him the title of Count of the Lateran Palace.<sup>59</sup> In the following years, Filippo would have been constantly traveling between Florence, Hungary, and Rome. In 1427, on their way to Hungary, the Florentine ambassadors found him in *Segna*, in Tommaso di Piero Melanesi's company.<sup>60</sup> In spite of his several business ties in Hungary, he probably kept his family home in Florence, though there is no indication in his tax return that he did so. He

53 The papal legate, Branda de Castiglione, was supposed to give the collected revenues to Filippo del Bene. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II/2. doc. 7839.

54 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri Vaticani 346. fols. 155r. Published: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II/2. doc. 7968. Matteo Scolari included Filippo as one of his creditors in his testament, saying that according to the account books of Niccolò di Angelo Serragli, he owed Filippo 2000 florin for contracts, bulls, and letters of Pope John XXIII. ASF, NA, 5814. fol. 271r. He also appears in the tax declaration of Matteo's heirs. ASF, *Catasto* 466. fol. 427v.

55 Holmes, *How the Medici*, p. 366.

56 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, III. doc. 2692. In 1413, he is mentioned in the same capacity. *Ibid.*, IV.357. A year later, he was still working as a papal collector in the Kingdom. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, IV. doc. 1140.

57 In 1452, Albertaccio's sons write in their tax return: 'A Filippo e Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari per debiti di nostri padri [...]'. ASF, *Catasto* 703. fol. 147v. See also Jacopo di Filippo's declaration in 1433: ASF, *Catasto* 455. fol. 4r. See the joint declaration of Jacopo di Filippo and his cousins, Amerigo and Baldassare di messer Albertaccio Del Bene. ASF, *Catasto* 455. fol. 4r. There was a business relation between Filippo, Andrea Lamberteschi, and Jacopo di Bartolomeo da Calenzano. See the deposit in the merchant court. ASF, Mercanzia 11780. fol. 3r. Between Filippo and Piero d'Andrea Lamberteschi. Mercanzia 11780. fol. 40v. See the deposit in the merchant court. Mercanzia 11780. fol. 40r.

58 *Regesta Imperii*, XI. 1. doc. 132. (02/10/1411).

59 *Regesta Imperii*, XI. 1. doc. 5889. (12/06/1424).

60 See the diary of Luca: ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 5. fol. 27v.



married Lena del Bene dal Barba, whose family operated a money-changing table at the Mercato Vecchio; therefore, the marriage secured him some business connections in Florence.<sup>61</sup> Filippo's household included his son, Jacopo, born around 1401/1403, his wife, and the sons of Albertaccio. Filippo passed away sometime after 1427, leaving a very modest family patrimony to his son, which constituted an estate in Petriolo, the parish of San Biagio, and several smaller parcels of land and houses.<sup>62</sup> By his testament, he commanded his son to construct a family chapel in Petriolo dedicated to San Luca, on which work was still ongoing in 1442.<sup>63</sup>

It is unclear where Jacopo stayed following his father's death. While he covered various offices in Hungary, he also served the Florentine Signoria as an ambassador to King Sigismund. Between 1438 and 1449 he was in Matko Talovac's service as count of the salt chamber in Szeged, and he also held other offices at the salt chambers.<sup>64</sup> He, like his father, remained throughout his life a resident and citizen in Florence.<sup>65</sup>

In 1442, according to the testimony of his tax declaration, because of earlier business between his father and the Scolari, several lands possessed by Jacopo ended up in Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari's hands.<sup>66</sup> In a letter addressed to Pietro de' Medici in 1448, Lorenzo was complaining about the lack of payment on Jacopo's behalf.<sup>67</sup> The very same letter mentions Lorenzo's return to Florence, which suggests also that he might have been working with Jacopo in the salt mines. The close relations between the two families are also illustrated by the fact that Jacopo del Bene and Lorenzo Scolari became brothers-in-law by marrying the Sapiti sisters, Lodomila and Agnola di Bernardo. It seems to me that they even shared the same house, located in the popolo of San Jacopo Sopr'Arno, which was originally possessed by their father-in-law, Bernardo di Francesco Sapiti.<sup>68</sup>

61 See the declaration in 1433. ASF, Catasto, 474. fols. 75r-76r.

62 He reported that he was suffering from gout. 'Filippo del Bene sopradetto d'età d'anni Lv, gottoso e uso di ben vivere e con famiglia al servizio suo.' ASF, *Catasto* 38. fols. 237r.

63 'Facciano adificare una capella di Santo Lucha, posta nella chiesa di Santo Biagio a Petriuolo per testamento di Giovanni d'Amerigho del Bene [...].' ASF, *Catasto* 667. fol. 268v.

64 Draskóczy, 'Olaszok a középkori Erdélyben', p. 129.

65 ASF, Catasto 812. Numero 64.

66 ASF, Catasto 667. fol. 268v; Catasto 703. fol. 145v.

67 ASF, MAP, filza 16. n. 35.

68 'Una casa non divisa con l'erede di Domenico Sapiti nel popolo di San Jacopo sopr'Arno [...] ebbi da Bernardo di Francesco Sapiti, mio suocero per parte della dota di Landomina mia donna e figliuola di detto Bernardo.' Jacopo's declaration, submitted in 1452. ASF, Catasto 703. fol. 145r.



### 3 The Cavalcanti Family

The Cavalcanti were also linked to the Da Montebuoni through marriage, as the Archbishop's mother was Giovanni di messer Amerigo Cavalcanti's sister.<sup>69</sup> Their lineage was similarly of ancient magnate origins; their ancestors lived in the sestiero di San Pier Scheraggio.<sup>70</sup> They were ineligible for city offices, thus they did not participate at all in politics during the period and we do not find their names among the speakers of the secret councils. Despite their politically unfavourable situation, the Cavalcanti remained one of the most extended lineages of the city. In 1378, they had 35 households located mainly in the gonfalons of Carro, quarter of Santa Croce and Vipera, quarter of Santa Maria.<sup>71</sup> Among them, messer Amerigo di messer Gianozzo lived in the gonfalon of Vipera.<sup>72</sup> By 1433, the number of their households diminished to 25 and included a total of 77 family members.<sup>73</sup> At that time, Gianozzo di Giovanni, Amerigo's grandson, kept his house in the same gonfalon of Vipera.<sup>74</sup> The total assets declared by the households amounted to 21,200 florins, but the distribution of the wealth between the households showed great inequality – among them, ten households paid *composto*.

If Giovanni Cavalcanti ever traveled to Hungary, we do not know. He had already died by the time of the first general census that would allow us to reconstruct his life.

#### Gianozzo di Giovanni Cavalcanti (b. 1397/1399): The Courtier

It was Gianozzo, one of Giovanni's sons to appear in the Scholaris' circle. In March 1426, he was among the witnesses of the document, written in Pippo Scolari's Buda house, in which he named the executors of Andrea and Matteo Scolari's testaments.

69 The description of Gianozzo's case makes a short reference to the fact that he and the Bishop were closely related. '[...] Erano a Baccia (Bač, RS) chol'arciveschovo de Buondelmonti che parente stretto di Gianozzo [...]'. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 321. fol. 98v.

70 Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates*, Appendix.

71 ASF, Prestanze 367. fols. 9r, 10r-v, 11r-v, 13v, 14r, 28v, 54r. Prestanze 368. fols. 6r-v, 7r-v, 20r, 44v, 79v. Prestanze 369. fol. 130r.

72 ASF, Prestanze 367. fol. 11r.

73 ASF, Catasto 488. fol. 330r, Catasto 489. fols. 116v, 287v, 506v. Catasto 491. fols. 22r, 69v, 82r, 104r, 121v, 141r, 226r, 237r, 258r, 265r. Catasto 492. fols. 174v. Catasto 493. fols. 126v, 253v. Catasto 455. fols. 73r, 112r, 417r, 421r, 458r. Catasto 498. fols. 183r, 363r. Catasto 495. fol. 463r.

74 ASF, Catasto 491. fol. 141r.

Gianozzo was around a decade younger than his uncle, the Archbishop, and he had not reached legal age by the time of his father's death.<sup>75</sup> In 1433, his two brothers, Amerigo and Niccolò, as well as their mother lived in three separate households.<sup>76</sup> Gianozzo remained with a thirteen-year-old girl, named Brigida, who was probably his wife. The document provides very little information about any kind of business activity in which he might have been involved. Similarly, we do not find any firm registered under his name in the 1433 *Catasto*, despite the business he conducted with his in-laws, Tommaso di Domenico Borghini and Lorenzo di Giovanni de' Medici (1395-1440).

The marriage of Gianozzo's sister Ginevra and Lorenzo brought to the Medici a property located on the ground floor of the Cavalcanti palace, near the Mercato Nuovo. The Medici consequently turned the property into the Medici *Tavola*.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, Tommaso Borghini by his marriage with Gianozzo's other sister, Lena, received a warehouse from the Cavalcanti.

By 1427, the three men had already been running a company together, with branches both in Florence and in Venice.<sup>78</sup> In March 1425, the firm may have already been operating, when Gianozzo and another Florentine merchant, named Filippo d'Amerigo Frescobaldi, signed a limited liability contract (*accomandita*) with Tommaso Borghini to take a load of silk textiles to the Hungarian royal court.<sup>79</sup> They traveled with Matteo Scolari, who at that time was Tommaso's partner in another company set up for textile trade in Hungary. By selling textiles to King Sigismund, the merchants received a good deal of money, though the King remained indebted to them

75 In 1427, he was 18 years old. ASF, Catasto 68. fol. 214r. In his catasto declaration, presented in 1433, his age is not accurate. In the original portate, we read 74 years old, meanwhile the campioni mentions him as 34 years old. Catasto 445. fol. 297r. Catasto 491. fol. 142r. They presented a correction to their first tax document, in which he is 30 years old. ASF, Catasto 297. fols. 164-167.  
76 See their declarations, submitted in 1433. Niccolò di Giovanni Cavalcanti was 23 years old. ASF, Catasto 445. fols. 545r-546r. Amerigo di Giovanni Cavalcanti was 35 years old. Catasto 445. fols. 70r-71r. Their mother, Costanza. Catasto 445. fols. 322r.

77 The marriage between Lorenzo and Ginevra took place in 1416. De Roover, *The Rise of the Medici*, p. 19. See also Ginevra's testament, issued in 1444. ASF, MAP filza. 161. fol. 1r.

78 '[...] Considerati una procura facta in decta corte del decto Giambonino Scolari insino a dì 5 del mese di marzo passato ad petitione di decto Tomaso Borghini procuratore in nome di Gianozzo di Giovanni di messer Amerigo Cavalcanti e di Lorenzo di Giovanni de' Medici per se e per suoi compagni e compagnie di Vinegia e di Firenze [...]'. ASF, Mercanzia 7715. fol. 235r.

79 In 1431, Domenico, Tommaso Borghini's son and heir, reported that 'Una mandata di drappi facemmo in Ungheria nell'anno 1424, i quali si dierono in acomanda a Filippo d'Amerigo Frescobaldi e Gianozzo di Giovanni Chavalcanti, e quali venderono alla maestà del re per circha di fiorini 700 o più [...]'. ASF, Catasto 350. fol. 353v.

for 1300 florins.<sup>80</sup> On this particular trip to Hungary, Matteo Scolari took with him cash and textiles from Tommaso's warehouse with the value of 900 florins.<sup>81</sup> This put him in debt to Tommaso. The parties had not settled this financial issue with each other by the time of Matteo Scolari's death so it fell to his heirs to deal with the case.

Thanks to the controversial situation, the parties involved – Gianozzo, Tommaso Borghini, and the Scolari nephews – ended up in a quarrel in which Gianozzo was forced to rely considerably on his uncle's help. During the history of papacy, popes typically surrounded themselves with and protected their relatives, who lived in their courts either as prelates or as courtiers.<sup>82</sup> Later examples, depicted in group portraits like the one of Pope Paul III, born Alessandro Farnese (pope from 1534 to 1549), and Pope Leo X, born Giovanni de' Medici (pope from 1513 to 1521), might give us a clear sense of the privileges they enjoyed in their uncle's or cousin's courts.<sup>83</sup> Gianozzo might have been a similarly protected courtier of his uncle, the Archbishop, who on occasion risked a confrontation with King Sigismund for his nephew.

The roots of the conflict between Gianozzo and the Scolari go back to November 1426, when Pippo Scolari gave a letter to his nephew, Filippo di Rinieri Scolari, which testified that the Count of Segna and Modrus was indebted to him.<sup>84</sup> However, Pippo himself owed 1000 florins to the Medici of Venice.<sup>85</sup> Pippo died in December, so the duty to recover the money from the Count fell to Filippo di Rinieri Scolari. The King seemingly

80 The document describing the case might be a short memo, prepared by/for Filippo Scolari: 'Al nome sia di Dio amen. In su questo foglio faremo richordo apunto chome la chosa di Gianozzo Chavalchanti e Filippo Freschobaldi è passata di danari di Filippo Scolari che si voleano chonvertire a lloro essere.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 321. fol. 98r. In 1429, Filippo reported the King's debt of 1300 Florentine florins in their tax return. ASF, Catasto 297. fols. 31v.

81 Matteo Scolari took textiles from Tommaso's silk workshop and warehouse in the value of 730 Florentine florins. For the court case, see: ASF, Mercanzia 7114bis. fols. 63r-v, 134v-136r.

82 The term *cortigiano* ('courtier') appears already in contemporary documents. For example, in 1427, maestro Giovanni del maestro Antonio da San Miniato mentions in his tax document that a certain 'messer Giovanni Azel tedescho, cortigiano abitava qui quando c'era il papa [...]'. ASF, Catasto 79. fol. 48v.

83 Tiziano, *Pope Paul III and his Grandsons*, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples, 1546; Raffaello, *Portrait of Leo X with two Cardinals*, Uffizi Gallery, 1518-19. For the study of the phenomenon see: *Court and Politics in Papal Rome*.

84 In 1429, Filippo Scolari reported that he had '[...] Ancora pretende avere ragioni contra a Gianozzo Cavalcanti [...]'. ASF, Catasto 296. fol. 160r.

85 See the contemporary copies of letters collected for the case: 'Copia di più lettera da Buda, le quali parlano sopra i danari 1000 s'anno avere dal Conte di Signa per parte di messer Filippo Spano.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 370r-v.

wished to help Filippo in the beginning, but the Count refused to pay.<sup>86</sup> A couple of months later, both the ruler and Filippo Scolari, accused Gianozzo Cavalcanti of business misconduct, instead of demanding payment from the Count. The Scolari originally wished to eliminate their debt by giving the Count's money to the Medici. Both the Count's and Gianozzo's claims in the matter likely stood in sharp contrast to each other, which then made Filippo Scolari suspicious. Whether these accusations were true or false, and whether the Count had finally paid his debt to Gianozzo, we do not learn explicitly from these sources.

The act of standing against the Count of Modrus, one of the most important barons in the royal court, surely exceeded the limits of an ordinary Florentine merchant in Hungary. In the meantime, Filippo Scolari brought the case in front of the Merchant Court by claiming that Gianozzo and Filippo Frescobaldi wanted to turn the money to their own interests.<sup>87</sup> At that point, Gianozzo's situation, both in Florence and in Hungary, was worrisome, and the help of his uncle the Archbishop became crucial. When the case started to escalate, he found shelter in Kalocsa to hide from the King's anger.<sup>88</sup> Sigismund had even demanded the money from the Archbishop, which Gianozzo had supposedly taken from the Count of Modrus.<sup>89</sup>

The Archbishop's help, though, did not prove to be sufficient, and in 1427 Gianozzo ended up in Sigismund's prison. Whether Gianozzo's

86 The letter was written on 28 June 1427. Two other letters were sent, one on 19 August 1427, and 16 January 1428. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 370v. See Sigismund's decision, verbalized by the royal chancery. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 262r-v.

87 '[...] In su questo foglio faremo richordo apunto chome la chosa di Gianozzo Chavalchanti e Filippo Freschobaldi è passata de danari di Filippo Scholari che si voleano chonvertire a lloro essere.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 321. fol. 98r.

88 'Copia d'una letta che l'omperadore scrisse al'arcivescovo di Coloccia che sostenesse Gianozzo [...]'. ASF, 78. 326. fols. 262v-263r.

89 'Item uno effetto publico scritto per mano di publico notaio per la quale apparisse come il serenissimo principe et signore Sigismondo imperatore de romani scrisse lettera al arcivescovo di Collocia che in quanto Gianozzo Cavalcanti predecto non vole esser dare e pagare i certi assegnamenti che esso imperatore aveva facti per denari 2000 che il decto Gianozzo aveva ricevuti dal Conte di Segna in nome di messer Pippo Scolari e per suoi facti che esso ritenesse questo, il decto Gianozzo decta partita. Et come il decto arcivescovo di Collocia avendo auti risposta dal decto Gianozzo che la decta partita aveva distribuita e derogati come doveva lo fece pigliare e detenere e messe decto Gianozzo nel carcere.' ASF, Mercanzia 7115. fol. 98r. Furthermore, see the copy of a letter written by Sigismund's chancery to Giovanni Buondelmonti in Gianozzo's case: '[...] I decti danari precisamente tocchano alla nostra Maiestà [...]'. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 262v. Furthermore, see a document issued by a public notary in Florence: Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 314. fols. 18- 19. See other documents regarding the case at the Merchant Court: ASF, Mercanzia 7118. fols. 46v-47r.

imprisonment resulted from a court procedure in Hungary, or if he was taken only by the King's order, is not to be found in the documents. However, more than a year later, in March 1429, the Latin consul, Leonardo di Nofri Bardi, as relator of the case in the royal court, received a letter from the Signoria asking for a favourable outcome for Gianozzo.<sup>90</sup> But this was long after Gianozzo's capture and might have been only a formality, which did not mean that there was anyone truly investigating the case in Hungary.

The Archbishop and the Medici likely mobilized Florentine diplomacy in favour of their relative and in-law. In April 1428, Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini, who arrived during the summer of 1427 as an ambassador in Buda, was completing a mission on behalf of the Merchant Court with the intent of obtaining Gianozzo's deliberation.<sup>91</sup> In 1428, the three business partners, Gianozzo, Tommaso Borghini, and Lorenzo di Giovanni de' Medici, even asked for another Scolari nephew, Giambonino, to be captured at the Merchant Court for the debt.<sup>92</sup> Gianozzo was finally released that year, thanks to the intervention of the Florentine as well as the Milanese ambassadors.

However, the court processes moved slowly, and Giambonino Scolari, in a letter written on 27 May 1429, and addressed to his brother Filippo noted with preoccupation that Gianozzo's case at the Merchant Court was not yet concluded and that the *Calimala* Guild was about to call together a meeting on the issue.<sup>93</sup> On 4 March 1430, when submitting his tax return, Filippo Scolari claimed that the litigation had not yet concluded.<sup>94</sup> Interestingly, all these serious issues of imprisonment and requests for capture did not completely destroy the business ties between the Scolari and the Borghini. Tommaso Borghini's son Domenico still worked in close cooperation with the Scolari nephews in Venice while the case was ongoing.

90 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 32. fols. 52v-53r.

91 'Io sia dinanzi alla reale Maestà a suplicare la liberatione di Giannozzo di Giovanni Cavalcanti.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 337r.

92 ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini 12/04/1428.

93 'Vero che per anchora del fatto di Gianozzo non è concluso e che ala Merchadantia [...] me scrivi che l'Arte di Chalimala si doveva ragunare e farne conclusionone che è cossa che molto mi piase pure sia presto [...]'. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 354r.

94 ASF, Catasto 296. fol. 160r.

## 4 The Borghini Family

The Borghini became the Cavalcantis' in-laws by the marriage between Gianozzo's sister Lena and Tommaso di Domenico Borghini. The Borghini, who acquired a name for themselves over the course of the fourteenth century, were of *popolani* origins.<sup>95</sup> In 1378, they had only one household registered in the tax document under the name of Zanobi di Taddeo, who lived with his family in the gonfalon of Bue, quarter of Santa Croce.<sup>96</sup> Both Zanobi and his brother, Domenico di Taddeo, were active participants of the secret councils.<sup>97</sup> In 1433, only Tommaso's son, Domenico, submitted a tax return for the family. His household was composed of seven family members and was located in the gonfalon of Bue, quarter of Santa Croce.<sup>98</sup> He declared 2883 florins of total assets and paid two florins and eighteen soldi of catasto. The Borghini, thus, was a completely new family in the Florentine social scene, but its members already occupied a place in the political elite. There is no evidence that they had any connections in the Kingdom of Hungary prior to Pippo's presence in the royal court.

Despite their new social status in Florence, the family's participation in silk manufacturing and long-distance trade went back at least to the 1390s. By 1395, Tommaso's distant uncle, Tommaso di Orlando Borghini, appears as Francesco di Marco Datini's agent in Avignon.<sup>99</sup> In 1402, we find him back in Florence, where he seemingly started to produce silk textiles with his new firm, which he had set up with Lorenzo di Dinozzo.<sup>100</sup> Tommaso, indeed, might have belonged to the first generation of those silk manufacturers of Florentine origins who invested financial and human capital into silk companies. At that point, Florentine silk production could hardly have been called foreign-oriented; the production was probably limited to fulfilling

95 According to my studies, the first reference of the family is dated to 1350, when a notary act mentions a certain Tommaso Borghini. ASF, NA, 14004. fol. 26v.

96 The other households seem to be unrelated to this one, even though the *Tratte*, that is, the list of office holders, mentions more persons with the Borghini family name, like Zanobi di Taddeo Borghini. ASF, *Prestanze* 367. fol. 24r.

97 Zanobi Borghini: ASF, CP 24. fols. 10v, 13r, 34v, 39v; CP 28. fols. 47r. Domenico Borghini: CP 14, fol. 52v; CP 23. fols. 2v, 10v, 12r, 16v, 18r, 20v, 29r, 30v, 33r, 139v, 143r, 145r, 146r, 148v.

98 ASF, *Catasto* 491bis. fol. 150v. In 1427, the household included Domenico (aged 56), Lena, his wife (aged 32), his offspring Domenico (aged 17), Giovanni (aged 14), Mattea (aged 8), Checca (aged 4), and Marietta (aged 3). ASF, *Catasto* 29. fol. 667.

99 See the correspondence with Datini. AD, busta 429, inserto 26, codice 507126; busta 430, inserto 18, codice 50712. His brother Cristofano di Orlando at that time was staying in Arles. AD, busta 620, inserto 17, codice 508660.

100 AD, busta 501, inserto 20, codice 503660.

the needs of the domestic market. Only the supply of raw silk required the involvement of international merchants, because it originated in distant locations.

### **Tommaso di Domenico Borghini (c. 1381-c. 1428/1430): The Pioneer Silk Entrepreneur**

The domestic silk industry, as Sergio Tognetti claims, underwent its initial phase of development in the first part of the fourteenth century, when skilled workers from nearby Lucca arrived in the city.<sup>101</sup> Lucca, as the earliest centre of silk manufacturing in Italy, dominated the market for the entire fourteenth century. Following Venice, Florence stood as the third largest silk manufacturing centre in the Italian Peninsula.<sup>102</sup> As a consequence, silk textile turned into the first product manufactured in Florence, which Florentine merchants sold throughout western Europe.<sup>103</sup> It took probably forty years for the second generation of silk manufacturers and entrepreneurs to appear on the scene and they seem to have been descendants of the first investors. By that time, the sector had already started to employ Florentine merchant networks abroad for the distribution of their finished silk fabrics. Tommaso, therefore, belonged to this second generation of businessmen who was engaged both in the production and in the marketing of silk textiles abroad. His success in the silk sector may be attributed to his uncle and brother, who might have helped him in investing human and financial capital into his enterprise.

Tommaso's elder brother Jacopo was a wool manufacturer who, with his partner, Zanobi di Cambio Orlandi, ran a workshop in the convent of San Martino.<sup>104</sup> In 1401, Jacopo died and Tommaso was to inherit the business and probably the profit obtained by his brother. In December 1405, the firm owned by Tommaso's uncle and Lorenzo di Dinozzo still existed.<sup>105</sup> The know-how in silk manufacturing came from his uncle who, by his death,

101 Tognetti, 'La diaspora dei lucchesi'.

102 Molà, *The Silk Industry of Renaissance Venice*.

103 Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 282-295.

104 '[...] D'una compagnia chel detto Zanobi di Cambio Orlandi el detto Jacopo di Domenico Borghini ebbono insieme già e più tempo in fare e in far fare una bottega d'Arte di Lana nel Convento di San Martino della città di Firenze la quale compagnia e bottega duro per spatio e termine di tre anni e mezo la quale compagnia e bottega si partiva in tre parti cioè chel detto Zanobi di Cambio Orlandi ne tocchava parti due e al detto Jacopo di Domenico Borghini ne tocchava parte una [...]'. ASF, Arte della Lana 325. fol. 39v.

105 AD, busta 870, inserto 11, codice 901229.



left business obligations and contacts for his nephew.<sup>106</sup> This suggests that Tommaso's silk firm was probably the continuation of his uncle's business.<sup>107</sup> The location of his silk workshop is uncertain, although Tommaso received a workshop-warehouse from the Cavalcanti as part of his wife's dowry; it was situated in the Via Nuova dei Cavalcanti, in the parish of San Romolo. However, in 1427, it was reported to be used by the Cavalcanti themselves.<sup>108</sup> Tommaso might have started the activity on his own sometime around 1410, the year when his enrollment as a silk manufacturer was registered at the Por Santa Maria Guild. In the following years, he grew into one of the most respected members of the guild and was elected to consul nine times.<sup>109</sup>

Tommaso's pioneering activity in the silk manufacturing business cannot be separated from an important innovation in the sector that helped build the reputation for Florentine fabrics. In 1420, the introduction of this technical novelty was commemorated in the statutes of the Por Santa Maria Guild, which state that Tommaso, in cooperation with two other businessmen, sponsored the earliest production of metallic threads for the silk sector in Florence.<sup>110</sup> One of his fellow manufacturers mentioned in the document is Tommaso's partner, Giorgio di Niccolò di Dante Ughi, with whom he established a company for the manufacturing of gold and silver threads in 1423.<sup>111</sup>

106 Following their father's death, Tommaso's son declared that they still had outstanding credit, which was left by the company owned by Tommaso Borghini and Lorenzo di Dinozzo. See his sons' declaration, in 1431: 'E più dobbiamo avere dalla compagnia che fu di Lorenzo di Dinozzo e Thommaso Borghini e compagni circha di fiorini xxv, i quali denari facciamo perduti.' ASF, Catasto 350. fol. 353v.

107 AD, busta 870, inserto 11, codice 901229.

108 In 1427, it was reported to be used by members of the Cavalcanti family as a tailors' workshop. See Tommaso's tax declaration, in 1427: 'Una bottega, ovvero fondacho posto nel popolo di Santo Romolo, nella Via Nova de Chavalchanti, da primo via, da secondo è chapitani della Parte Ghuelfa, a terzo e a quarto detti chapitani. La quale bottega, ovvero fondacho abiamo e tegniamo per dotta di monna Lena, donna del detto Tomaso, per fiorini dugiento, carta fatta per mano di ser Ghuido di messer Tomaso, notaio fiorentino [...]'. ASF, Catasto 29. fol. 664r.

109 ASF, Arte di Por Santa Maria 246. fol. 8r, (1410), Arte di Por Santa Maria 246. fol. 8v (1411), Arte di Por Santa Maria 246. fol. 9v (1415), Arte di Por Santa Maria 246. fol. 10v (1417), Arte di Por Santa Maria 246. fol. 11r (1419), Arte di Por Santa Maria 246. fol. 12r (1421), Arte di Por Santa Maria 246. fol. 13r (1423), Arte di Por Santa Maria 246. fol. 14r (1426), Arte di Por Santa Maria 246. fol. 15r. (1428).

110 '[...] Nel 1420 s'inchominciò in Firenze a far filare l'oro et battere foglia da filare oro e fu l'arte di Por Santa Maria, cioè tra mercanti d'essa a loro spese e sotto nome dell'arte, che fu Tommaso Borghini, Giorgio di Niccolò di Dante e Giuliano di Francesco di ser Gino (Ginori). Costò gran denaro a condurceri è maestri e maestre.' Dini, *Manifattura e commercio*, p. 47.

111 For one of the firm's account books, see: 'Giorgio di Niccolò di Dante Ughi e Tommaso di Domenico Borghini e chompagni del'oro e del'ariento filatto [...]'. ASF, Ughi 67. fols. 1v-21v. See



Marketing of the firm's products abroad followed a pattern different from that of the major wool companies, which relied on Florentine merchant networks for distribution. Tommaso, in fact, decided to found a merchant company with Matteo Scolari for selling his own silk in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>112</sup> This pattern seems to be typical of other Florentine silk companies as well, like that of the Corsi and Melanesi brothers, who intended to enter their products into the Hungarian market. The production of Tommaso's firm might have been rather voluminous; Matteo Scolari, by his death, remained indebted to them for 900 Florentine florins. Because of liquidity problems experienced by Matteo's heirs, Tommaso was entitled to retain the income and later on the property rights of Matteo's estates, located in the parish of Santo Stefano a Campi.<sup>113</sup>

As the third generation of silk manufacturers, Tommaso's sons started their careers in the industry on their father's side.<sup>114</sup> In 1428, he and his sons, Domenico (b. c. 1411) and Giovanni (b. c. 1413) started a new silk workshop and gave a minor share to Jacopo di Bonifazio Russi. Tommaso died sometime following the founding of the company, and his heirs, maybe after a couple of months or one or two years, decided to discontinue the activity. In January 1431, we find in their declarations that the capital belonging to Tommaso's

also Giorgio's tax return, presented in 1427: ASF, Catasto fols. 970-973v.

112 See the case of Matteo's debt at the Merchant Court. ASF, Mercanzia 7114bis. fols. 63r-v, 134v-135r. The company kept in contact with other Florentine merchants working in Hungary who belonged to the Scolari's business network, like Simone di messer Andrea da Montebuoni and Filippo Frescobaldi. 'Qui apreso faremo richordo di tutti debitori e creditori che si trova nella bottega di Tomaso Borghini proprio, cioè nell'Arte della Seta, debitori a libro bianco segnato J. messer Matteo Scholari tra i danari adietro e spese fatte per una sentenza abiamo chontro ale rede e beni di detto messer e chosti ch' à tenuto Giovanni de Medici a chanbi in tuto fiorini 911 [...] Simone di messer Andrea da Montebuoni carta 4, fiorini 64. Filippo Frescobaldi debitor chativo però che quello che in Ungheria per noi e da gli avere da rre d'Ungheria e no' ne faciamo chonto niuno [...]'. ASF, Catasto 29. fols. 665v-666r. See his sons' tax declaration, submitted in 1431: Catasto 350. fol. 353v.

113 See the declaration of the heirs from 1427: 'Uno podere posto nel popolo di Santo Stefano a Chanpi, lughò detto Al fornello, con casa da signore e da lavoratore [...] Uno podere posto in detto popolo, lughò detto Il fornello [...] Uno podere posto in detto popolo, luoghò detto Gricignano [...] I sopradetti 3 poderi à presi Tomaso Borghini e compagni per fiorini 900 àno avere e degliene àno la rendità [...]'. ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 871v. 'Tommaso Borghini e compagni setaiuoli deono avere fiorini 900 che tengono 3 poderi a Canpi come n'abiamo fatto conto a pie de poderi [...]'. ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 875r.

114 See the surviving index of the matriculations mentioned in both Domenico's and Giovanni's names; however, the years of their admittance to the guild remain unclear. Meanwhile, Tommaso's third son, Piero, was enrolled in 1425. ASF, Arte di Por Santa Maria 28. fol. 1v.

heirs was 1718 florins, while Russi's part was 1194 florins.<sup>115</sup> The decision taken by the Borghini brothers might have had a lot to do with the fact that Domenico had been working in Venice as an international merchant as early as 1427. Earlier, his father, Gianozzo di Giovanni Cavalcanti, and Lorenzo di Giovanni de' Medici had operated a firm in Venice. In March 1427, Domenico became a partner of Agnolo di Zanobi Gaddi (c. 1398-) in a merchant company that traded with precious metals and stones, where Agnolo's share was 3500 Venetian ducates.<sup>116</sup> The Gaddi had already developed good connections in Venice, as they had moved to the city sometime before 1390 and grew into an important family of the local Florentine community.<sup>117</sup> In 1431, in the company balances, Agnolo declared that their firm retained three-eighths of two lands in Santo Stefano a Tizzano, in the neighbourhood of Matteo Scolari's former property, as a business debt. This seems to confirm that the Gaddi and Borghini of Venice earlier had kept strong business ties with Matteo Scolari and that maybe the lands were meant to clear an outstanding debt.<sup>118</sup> Domenico di Tommaso Borghini's surviving letters addressed to Giambonino and Filippo di Rinieri Scolari also strengthen the hypothesis that the strong business ties between the two families, even after 1426, remained uninterrupted.<sup>119</sup>

115 See his sons' declaration from 1431: 'E più ci troviamo in sulla bottegha dell'Arte della Seta in compagnia di Jacopo di Bonifazio Russi, la quale compagnia cominciò a dì xxv d'ottobre 1428 e di poi non se saldo alcuna ragione. Ma in detta compagnia mettemmo di corpo tra denari contanti e debitori e mercatantie fiorini 1718 d. vii a ffiorini. Così siamo creditori al libro secreto.' ASF, Catasto 350. fol. 353r. 'A voi signori uficiali del chatasto qui apresso faremo richordo noi rede di Tommaso Borghini e Jachopo di Bonifazio Russi di quello ci ritroviamo questo dì 31 di gennaio 1430 di chorpo in sulla bottegha dell'Arte della Seta ciaschuno per la parte sua, chome apresso diremo chontando debitori e creditori e mercatantie abbiamo in detta compagnia. Rede di Tommaso Borghini àno di chorpo in detta compagnia chome apartitamente a libro secreto segnato B. da 3 a 5 fiorini mille setteciento diciotto s. d.7. a ffiorini. fi. 1718. s. 2. aff. Jachopo di Bonifazio Russi à di chorpo in detta compagnia chome apare partitamente a libro secreto segnato B. da 5 a 6. fiorini mille ciento novantaquatro s. xxiii d. 6 a ffiorini. fi. 1194 s. 23. d. 6. Troviamo in detta compagnia drappi di seta di più ragioni fatti in bottegha per fiorini mille seicento venti s. 22. d. 11 a ffiorini [...]. Catasto 350. fol. 356r.

116 See the fragments of the account book of the company of Lorenzo Tacchini and Raimondo Manelli of Avignon: '1430 chopia d'uno conto àuto da Vinegia da Agnolo Ghaddi e Domenicho di Tommaso e compagni [...]. ASF, CS, serie V. 1760. fol. 102r. In 1431, in his tax declaration, Agnolo mentioned that he founded the company with Tommaso on 26 March 1427. ASF, Catasto 380. fol. 39v. ASF, CS serie V. 1760. See Agnolo di Zanobi Gaddi's declaration in 1431. ASF, Catasto 380. fol. 39v.

117 For the Gaddi in Venice see: Mueller, *Money and Banking*, pp. 268-270.

118 ASF, Catasto 380. fol. 41v.

119 Domenico was probably an apprentice of the Medici of Venice and, as business partners, sent frequent letters to the Scolari brothers. For his letters see: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol.

## 5 The Guicciardini Family

The Da Monte buoni also established social ties to one of the most important families of the Medici faction, the Guicciardini, with the Archbishop's sister Agnola di messer Andrea da Monte buoni marrying Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini.<sup>120</sup> The Guicciardini were documented in Florentine sources as early as the mid-twelfth century, and following the Black Death they became one of the most prominent *popolani* lineages.<sup>121</sup> Despite their social status, the number of their households remained modest during the entire period. In 1378, the officers of the *estimo* recorded eight households in the city, all of them located in the gonfalon of Nicchio, quarter of Santo Spirito.<sup>122</sup> By 1433, the number of households had not changed and only one household was located elsewhere.<sup>123</sup> They declared 29 family members and 33,865 florins of total assets. One of the households paid only *composto* and the *catasto* of the other seven amounted to 46 florins, 59 soldi, and 33 denari.

The Guicciardini were heavily involved in politics throughout the fourteenth century, and we encounter their names often in the registers of the secret councils. Piero's father, messer Luigi di Piero († 1403), an active politician himself, was dispatched abroad several times by the Signoria as head of the diplomatic contingents. He also participated as speaker in the meetings of the secret councils on a regular basis.<sup>124</sup> At the time of his death, he was mentioned as one of the richest men in Florence. The family had

340r-v. (30/04/1429); fol. 341r-v. (07/05/1429); fol. 344r-v. (14/05/1429); fol. 346r-v. (21/05/1429); fol. 357r-v. (28/05/1429); fol. 387r-v. (04/6/1429); fol. 359r-v. (11/06/1429); fol. 365r-v. (23/06/1429).

120 She was his third wife, before he had a Valori and an Acciaiuoli. Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth*, p. 108. The date of his third marriage is uncertain, but given the fact that Agnola da Monte buoni was 36 years old in 1427, we can only suspect that, according to Florentine customs, she was still in her teens when she married Piero. See Piero's declaration: ASF, Catasto 65. fol. 54r. (1427); Catasto 335. fol. 577r. (1431)

121 For the history of the lineage and their genealogical tree, see: Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth*, pp. 108-155. Brucker, *Florentine politics and society*, pp. 124-125.

122 Federigo di Leone. ASF, Estimo 268. fol. 35r; Margherita di Angelo di Puccio. Estimo 268. fol. 45r; Luigi di messer Piero. Estimo 268. fol. 64v; Dardano di Niccolò. Estimo 268. fol. 66r; Jacobo di Luca. Estimo 268. fol. 68r; Leoncino di Niccolò. Estimo 268. fol. 68r; Francesco di Niccolò. Estimo 268. fol. 68r; Sandro di Niccolò. Estimo 268. fol. 79v.

123 Agnoletta di Simone di Jacopo di Luca. ASF, Catasto 499. fol. 73v; Battista di Niccolò di messer Luigi. Catasto 488. fol. 53r; Giovanni di Niccolò di messer Luigi. Catasto 488. fol. 162v; Giovanni di Francesco. Catasto 488. fol. 187v; Ghino di Lioncino. Catasto 488. fol. 190r; messer Giovanni di messer Luigi. Catasto 488. fol. 200v; Piero di messer Luigi. Catasto 488. fol. 318r; Pagolo di Francesco. Catasto 488. fol. 340v.

124 There are 68 speeches registered under his name. ASF, CP vols. 20-36. For the offices held by him, see: Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth*, pp. 111-112.

seemingly no connection to Hungary before Pippo's time, and the relation between the two families might have been based entirely on the in-law ties which linked them to the Da Montebuoni.

### Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini (1378-1441): The Ambassador

Piero did not have much interest in business, but, rather, in politics. It is not surprising, therefore, that the entire 1433 *catasto* does not mention a single firm registered under his name.<sup>125</sup> During his political career, he became an important supporter of the Medici.<sup>126</sup> Like his father, Piero was an active member of the secret councils and in the period between 1413 and 1433, he was registered 54 times as a speaker.<sup>127</sup> Besides domestic politics, diplomacy was his major field of expertise. In the 1420s and 1430s, he led numerous diplomatic missions to foreign courts, among them to King Sigismund, the King of Aragon, the Pope, Milan, and Venice.

His earliest connections to Sigismund's court remain somewhat unclear. According to the chronicle of Bartolomeo di Michele del Corazza, Piero threw a party in 1410 on the occasion of Pippo Scolari's visit in Florence that involved dining, hunting, and jousting.<sup>128</sup> Six years later, Sigismund had probably conferred a noble title on him.<sup>129</sup> Beyond these details, one document issued in Pippo's Buda house, naming him as one of the executors of Matteo and Andrea Scolari's testaments, informs us that Piero was acquainted with the Scolari. In 1427, his pre-existing relations to the Da Montebuoni and the Scolari might have also led to his appointment as an ambassador of the Florentine Signoria to Sigismund. As Isabella Lazzarini pointed out, during the fifteenth century, a 'mixture of family and personal elements played a crucial role in being chosen as an ambassador.'<sup>130</sup> She has

125 Excluding the list of debtors and creditors. His tax declaration mentions only the fact that his son invested in a firm he ran with messer Giovanni Guicciardini. ASF, Catasto 434. fol. 337v.

126 Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth*, pp. 113-115. No Guicciardini account books survived from the period; therefore, Goldthwaite determined the wealth of the family exclusively on the basis of their catasti.

127 ASF, CP vols. 41-49. His name was registered until 1437 among the speakers at the secret councils.

128 'E alcuno cittadino fece a lui convito; fra' quali furono molti giovani cittadini che gli feciono un desinare al luogo di Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini, al ponte a Grieve: e feciono un bello e ricco convito e una caccia nel giardino di detto Piero. E poi, dopo il mangiare, feciono in sulla Grieve una bella giostra: furono da sei o otto giovani. Andovvi di Firenze più di III mila cristiani. Fu delle belle feste ch'io vedessi mai, di simile cose.' Del Corazza, *Diario fiorentino*, p. 26.

129 Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth*, p. 117.

130 Lazzarini, *Communication and Conflict*, p. 125.

shown that Bonaccorso di Neri Pitti's (1354-1432) success as an ambassador rested on the personal network that he built in the French royal court, when he was sent on multiple occasions to the Kingdom of France.<sup>131</sup> Piero's case, therefore, was definitely not a unique one. Earlier, in 1426, Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi was dispatched by the Florentine government to Hungary; he was then a soon-to-be in-law of the Scolari. In Florentine diplomacy, the private side of ambassadorial appointments might have tried to ensure the success of diplomatic missions by considering the social network available for helping ambassadors perform their task. Consequently, embassies might have been designed to serve both diplomatic and private interests.

The crucial role of temporary embassies rested on the peaceful resolution of diplomatic conflicts with foreign powers, since a military confrontation might have disturbed Florentines' trade in the given region. The strong intersection between trade and diplomatic interests of members of the Florentine political elite resulted in the selection of a high number of international merchants to fulfill ambassadorial tasks.<sup>132</sup> The diplomatic missions that led to the Kingdom of Hungary confirmed in several ways Brian J. Maxson's claim that around the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Florentine diplomatic practices already pointed toward the careful selection of potential ambassadors.<sup>133</sup> Even though ambassadors were appointed by the *Signoria* itself, members of the political elite in the framework of the secret councils had the ability to advocate for possible candidates. The ratio between the suggested and the accepted personnel for a given diplomatic contingent must have been very high.

In early Renaissance Florence, embassies typically included three persons at the head of the contingent: a politician who was likely also an important international merchant, an educated man, and a notary or so-called chancellor of the embassy. The politician's expertise typically included trade in

131 Lazzarini, 'Mercatura e diplomazia', pp. 277-283.

132 Lazzarini, 'Mercatura e diplomazia'. Ibid., 'I circuiti mercantili della diplomazia italiana nel Quattrocento'. Prajda, 'Trade and Diplomacy in pre-Medici Florence'.

133 It can be considered the most active period of the Florentine diplomacy in relation to the Hungarian ruler, with four embassies following each other in the years 1424, 1426, 1427, and 1428. In all these cases, the *Signoria* assigned its most influential politicians to the court. Among them were Biagio di Jacopo Guasconi (1424), Rinaldo di Maso degli Albizzi (1426), and Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini (1427; 1428). Besides them, also learned men, like Bene di Jacopo del Bene (1376), juris doctor, Nello di Giuliano Martini da San Gimignano (1426), similarly juris doctor, and Luca di Maso degli Albizzi (1427) traveled with the embassies. As Maxson has observed, educated men with good rhetorical skills were more likely to be appointed as ambassadors. Maxson, *The Humanist World of Renaissance Florence*, Chapter 6.

addition to politics, while orations and diplomatic communication were left for the second, learned man. The skills and selections of this position, described by Brian Maxson, show that the differences between the two ambassadors were significant, and these two distinct tasks required two or three persons. The *Signoria*, in all the cases known to us, assigned its most influential politicians to the Hungarian court. Among them were Biagio di Jacopo Guasconi (1424), Rinaldo di Maso degli Albizzi (1426), and Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini (1427).

Among the individuals studied in the present volume, businessmen like Andrea di messer Lorenzo Da Montebuoni, Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi, and Vieri di Vieri Guadagni often performed in diplomatic capacities.<sup>134</sup> In fact, international merchants' participation in ambassadorships might have considerably facilitated the *Signoria's* attempt to maintain trade and political connections with the Kingdom of Hungary. These businessmen also used their sojourn for networking purposes with their fellow Florentines and Hungarian dignitaries.<sup>135</sup> The practice of cultivating business ties during diplomatic missions is best illustrated by the travel accounts of the Albizzi brothers, Luca and Rinaldo di Maso. Sources produced during their trips to Hungary suggest that networks of Florentine merchants abroad might have contributed considerably to the success of diplomatic missions, and that Florentine ambassadors very often relied on the help of their fellow citizens abroad. Diplomatic journeys might have been organized both financially and logistically like commercial trips: they used the same trading routes and ambassadors similar to merchants, and they seem to have recorded the daily expenses of their trip, important information for the *Signoria*. Rinaldo and Luca met several Florentine merchants during their trips; Luca mentioned that in Venice two of them, Tommaso Melanesi and Filippo di Giovanni del Bene, were heading to Hungary by sea. Another merchant, Tommaso Schiattesi, even joined him on his way to *Segna* (Senj, SLO).<sup>136</sup>

134 See as examples: ASF, CP vols. 43, 44. Obtained business interests in the papal court in Rome, where Vieri was sent several times by the Florentine government

135 The *persona* of Simone Peruzzi's fellow ambassador and the circumstances of his assignment provide another case for the intersections between diplomatic missions and establishing Florentine commercial ties abroad. Prajda: *Diplomacy and trade*. Guicciardini sent a letter to Simone and Tommaso Melanesi on 3/11/1427, from Barcs, informing them that Luca was going back to Florence and that Jacopo Riccardini, the chancellor of the mission, had arrived in Hungary. ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fol. 7r.

136 Prajda, 'Egy firenzei követjárás'.

In addition, learned men, such as the jurist Bene di Jacopo del Bene (1376), Nello di Giuliano Martini da San Gimignano (1426), and Luca di Maso degli Albizzi (1427), traveled with the embassies to Hungary. Piero Guicciardini, in this sense, did not belong to any of these groups; he was neither a learned man nor a merchant himself. He belonged to those very few men who retained politics as their primary focus.

As compared to other examples of Florentine diplomatic contingents in Hungary, the embassy led by Piero in 1427 provides us with an eloquent example of ambassadorial practices in pre-Medici Florence. The most important sources in this regard are Piero's fellow ambassador's travel accounts, particularly Luca di messer Maso degli Albizzi's, who recorded several important details of his appointments and journey to Hungary. The contingent originally included three persons who were chosen by the *Signoria*: Piero, as a first rank politician and experienced diplomat; Luca, an educated man with some travel experience already, and the chancellor of the embassy, ser Jacopo Riccardini. They departed from Florence on 22 June 1427, in the company of a few servants and sixteen horses. On the same day, they received detailed instructions from the chancellor of the Republic in the name of the government, regarding their duties and the general scope of the mission.<sup>137</sup> An ambassadors' role was primarily to maintain amicable relations with foreign powers and to guarantee undisturbed trade for Florentine merchants in their territories. Recommending Florentine businessmen to the ruler by name was also among their primary responsibilities.<sup>138</sup> Their mandate most commonly included visits to the most powerful landlords, who in the Hungarian case were members of the royal *aula*.<sup>139</sup> In Piero Guicciardini's case, this included a short stay with his brother-in-law, the Archbishop Da Montebuoni. Ambassadors most commonly resided in Hungary for several weeks or months. Piero himself, according to the registers of the chancellery, spent 108 days in the service

137 'Nota et informazione a voi Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini e Luca di messer Maso degli Albizzi cittadini fiorentini, ambasciatori del Comune di Firenze di quello avete a fare colla Sancta Maiesta del serenissimo et gloriosissimo principe et signore messer Sigismondo [...]'. ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Comissarie 7. fol. 76v.

138 '[...] la comunità nostra et i nostri cittadini et mercatanti alla Supremetia Reale raccomandere.' ASF, Signori Legazioni e Comissarie 7. fol. 77r.

139 Andrea might have had the occasion to build personal contacts with them; these later on might have facilitated his son's attempt to set foot in Hungary. '[...] All'ottavo capitolo che comincia al traccio visiterete e saluterete i signori di Ungheria et facemolo secondo la nostra possibilità [...]'. The ambassadors' answer to the Signoria's instructions on 21 July 1396, confirming that they had visited several dignities in Hungary. ASF, Dieci di Balia, Relazioni di Ambasciatori 1. fol. 20v.



of the *Signoria*, from 16 June 1427 through 31 October 1427.<sup>140</sup> Thanks to Luca's ledger, it is also possible to calculate the approximate costs of an ambassadorship of this kind, which might have been commensurate with the price of a nice house in the Florentine city centre. To cover his travel expenses, Luca received 200 Florentine golden florins from the Dieci di Balìa, the temporary governing body of the Florentine state.<sup>141</sup> From this sum, the ambassadors were expected to pay for their accommodation, meals, the salary of their servants, passage, supply for their horses, and the small gifts they purchased for their hosts. Beyond this budget the ambassadors were entitled to collect their salaries upon their return to Florence, stipulated on the basis of the length of the mission.<sup>142</sup> In 1376, the heirs of Bene di Jacopo del Bene demanded his salary, which amounted to 3 florins, 19 soldi, and 8 denari per day.<sup>143</sup> Fifty years later, in Piero di Luigi Guicciardini's case, this amount was 4 golden florins.

One of Piero's letters gives us a sense of how an ambassadorial audience with a king took place. In this letter, he describes that after having learned about the King's whereabouts in a camp near the southern borders of the Kingdom, set up in the view of a battle against the Ottomans, he traveled there on horseback, maybe without the rest of his company. After his arrival, Piero was accommodated in the tent of a baron, a friend of the Archbishop Da Montebugni. Then two knights escorted him to Sigismund's tent. During the audience, held in the presence of the Archbishop Da Montebugni, the Archbishop of Esztergom, the Bishop of Veszprém, and other barons and royal *familiars* of Florentine origins, Piero was commanded to sit at Sigismund's feet. Following the formalities, the King ordered him to speak about the reason for his visit, and the King answered his questions in Latin, as Latin would have been one of Sigismund's native languages, along with German and Hungarian.<sup>144</sup> After his visit to the King's tent, Piero was invited to

140 ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie e Responsive 8. fol. 87v.

141 ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 5. fol. 21r.

142 It is not entirely clear whether or not the budget they had received before their departure was part of their salary; most probably it was not. For the register containing ambassadors' salaries see: ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie 8.

143 For documents regarding this embassy see: ASF, Del Bene 50.

144 '[...] A dì 16 s'aopero tenuto che passamo e venimo nel campo del re e si montano a Uci-padilione 'uribarone, amicho di messer l'arcivescovo [...] il re mandò per me due chavalieri bene acompagnati e chosì mi rapresentai alla sua maestà fatta le debite reverenzie volle ch'io sedessi a piedi suoi a presenza del archivescovo di Strighonia e de altri; vescovo Da Montebugni e del vescovo di Vesprimo e di più baroni e gran Dio volle che Filippo del Bene fosse presente Lionardo



Archbishop Da Montebuoni's place. The Archbishop sent for Filippo di Giovanni del Bene before letting his relative speak. Piero, on the *Signoria's* order, recommended Filippo and Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari to his brother-in-law, who, in response, graciously recalled the memory of the Spano.<sup>145</sup>

It is not clear whether after his visit to the King's camp Piero returned to Florence. But we find him again in Hungary the next spring, when he acted as witness for one of the documents issued in the name of the Da Montebuoni brothers.<sup>146</sup> Long diplomatic missions gave ambassadors the opportunity to get actively involved in the life of the resident Florentine community. Following Pippo Scolari's death, several Florentines fell out of favour with the King. Piero's participation in the negotiation between the *Signoria* and Sigismund regarding the mistreatment of Florentines in Hungarian territory was one of the main reasons for his stay.<sup>147</sup> As we have already seen, among the captured merchants was Piero's in-law, Gianozzo di Giovanni Cavalcanti, as well.<sup>148</sup> During his days in Hungary from April 1428 at least until 10 August 1428, Piero addressed three letters to the consuls of the Merchants' Guild in which he stated Gianozzo's case.<sup>149</sup> Given the seriousness of the situation, one might ask if Piero's return may have been suggested by the Archbishop, who actively helped the ambassador in carrying out his mission.<sup>150</sup> Piero, as one of the executors of Matteo Scolari's

di Nofri, Lorenzo Scolaro e Simone Milanese mi chomando chio dicesse quello avevo a parlare [...] e rispondendo con gran prudentia a tutte le parti chome se io gli avessi sposto in tedesco o in unghero che sono le sue naturali lingue e d'uno latino aperto che ancho io l'ò 'ntendea bene disse avea molto accetta l'ambasciate de fiorentini.' ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balia, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fol. 5r.

145 ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balia, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fol. 7v.

146 '[...] Actus in confinibus Hungarie in terra seu villa contra prope Danubium, presentibus Petro domini Loysi de Guicciardinis [...]'. ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 04/02/1427.

147 The Florentine chancellery also sent diplomatic letters to the King, asking for Giovanni and Niccolò Lamberteschi's release. ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 32. fols. 65r-v, 178v-179r.

148 See the ambassador's two letters to the Calimala guild. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326. fols. 337r-v. A year later, the Florentine chancellery even sent diplomatic letters to the relator of Gianozzo's case. ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 32. fols. 52v-53r.

149 On 10 August 1428, Piero was still at the borders of the Kingdom, probably in the King's camp. ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balia, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fols. 20v-21r.

150 The diplomat used the service of the Archbishop's servants. '[...] Ingegnero io e Piero avere uno o due famigli di messer l'arcivescovo di Montebuoni.' Letter of the ambassadors to the dieci di Balia. ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balia, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fol. 4v. (18/08/1427) The Archbishop had even provided him with commercial credit during his journey. 'Item mi trovo debitore di messer Giovanni, arcivescovo di Colloci de Buondelmonti di ducati 80 viniziani. Item mi truovo debitore di Nicholo di messer Andrea da

testament, might have had other tasks in Hungary, which alludes to the fact that the consuls of Merchants' Guild who were responsible for Gianozzo's case, as well as executors of Matteo's testament, might have also demanded his return to Hungary.<sup>151</sup> In addition, this reinforces the earlier observation that diplomatic and private interests went hand in hand when appointing ambassadors to foreign powers.

Isabella Lazzarini maintains that prolonged ambassadorships might have led to the shift from high-profile aristocrats or bishops at the head of diplomatic contingents to professionals.<sup>152</sup> Riccardo Fubini has described and analysed in more detail the ways ambassadorial practices worked in the second half of the fifteenth century, addressing the issue of diplomatic career models in the Florentine elite.<sup>153</sup> In light of these later studies, Piero might have represented the earliest of those professional politicians who later started to gradually replace international merchants performing in diplomatic capacities after the fall of the Albizzi regime.<sup>154</sup>

## 6 The Albizzi Family

The Scolari brothers, through their social ties, developed relations with the highest circles of the leading Albizzi faction. In 1426, when Francesca di Matteo Scolari was only a toddler, Pippo or maybe Matteo himself arranged her engagement with Rinaldo degli Albizzi's son, Giovanni (b. c. 1411).<sup>155</sup> This event marked the consolidation rather than the beginning of political cooperation between the two families.

The history of the Albizzi family goes back to twelfth-century Arezzo, when their ancestor of German origins settled in the city. By the middle of the thirteenth century, his descendants had moved to Florence where the Albizzi grew into one of the most sizeable lineages.<sup>156</sup> In 1378, the *Estimo* mentions 26 Albizzi households, all located in the gonfalon of Chiavi, overwhelmingly

Montebuoni in fi. 67 per paghe di fi. 600 di Monte di Pisa che ho prese delle sue.' ASF, Catasto 335. fol. 579v. See Piero's tax declaration.

151 See the copies of Piero's letters. ASF, Corp.Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 337r-v.

152 Lazzarini, *Communication and Conflict*, pp. 125-135.

153 Fubini, 'Diplomacy and Government', pp. 25-48. Ibid., 'Classe dirigente ed esercizio della diplomazia'. Ibid., *Italia quattrocentesca*, pp. 185-350. Ibid., 'L'istituzione diplomatica e la figura dell'ambasciatore'.

154 On the rise of the resident ambassador see: Fletcher, *Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome*.

155 Rinaldo mentions, upon his visit to Hungary, that he was a new relative to Pippo Scolari. *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. p. 589.

156 For a detailed genealogy of the lineage, see: Fabbri, 'Opus novarum gualcheriarum'.

in the Via San Pier Maggiore, which was also called Borgo degli Albizzi, referring in this way to its inhabitants. Over the course of their regime, the Borgo degli Albizzi remained the *lieu de pouvoir* of the lineage.<sup>157</sup> In 1433, they had 22 households, including 143 family members registered in the *Catasto*. The total assets declared by the entire lineage included 59,882 florins. However, seven households paid *composto*, which shows that there were considerable differences among the nuclear families in terms of wealth.

Rinaldo's father, messer Maso di Luca (1343-1417) was a first rank politician and the leader of the dominant Albizzi faction. Between April 1383 and February 1415, there were 334 speeches registered under his name in the volumes of the secret councils.<sup>158</sup> If Maso had ever developed any connection either to the royal court in Hungary or to the Scolari, we do not know. Only one of his distant relatives, Angelo di Berto degli Albizzi, appears in Hungarian sources. In 1391, he was already a citizen of Buda when he sold his house to Miklós Kanizsai, Master of the Treasury.<sup>159</sup>

### Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi (1370-1442): The Political Ally

Among messer Maso's offspring, both Rinaldo and Luca (1382-1458) were appointed as ambassadors, in the consecutive years of 1426 and 1427, to represent the Florentine state in Buda. Luca did not become a committed politician; his name appears only 26 times as a speaker at the secret councils.<sup>160</sup> Rather, he devoted himself to traveling and writing, which might explain his election to an ambassadorship.

Instead it was Rinaldo, the eldest, who inherited their father's political influence and, following messer Maso's death in 1417, emerged as one of the leaders of the faction in cooperation with Niccolò da Uzzano. Niccolò himself had economic interests in Hungary at least as early as 1394.<sup>161</sup> After Niccolò's death in 1431, all power was concentrated in Rinaldo's hands. By that time, he grew into a very experienced politician who held 288 public speeches at the secret councils between September 1407 and December 1433. He was

157 In 1433, out of 22 households 20 were located in the Borgo degli Albizzi.

158 ASF, CP vols. 22-43.

159 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 1921.

160 ASF, CP vols. 38-50. Between May 1414 and August 1432. CP vols. 42-50.

161 He set up a company with Francesco Federighi and Giovanni Tommasi and sent as their agent to Hungary, Agostino di Paolo Marucci. ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 24. fol. 121r (28/03/1394) See the Signoria's other letter to Sigismund. Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 24. fols. 109v-110r. (09/02/1395), 154r-v. (12/09/1395). Agostino was an ad-hoc speaker at the meetings of the secret councils. ASF, CP 16. fol. 104r (11/03/1379); CP 17. fol. 72v. (06/08/1379).

also the most significant diplomat of the Florentine state; after 1399, he was dispatched by the *Signoria* to foreign courts on numerous occasions.<sup>162</sup>

The Borgo degli Albizzi, that is, the Via San Pier Maggiore, turned into the headquarters of the faction over the course of these decades. In the 1427 census, there were at least twelve Albizzi households that kept houses on that street.<sup>163</sup> Many of them were also found in the neighbouring area, like the Via Albertinelli. Besides members of the lineage, the Albizzis' most important political allies clustered in that area: the Guadagni brothers, the Infangati brothers, the Altoviti, Piero di Bernardo della Rena, as well as the Scolari.<sup>164</sup> Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi kept his family home about halfway from the Via del Proconsolo to the San Pier Maggiore Church.<sup>165</sup> His second neighbour was Piero di Bernardo della Rena.<sup>166</sup> Vieri di Vieri Guadagni lived next to the Albergo dalla Corona, just opposite the Scolari palace.<sup>167</sup> On the other side of the Albergo, Antonio di Catellino Infangati kept his home, where his brother Baldinaccio also stayed during his Florentine visits.<sup>168</sup> Next to the Scolari palace, on the corner with the Canto de' Pazzi – that is the Via del Proconsolo – was Andrea Scolari's house where his sister lived. The building was later turned into what is today the Pazzi palace.<sup>169</sup> The Altoviti did not live on the same street, but they did own a house there.<sup>170</sup>

The Scolari moved to the Borgo sometime before 1410, probably because of a conscious choice to strengthen their political alliance with the Albizzi by means of a shared neighbourhood. The strong connections between

162 *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*. Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, pp. 450-453.

163 Antonio di Tedice. ASF, Catasto 80. fol.7v. Pagolo di Piero. Catasto 80. fol. 141v. Giovanni di Piero. Catasto 80. fol. 165v. Giovanni di Tedice. Catasto 80. fol. 169v. Niccolò di Gentile. Catasto 80. fol. 206r. Francesco di Niccolao. Catasto 80. fol. 341r. Luca di Pagolo. Catasto 80. fol. 421r. Stefano di Pagolo. Catasto 80. fol. 466v. Piero di Filippo. Catasto 80. fol. 512r. Matteo di Piero. Catasto 80. fol. 596r. Luca di m. Maso. Catasto 80. fol. 45v. (Piazza di San Piero Maggiore).

164 Kent, *The Rise of the Medici*, Appendix I.

165 'Una casa posta nel Borgo degli Albizi, dove habito con la mia famiglia e colla masserizia, da primo via, da secondo Piero e Bartolomeo della Rena, da terzo via e da quarto discendenti di Piero di Filippo degli Albizzi, popolo di San Piero Maggiore di Firenze, passa nella via di dietro e confina di là con Antonio di Tedice degli Albizi.' ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 852r.

166 For Bernardo's house see: ASF, Catasto 80. fol. 137r.

167 See the tax declaration of Vieri's heirs, submitted in 1427: 'Una chasa posta nel popolo di Santo Brocholo, che da primo la Via di Porta San Piero, sechondo l'Abergho dalla Chorona, terzo rede di Poldo de'Pazzi, quarto vescovo di Fiesole, quinto Francesco Gherardini, nella quale abitiamo [...]'. ASF, Catasto 80. fol. 904r.

168 'Una chasa a lato all'Albego alla Corona [...]'. ASF, Catasto 80. fol. 12v.

169 'Una chasa a lato al palagio di messer Matteo [...]'. ASF, Catasto 80. fols. 599r, 395r.

170 Rinaldo di Leonardo Altoviti had a house there. ASF, Catasto 81. fol. 381v.

the two families are also illustrated by the fact that Rinaldo even acted as legal representative on Pippo's behalf.<sup>171</sup> The establishment of political ties probably went back years before the engagement between Rinaldo's eldest son, Giovanni, and Francesca di Matteo Scolari. Pippo himself might have negotiated the terms around 1426 and part of the extraordinarily high dowry of 3300 Florentine florins was deposited for the Albizzi.<sup>172</sup> In fact, Rinaldo's visit in an official capacity in Hungary served both public and private interests, and Pippo's support and the alliance with Sigismund would have considerably reinforced the position of the Albizzi faction.<sup>173</sup>

The year 1426 was important in Florentine domestic politics. The war against Filippo Maria Visconti financially exhausted both the state and its citizens, and by the summer they reached the point when they were reluctant to discuss fiscal problems at the secret councils.<sup>174</sup> Because of the highly contested situation, there were more speeches registered at the meetings in 1426 than in any other years.<sup>175</sup> A good number of them were delivered at special commissions, the *Pratiche*, which were called at least 32 times that year.<sup>176</sup> As Dale Kent has suggested, involvement in the *Pratiche* might be a key in defining the political elite in Florence during the Albizzi regime.<sup>177</sup> The increased number of *Pratiche* during the 1420s was a clear sign of the elitist structure of the regime and an indication that decisions were often made with the involvement of only a restricted group of citizens.

171 In July 1426, Rinaldo also acted as procurator on Pippo's behalf against Jacopo e Massaiozzo di Giglio Gigli, bankers of Andrea Scolari. ASF, Mercanzia 7114bis. (18/06/1427).

172 In 1427, the tax declaration of the Scolari's heirs mentions 2000 Florentine florins deposited for the Albizzi. 'Messer Rinaldo degli Albizzi de'dare fiorini 2000 àne in deposito a 5 per 100 per la dota della Checcha, figliuola di messer Matteo Scolari e dona di Giovanni di messer Rinaldo, fiorini 2000.' ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 874v. See Rinaldo degli Albizzi tax return, submitted in 1431: 'Truovomi avere in diposito da messer Filippo Scolari per la dota della Checcha, sua nipote la quale debba essere moglie di Giovanni mio figliuolo fiorini dumilla denari, a 5 per cento, con certe condizioni come potete vedere, fiorini 2000.', Catasto 386. fol. 687r.

173 Rinaldo had a servant from Zagreb, whom he might have brought with him on his way back from the Kingdom of Hungary. ASF, Catasto 386. fol. 688r.

174 Pagolo Carneseccchi, one of the most significant merchants operating in Hungary, said: 'Excusando traditionem consiliariorum, quia materia odiosa est et cives pecuniis sunt exhausti.' ASF, CP 46. fol. 111v. Published: Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, p. 472. About the period in general: *Ibid.*, pp. 472-507.

175 930 speeches between 2 January and 29 December. ASF, CP 46. fol. 104r-CP 47.fol. 34r.

176 ASF, CP 46. fols. 114v (06/02), 143r (05/05), 143r (06/05), 146v (14/05), 157r (23/05), 158v (04/06), 164v (21/06), 166r (26/06), 173r (17/07), 174v (24/07), 180v (30/07), 183v (09/08), 188r (16/08), 193v (23/08), 196 (30/08); 47. fols. 1v (02/09), 2v (03/09), 3v (04/09), 7r (10/09), 8r (11/09), 10v (17/09), 11r (22/09), 12v (28/09), 20r (06/11), 23r (12/11), 34r (29/12).

177 Kent, *The Florentine Reggimento*.

Considering the persons in the present study, this group included: Rinaldo degli Albizzi, Filippo di Giovanni Carducci, Antonio di Piero di Fronte, Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini, and Ridolfo di Bonifazio Peruzzi. Among them, Pietro Guicciardini and probably also Filippo Carducci shall be considered as apparent Medici friends.<sup>178</sup>

In 1426, key figures of the Albizzi faction died, including the three Scolari and Vieri di Vieri Guadagni. They were followed a couple of months later by Antonio di Piero di Fronte and Pagolo di Berto Carnesecchi. After Da Uzzano's death in 1431, which made Rinaldo the sole leader of the faction, Rinaldo had lost his most important foreign supporters, including King Sigismund and the Florentine community in Hungary. At that point, though, the rhetoric was still incomparably higher on the Albizzis' side. Rinaldo himself spoke 288 times at the secret councils. Meanwhile Cosimo de' Medici (1389-1464) delivered only sixteen speeches during the studied period, and Cosimo's father, Giovanni di Bicci (1360-1429) gave 96.<sup>179</sup> Giovanni and Cosimo rarely participated in the *Pratiche*.<sup>180</sup>

The fall of the regime, as John F. Padgett claims, might have been due to other differences that manifested in the economic potential and networking strategies of the two factions and their leaders.<sup>181</sup> Over the course of the fourteenth century, the Albizzi lineage is considered the leader among those engaged in wool manufacturing in Florence.<sup>182</sup> But Rinaldo's father, Maso di Luca, received one-fourth of the fulling mills in the division of the patrimony, in 1373.<sup>183</sup> In fact, in 1427, his sons' names do not appear among the ones holding shares in the fulling mills.<sup>184</sup> Rinaldo, according to the testimony of his *Catasto* declarations, was not engaged in any large-scale business activity and we do not find any business firm under his name in the 1433 *Catasto*. In the early 1430s, only his sons had shares in various silk and wool manufacturing companies. Maso invested in a silk firm with Matteo and Ormanno degli Albizzi.<sup>185</sup> Meanwhile Tobia and Giovanni ran a

178 Filippo's two brothers, Bartolomeo and Niccolò, were filo-Medici politicians. Kent, *The Rise of the Medici*, Appendix I-II.

179 Giovanni spoke between 1398 and 1427. ASF, CP vols. 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47.

180 Giovanni six times, between 1414 and 1426. ASF, CP 42 fol. 185r, 44. fols. 18v, 117v. CP 46. fols. 1r, 7r, 16v. Cosimo only once, in 1425. CP 46. fol. 86r.

181 Padgett and Ansell, 'Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici'.

182 Hoshino, *L'Arte della Lana in Firenze*, pp. 305-327.

183 Fabbri, 'Opus novarum gualcheriarum', pp. 544-546.

184 Hoshino, *Industria tessile*.

185 ASF, Catasto 386. fol. 683v.

wool workshop with Andrea de'Pazzi.<sup>186</sup> Rinaldo's wealth, therefore, was of ancient heritage, based mainly on his extended properties in the Florentine countryside and not on large-scale business activity.<sup>187</sup>

The Medici firm, on the other hand, was a major player in international banking and hard to avoid for anyone seriously engaged in trade at this period. Their branches in Florence, Venice, and the papal court grew into indispensable intermediaries between Florentine companies and their traveling agents. This significant contrast in their business profiles resulted in an impressive difference of wealth between the two leaders. In 1433, Cosimo and Lorenzo di Giovanni de'Medici declared 73,823 florins of total assets, while Rinaldo declared only 12,802 florins, and his brother Luca declared 8553 florins of total assets.<sup>188</sup> Nevertheless, in September 1433, Rinaldo was able to achieve Cosimo's exile, but exactly a year later Cosimo was called back to the city by his followers.<sup>189</sup> Consequently, he sent several members of the Albizzi faction to exile, including the Scolari's old friends Rinaldo and his family, Simone and Tommaso di Lapo Corsi, Ridolfo di messer Bonifazio Peruzzi, and Bernardo di Vieri Guadagni.<sup>190</sup>

## 7 The Guadagni Family

The social alliance between the Scolari and the Guadagni families was consolidated in 1420 with the marriage between Matteo's eldest daughter, Caterina, and Vieri di Vieri Guadagni's son, Francesco (b. c. 1400).<sup>191</sup> The

186 The workshop is mentioned in their declaration, submitted in 1431. Rinaldo's declaration: 'Giovanni, mio figliuolo mi de' dare fiorini 4000 denari, i quali tiene nel corpo della compagnia di Thobia, mio figliuolo e compagni lanaiuoli [...]'. ASF, Catasto 386. fol. 68ov. Their third partner was Matteo di Piero di Banco. Catasto 478. fol. 19r.

187 Hoshino, *L'Arte della Lana*, pp. 325-326.

188 ASF, Catasto 497. fol. 177r. (Cosimo and Lorenzo de'Medici), Catasto 499. fol. 655r. (Rinaldo degli Albizzi), Catasto 499. fol. 484v. (Luca degli Albizzi).

189 In November 1434, at the secret councils, Luca di messer Maso degli Albizzi, Cosimo de'Medici, Neri di Gino Capponi, and Niccolò Valori said, 'Lo errore è chiaro che cominciò nel 1433 del mese di settembre. Et quello errore ha partorito quest'altro di quelli che anno voluto fare contro alla Signoria e contro al palagio, puniscasi quelli che anno errato nell'uno caso, nell'altro a cciò che esino exemplo agli altri di non connectere simili delicti,' and ASF, CP 50. fols. 204r-v.

190 Rinaldo went into exile to Naples or Trani. Francesco Guadagni went to the Stinche. Ridolfo went to Aquila. For the exiled families, see: Brown, 'Insiders and Outsiders', Appendix. Kent, *The Rise of the Medici*, Appendix II.

191 The Guadagni received a dowry of 3300 Florentine florins. ASF, Guadagni 14. 15. One of Matteo Scolari's brothers-in-law, Antonio di Catellino Infangati, commemorated the event in his private account book: 'Ricordanza chome a honore di Dio e di Madona Santa Maria e di tutta



Guadagni was an ancient lineage, but of *popolani* origins which traced its roots to the twelfth century in Florence.<sup>192</sup> They were also supporters of the Guelph Party.<sup>193</sup> The lineage was not particularly extended in the fourteenth century. In 1378, they had nine households dispersed throughout the city. Already at that time, Vieri's family, who were registered under the name of Migliore di Vieri di Migliore, lived in the Borgo San Pier Maggiore (Borgo degli Albizzi).<sup>194</sup> In 1433, only four households submitted a declaration, and among them, three were headed by Vieri di Vieri's sons.<sup>195</sup> They counted 26 family members and declared all together 18,503 florins of total assets. Two of the households paid *catasto*: 7 florins, 29 soldi, 11 denari, and two others only *composto*. Prior to 1382, the sole member participating in the meetings of the secret councils was Migliore.<sup>196</sup> He and a few other members of the family occasionally held city offices as well.<sup>197</sup> No sources have come to light which would suggest an earlier connection between the family and the Kingdom of Hungary.

### Vieri di Vieri Guadagni (c. 1370-1426): The Banker

The in-law Vieri di Vieri's name appears for the first time as a speaker at the secret councils in 1397, which suggests that he was about the same age as the Scolari brothers.<sup>198</sup> He enrolled in three different guilds: Merchants', Money-changers' and Wool Guilds, securing his election for a number of city offices. He served a few times as consul of the Wool Guild and covered on many occasions the office of Standardbearer, as well as other city magistrates.<sup>199</sup> With his active participation in politics, he became the most passionate

di celestiale corte di Paradiso la Chaterina figliuola di messer Matteo Scolari n'andò a marito a dì 16 di gugno 1420 al figliuolo di Vieri Ghuadagni cioè a Francescho suo figliuolo maggiore a chui i Dio dia buona ventura e si a lui e si a lei sempre prosperando di bene in meglio e durando insieme lungho tempo che chosì piaccia a Dio che sia.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 97. 13. fol. 112v.

192 Passerini, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Guadagni*.

193 In the 1380s, Migliore di Vieri Guadagni, on behalf of the Guelph Party, took part in the confiscations. ASF, Capitani di Parte Guelfa, Numeri Rossi 57. fols. 57r, 71r.

194 ASF, Prestanze 369. fol. 74v.

195 Bernardo di Vieri. ASF, Catasto 499. fol. 141r; Francesco di Vieri. Catasto 499. fol. 290v; Migliore di Vieri. Catasto 499. fol. 507r; Matteo. Catasto 499. fol. 537r.

196 For his speeches, see: ASF, CP vols. 2-13, (1358-1375).

197 Migliore held the office of Standardbearer and Twelve Good Men: ASF, CP 2. fol. 86r. (15/05/1359); 7. fol. 42v. (16/09/1365)

198 ASF, CP 32. fol. 96r. In 1391, he was mentioned as minor in the election for city offices. *Online Tratte of Office Holders* record n. 110776.

199 ASF, Arte di Calimala 6. fol. 8r. (1407, renewal of his matriculation). In 1418, he was elected to consul of the Wool Guild. ASF, Arte della Lana 543. fols. 35v, 53r-v, 55v. Between 12 June 1403



supporter of the Albizzi faction. Between February 1397 and May 1426, there were 146 speeches registered under his name, and he took part in the *Pratiche* at least ten times.<sup>200</sup> He was involved in Florentine diplomacy as well, by representing the *Signoria* in foreign courts at various times as an ambassador, including official visits to Ladislaus of Durazzo in the years 1412-1413.<sup>201</sup> In 1419, he, Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, Bartolomeo Valori, and Niccolò da Uzzano were appointed as executors of Pope John XXIII's (c. 1370-1419, elected in 1410) testament, which alludes to his connections to the papal court at this early period.<sup>202</sup>

The pope was Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici's close friend, who gave the Medici bank access to the Apostolic Chamber.<sup>203</sup> In 1411, when John XXIII nominated Jacopo di Francesco del Bene and Francesco di Giachinotto Boscoli to be depositaries of the Chamber, they were provided with capital by four other Florentine businessmen: Andrea di Lipaccio de' Bardi, Averardo di Bicci de' Medici, and Filippo and Bartolomeo di Giovanni Carducci. As early as 1397, Giovanni di Bicci had operated his own branch in Rome.<sup>204</sup> Consequently, Giovanni set the headquarters of the bank in Florence and in 1402 opened a branch in Venice. However, during the first of more than two decades of its existence, the branch following the papal *Curia* was the principal source of profits. From one side, the Medici bank acted as depositary of the Apostolic Chamber, handling funds for the papal treasury, and from the other side, prelates residing in the court also turned to them with their financial businesses. In 1420, after the bankruptcy of Doffo Spini's firm, the Medici gained dominance in the papal finances and following that, until 1443, the depositaries were all Medici men.<sup>205</sup>

As a businessman, Vieri Guadagni probably did not separate himself completely from the Medici faction, and he and his brother might have had

and 6 May 1413, Vieri was mentioned as Standardbearer seventeen times in the registers of the secret councils: ASF, CP 35. fol. 85r, CP 42. fol. 5v.

200 For his speeches see: ASF, CP vols. 32-46. For the *Pratiche* he participated in see: CP 36. fol. 89v. (1403), 41. fols. 144v, 170v, 172v. CP 43. fol. 142r. CP 44. fol. 169r. CP 45. fols. 66r, 133v, 159v, 182v (1424).

201 For examples, see: ASF, Dieci di Balla, Legazioni e Commissarie 3. fols. 124r, 174r, 176r, 348r. ASF, Signori, Rapporti di relazioni di oratori fiorentini 2. fols. 53v, 60r, 123v, 127r. ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie 6. fols. 5v, 32v, 35r, (Ladislaus of Naples), 39v, 81v, 94r, 100r. Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie 3. fols. 94r, 105r.

202 However, it appears to have been Giovanni di Bicci who managed the financial side of the testament. Holmes, *How the Medici*, pp. 376. Cassandro, 'Due famiglie di mercanti', pp. 311-329.

203 Holmes, *How the Medici*, p. 364.

204 De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, pp. 36-50.

205 Holmes, *How the Medici*, pp. 378-379.

similar plans in establishing a name for themselves as bankers in the papal *Curia*. The start of his career, though, was different from that of Giovanni di Bicci. He and his brother Bernardo (1369-1433) appear in 1390 as business clients in the account books of Jacopo di Francesco del Bene.<sup>206</sup> Though they maintained two separate households, their business activities tied them together. In the early 1400s, they owned a retail cloth firm together and ran a wool-manufacturing workshop in the Convent of San Martino.<sup>207</sup> Their investments in the local wool industry remained important during their lives. Vieri later put money into two separate companies he established, one with Adovardo di Cipriano Giachinotti, Fruosino di Luca da Panzano, and Nofri di Jacopo Cardinali, and the other with Andreuolo di Niccolò Sacchetti and Fruosino di Luca da Panzano.<sup>208</sup> He also had shares in a warehouse company, which he ran with Niccolò di Francesco Sacchetti and Niccolò Villani.<sup>209</sup>

Banking, as part of their business profile, might have come later into the Guadagni brothers' lives. In 1414, Bernardo appears – among other Florentines, including Giovanni di Bicci – as a businessman administering funds for John XXIII's treasury.<sup>210</sup> In 1420, Bernardo, probably using the profits obtained in the wool industry, set up a merchant banking company with the Cambini brothers, Andrea and Niccolò di Francesco and Adovardo di Cipriano Giachinotti.<sup>211</sup> They opened branches both in Florence and in Rome.<sup>212</sup> After a couple of years, Bernardo moved out of the company and in 1424 his partners decided to invest 4000 Florentine florins into the

206 See as examples: ASF, Del Bene 19. fols. 9v, 10r, 32v, 33r, 43v. (libro di commercio di lana, 1390-1392) Del Bene 20. fols. 20r, 90v-91r. (libro di commercio di lana, 1391-1393). Bernardo also served the Signoria as ambassador.

207 ASF, Arte della Lana 318. fols. 45v, 76r, 52r. ASF, Catasto 478. fol. 280v.

208 They established the first company in 1425. Adovardo's declaration, submitted in 1427: ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 85r. The second company was set up in 1422. Sacchetti's tax declaration, submitted in 1427: Catasto 29. fols. 7v-8r, 9r. The tax declaration of Vieri di Vieri Guadagni's heirs, presented in 1427: Catasto 57. fols. 906v-921r. ASF, NA 681. fol. 2r.

209 See his son Bernardo's declaration from 1427. ASF, Catasto 56. fol. 503r. In 1413, Matteo Scolari made a deposit for Niccolò Serragli, Lorenzo di Giovanni Strozzi, and Niccolò di Matteo Villani. ASF, Monte ser. II. 1806. fol. 144v.

210 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri Vaticani, vol. 346. fols. 159r. (he appears with Giovanni di Bicci), fol. 167r.

211 Tognetti, *Il banco Cambini*, pp. 36-37.

212 The Cambinis' partnership(s) appear also in the account book of the Apostolic Chamber, dated to 1423. 'Die xxii dicti mensis prefactis dominus Antonius thesaurarius habuit, recipuit dicto Bartholomeo de Bardis depositario nomine Camerae Apostolice ab Adoguardo Iachinotti, Nicolao Cambii et sociis mercatoribus Florentinis florenos auri de Camera ducentos quos Camerae Apostolice mutuaverunt a omnio rehabendi.' Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Camera Apostolica, Introitus et exitus 379. fol. 114v.

more prestigious company of Vieri di Vieri, which operated until Vieri's death. In the 1410s and 1420s, Vieri kept a local moneychanging table at the Mercato Nuovo.<sup>213</sup> Vieri's company might have served as one of the most important banks for the Scolari's business; it was also included in Matteo's testament.<sup>214</sup> Also, the Archbishop of Kalocsa and his brother Niccolò di messer Andrea da Montebuoni used their services.<sup>215</sup> In the balance of Vieri di Vieri Guadagni's company in Rome, his heirs declared a considerable number of debtors of foreign origins, among them many from the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>216</sup> Furthermore, an entry in the account book of the Apostolic Chamber, datable to 1426, shows that the Guadagni bank was an intermediary between the Chamber and the collectors operating in the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>217</sup> This might allude to the fact that the Guadagni bank developed interest in that part of Europe and also that the Florentine merchants working in the Kingdom of Hungary connected other neighbouring destinations to their international network of trade.<sup>218</sup>

At his death in August 1426 Vieri was commemorated by Pagolo di Matteo Petriboni as one of the most respected citizens of his time.<sup>219</sup> Among his sons, Francesco, Caterina Scolari's husband, continued his father's activity in the banking business as well as the cultivation of the in-law ties with the Scolari.<sup>220</sup> He acted a few times as a legal representative on Matteo Scolari's behalf and managed his business credits and debts on Pippo's commission.<sup>221</sup>

213 See the numerous entries in the account books of Lazzaro di Giovanni di Feo Bracci. AFL, 3340. fols. 11r, 12r, 46v. (1415)

214 'Antonius Pieri Frontis in florenos auri quingentis pro ut constat pro libris Vieri Guadagni. Baldinaccius domini Salicis de Cavalcantibus pro ut constat pro libris dicti Vierii. Spinus Azolini pro ut constat pro libris dicti Vierii et Nicholai Johannis del Bellaccio.' ASF, NA 5814. fol. 271r. In 1428, Vieri's sons sued the Scolaris' heirs for business debt at the Merchant Court. ASF, Mercanzia 7117. fols. 312v-314r.

215 See the case between tra Benedetto di ser Lando di messer Tommaso da Cena and the heirs of Vieri Guadagni's bank. ASF, Guadagni 14. 10. fols. 1r-11v. (1429)

216 See the balance: ASF, Catasto 57. fols. 920-922v.

217 'Dalla Chamera Apostolica a di ultimo detto fi. sei cento ebbero dalla compagnia delle rede di Veri Guadagni e compagni sono per conti paghano per nome di messer Jacomino de Rosti collettore in Pollonia per denari riscossi in detta collettorìa. fi. vi cento.' Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Camera Apostolica, Introitus et Exitus 384. fol. 2r. (30/09/1426).

218 This might explain the modest number of references to diplomatic contacts between Florence and the Kingdom of Poland. Bettarini, 'The New Frontier'.

219 Petriboni and Di Borgo Rinaldi, *Priorista*, p. 190.

220 See a business claim between Simone, Niccolò, and Giovanni di messer Andrea da Montebuoni e Francesco di Vieri Guadagni, regarding the heredity of Pippo Scolari. ASF, Mercanzia 7116. fols. 92v-93r. (22/09/1422).

221 Francesco managed Matteo's deposit at the Merchant Court. ASF, Mercanzia 11781. fol. 81v (1424/25). Along with the outstanding debts and credits of the deceased was his competency.

In 1427, Francesco even declared a business obligation with Baldinaccio di Catellino Infangati.<sup>222</sup>

Even though his name never appears as a speaker at the secret councils, in 1434, his father's close connections to the Albizzi faction resulted in his exile outside the borders of the Florentine state. The Guadagni bank, probably due to this event, disappeared; meanwhile, the Cambini brothers, studied by Sergio Tognetti, had turned their own partnership into one of the most prestigious banks of Florence by the mid-fifteenth century.<sup>223</sup>

## 8 The Altoviti Family

The Scolari and the Altoviti families were connected to each other by double marriage ties. Sometime between 1369 and 1396, Pippo and Matteo's sister Balda (b. c. 1357/5-) married Caccia di Palmieri Altoviti.<sup>224</sup> Later, one of Balda's sons, Martino di Caccia, married Andrea Scolari's niece, Margherita Nardi.

The history of the Altoviti lineage in Florence goes back to the thirteenth century, but they were of *popolani* origins.<sup>225</sup> In the late fourteenth century, their lineage, compared to the others studied in this book, was quite extended. In 1378, they had 20 households, located mainly in the gonfalon of Vipera, quarter of Santa Maria Novella.<sup>226</sup> This number did not change significantly by 1433, when the lineage numbered 21 households and 91 family members.<sup>227</sup> Out of these households, six paid only *composto*, but

'Questi sono i danari che Francescho di Vieri Ghuadagni e fratelli àno avuti e ricevuti per messer Matteo Scholari e lle sue rede [...] andò Francescho in Ungheria alo Spano e portogli chonti con mostradegli che restava avere da messer Matteo Scholari fiorini 2600 [...]'. ASF, MAP filza 150. doc. 17. fol. 19r.

222 'Baldinaccio di Chatellino Infanghati e Francesco Ghuadagni cioè Francesco è obrighato pel detto Baldinaccio fiorini 663 s. 14 d. 6.' This entry is included in the tax return, submitted in the name of Vieri's sons, and entitled 'Rede di Vieri Ghuadagni e compagni, 1427. Debitori del libro delle merchatantie segnato J, questo di xii di luglio de libro detto'. ASF, Catasto 57. fol. 913.

223 Tognetti, *Il banco Cambini*, pp. 117-264.

224 The marriage was mentioned by Litta, Passerini, *I Buondelmonti*, tavola XII. ASF, Manoscitti 519, inserto 4. fol. 3r. I have calculated the date of their marriage on the basis of the birthdate of their son, Martino.

225 Passerini placed the origins of the family to the twelfth century; however, the family name seems to appear in the documents only decades later. Passerini, *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Altoviti*.

226 ASF, Prestanze 367. fol. 59v. Prestanze 368. fols. 4v, 5r-v, 7r, 15v, 16r.

227 ASF, Catasto 492, fol. 87v. Catasto 455. fols. 47r, 54r, 118r, 153r, 158r, 192r, 202r, 221r, 287r, 318r, 355r, 381r, 422r, 432r, 444r, 446r, 455r, 496r, 516r, 722r.

the majority had *catasto*; however, because of some missing data the total assets of the lineage cannot be calculated. Members of the lineage were also very active politically, and we find their names among the speakers of the secret councils at the very beginning of its history.<sup>228</sup> Several Altoviti appear to have covered city offices before and during the studied period.<sup>229</sup> However, Caccia di Palmieri's name is not among the office holders or among those politically active. Similarly, there are no references to whether his family was connected in any way to Hungary before Pippo's entrance into the local political elite.

### Leonardo and Martino di Caccia Altoviti (1396-a. 1439): The Heirs

Because of Caccia's complete absence from the guild matriculations and from the lists of office holders and speakers at the secret councils, it is no surprise that we do not find his sons' names in the abovementioned sources. Their businesses, if they had any, remain undocumented by the records of the 1433 *Catasto*. Given all these circumstances, the living conditions of Caccia's family would have been quite modest. Among his sons, Martino was a later child, but we do not know anything about his brother Leonardo.

The earliest source mentioning the Altoviti and the Scolari brothers together is dated to 1412, when the latter accepted Leonardo as their universal heir and gave him shared property ownership over some of their estates in Hungary, including Ozora.<sup>230</sup> In 1416, the three of them jointly received the privilege from King Sigismund of constructing a castle on their estates. Whether Leonardo ever enjoyed his uncles' donations is unclear, but until that point, he was definitely viewed as their successor.

The Scolari brothers' choice in installing Leonardo as their universal heir might have been influenced by several circumstances. By 1412, the 43- or 44-year-old Pippo, after more than a decade of marriage, probably did not have any surviving offspring. Matteo, who was also in his early forties, had only one daughter. Therefore, the two already middle-aged Scolari might have developed concerns about succession and inheritance. From this point of view, Caccia's sons, although they did not hold the Scolari name, seem to have been the most rational choices. Ensuring the Altoviti brother's line in

228 ASF, CP vols. 1-50. (1349-1434).

229 For example, Stoldo, in the capacity of Standardbearer, was a frequent speaker at the secret councils. ASF, CP 20. fols. 128r, 131v, 138v, 140v, 141v, 143v, 147r, 148r, 153r, 155r.

230 '[...] nepotus eiusdem heredes et successoros [...]'. MOL, DL 87891. Published: *Okmánytár Ozorai Pipó történetéhez*. III, p. 426. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, III. doc. 2650. (09/09/1412).

the succession might have led Pippo to negotiate a marriage with his cousin, Andrea Scolari, between Caccia's other son, Martino, and Andrea's niece, the daughter of Jacopo Nardi and Constanza di Filippo Scolari (1377-1450). The marriage took place sometime in the early 1420s, and by 1427 the couple already had several offspring.<sup>231</sup> The close ties between the Altoviti and their uncles is also exemplified by the fact that Matteo left an annuity of 100 Florentine florins in his testament for Martino's sister Caterina.<sup>232</sup>

However, for reasons unknown to us, Pippo and Matteo changed their previous intention to include Caccia Altoviti's sons in their inheritance. Leonardo died around 1424, which was mentioned in a Hungarian document.<sup>233</sup> In 1426 one of his sons, Giovanni, appears in Hungarian sources.<sup>234</sup> Leonardo left a household composed of his widow, Jacopa di Giovanni di Bandino da Filicaia, and three sons, Rinaldo (b. c. 1390), Giovanni (b. c. 1392), and Zanobi (b. c. 1399).<sup>235</sup> The Da Filicaia were the Scolari's neighbours in the Borgo degli Albizzi, which might explain the choice of wife for Leonardo.<sup>236</sup> In 1427, their household owned a family home in the parish of Santa Maria Novella, another house in the parish of San Pier Maggiore, and smaller parcels of lands and vineyards in the countryside. But there is no evidence if Leonardo had ever received any immovable properties from the Scolari.

Similar to Leonardo's heirs, Martino, with his already sizeable family, might have benefited from the benevolence of the Scolari. His wife received a parcel of land from his uncle, Andrea Scolari, but it was hardly enough to provide them with a decent living.<sup>237</sup> The Altoviti brothers remained excluded from the inheritance and besides that land, none of the Scolari estates were passed on to them.<sup>238</sup>

231 See Martino's tax declaration, presented in 1427. ASF, Catasto 38. fols. 457r-458r. The correction of his declaration: Catasto 297. fols. 35r-36r.

232 ASF, NA 5814. fols. 78v, 267v. See also the declaration of the heirs. ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 875v.

233 *Sopron vármegye története*, II, pp. 77-80. See also: Engel, 'Ozorai Pipo', p. 87, n. 224.

234 *Okmánytár Ozorai Pipo történetéhez*, IV, pp. 613-616.

235 ASF, Catasto 38. fol. 622v. His wife's name was reported in the tax declaration of Antonio di Luca da Filicaia. Catasto 80. fol. 65v.

236 The widow owned some immovable properties in the Borgo degli Albizzi, located next to the house of Piero di Bernardo della Rena. ASF, Catasto 80. fol. 65v.

237 Since the Bishop cared diligently for her sister, it is likely that he was the one to provide Margherita di Jacopo Nardi with a dowry. He also left in his testament a considerable sum of money to Margherita. See Andrea's testament: ASF, CS serie II. 134. fol. 117r. The copy of the document: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 288r. Margherita's tax declaration, submitted in 1458: ASF, Catasto 812. fol. 52r.

238 Martino's declaration submitted in 1433. ASF, Catasto 445. fols. 318r-319r.

Pippo's and Matteo's initial plan might have been to keep the family patrimony together in the hands of the Altoviti brothers. Although they later changed their intention, their estate planning was still not at all in conformity with the most common strategy at the time, described by Thomas Kuehn, which emphasized to an extreme patrilinear kinship in inheritance.<sup>239</sup> Pippo left his estate in Ozora and all of its subject lands in his widow's hands.<sup>240</sup> Meanwhile, Matteo wished to transmit a considerable part of his immovable properties through the female line.

An essential part of Matteo's strategy was to provide his three daughters with extraordinarily high dowries of 3300 Florentine florins each. By comparison, Alessandra di Filippo Macigni, offspring of one of the richest families of Florence, brought 'only' 1600 Florentine florins of dowry to her in-laws, the Strozzi.<sup>241</sup> The dowry of Caterina, the eldest, was paid to the Guadagni, following her marriage on 12 June 1420.<sup>242</sup> Caterina's testament was issued in 1442, by which she named her sons as her general heirs, thus passing on her father's inheritance to the Guadagni.<sup>243</sup> The dowry of her younger sister Francesca (c. 1422-1478) had already been deposited in 1426. Later, Matteo's estate was given to Francesca's husband, Bonaccorso Pitti, and then by him to their offspring. Matteo left the same amount to his youngest, Mattea (b.1424), who died prematurely. This instituted her sister, Francesca, as her legal heir who was entitled to get half of her dowry.<sup>244</sup> After their father's death, the dowries of the two younger girls were managed by the *Magistrato dei Pupilli*, as was customary in the case of orphan girls of a certain social status.<sup>245</sup> Besides their dowries, the three Scolari daughters also enjoyed the income of some of their father's former lands.<sup>246</sup>

239 Kuehn, *Heirs, Kin, and Creditors*, p. 82. More generally: Chapter 3.

240 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár XIII*. doc. 585. (18/05/1426)

241 Crabb, *The Strozzi of Florence*, p. 22.

242 ASF, Guadagni 14. 9. fol. 4v.

243 She had three sons: Vieri, Filippo, and Matteo di Francesco Guadagni. ASF, Guadagni 11. 3. fol. 2r. She died probably in 1460, when her son Filippo took over her inheritance. Guadagni 14.1 5. fols. 1r-v.

244 Francesca's declaration, submitted in 1431: 'Item pretende avere ragione nella'redità di detto suo padre per la metà di fiorini 3000 lasciò ala Mattea, sua sirochia nel simile modo perché è morta, non maritata [...]'. ASF, Catasto 385. fols. 814v.

245 See for example: ASF, Magistrato dei Pupilli 56. fol. 55r. (1436).

246 'La terza parte degli usufruti d'uno podere posto nel popolo di Santa Andrea a Morgiano, con chasa da lavoratore [...] Item pretende avere ragione nella terza parte degli usufruti degl'infrascritti poderi de quali niente n'è per ora perché si tenghono per creditori di dette rede [...] Uno podere posto nel popolo di Sancto Piero a Ema chon uno palagio e tore e chasa da lavoratore e fornacie da chalcina luogho detto al Prato. Uno luogho posto nel popolo di Sancto Stefano a Champi luogho detto El fornello con chasa da signore e cholonbaia e orto murato. Item



By the restitution of their wives' dowries, Pippo and Matteo Scolari left little possibility for their male relatives to succeed. Therefore, neither the Altoviti nor the Scolari nephews ever inherited any immovable properties in the Kingdom of Hungary or in the Florentine Republic upon Pippo's and Matteo's deaths. Only the estates of their closest uncle, Andrea Scolari, were passed on to the Scolari. This decision might have left Martino Altoviti in a difficult financial situation to the extent that in 1439 one of his sons was forced to repudiate him.<sup>247</sup>

## 9 The Infangati Family

Aside from the Altoviti family, the Scolari brothers' closest in-laws were the Infangati, because of the marriage between Matteo and Piera, daughter of Catellino di Baldinaccio Infangati. The history of the lineage was much like the Scolari's: as one of the oldest lineages, they appear in Florentine sources in the twelfth century. They traditionally belonged to the magnates, and they were of Ghibelline loyalties, too; therefore the lineage suffered severe property losses to the anti-magnate and anti-Ghibelline laws.<sup>248</sup>

In 1378, they had six households located mainly in the parish of San Pier Scheraggio, gonfalon of Carro, quarter of Santa Croce.<sup>249</sup> By 1433, this number was down to three households with sixteen family members.<sup>250</sup> They reported together 3782 florins of total assets and only one of the households paid *catasto* of one florin, one soldi, and three denari.<sup>251</sup> As an ancient magnate lineage, its members never appear as speakers at the meetings of the secret councils, and their names are not registered among those elected

pretende avere ragione nella pigione delle infrascritte chasate e botegha sono in chontesta de chonsoli di Chalimala. Due chasette e una botegha a uso di malischalcho poste nel popolo di Sancto Brocholo apichate alla chasa grande di messer, Matteo suo padre.' ASF, Catasto 385. fols. 814r-v.

<sup>247</sup> His son Caccia repudiated him. ASF, Ripudie d'eredità 12. fol. 38r. (18/11/1439), Ripudie d'eredità 13. fol. 139v. In 1433, Margherita and Martino had eight offspring, and they paid only *composto*. ASF, Catasto, 455. fol. 318r.

<sup>248</sup> Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates*, Appendix.

<sup>249</sup> Girolamo. ASF, Estimo 268. fol. 29r. Jacopo di Piero. Estimo 268. fol. 82v. 367. fol. 14r. Miniato di Manetto. Estimo 268. fol. 84v; Piera, widow of Baldinaccio. Estimo 268. fol. 10v; Giovanni di Catellino. Estimo 268. fol. 11r; Antonio di Manetto. Estimo 268. fol. 11r.

<sup>250</sup> Antonio di Catellino. ASF, Catasto 499. fol. 22r. Baldinaccio di Catellino. Catasto 499. fol. 174v. Pagolo di Jacopo. Catasto 489. fol. 460r.

<sup>251</sup> The Catasto at this point might not be accurate.



for city offices either.<sup>252</sup> However, they were heavily involved in business. In the 1350s, the brothers Baldinaccio and Giovanni di Catellino Infangati, members of the Moneychangers' Guild, were running a firm together.<sup>253</sup> Around 1364-1366, following Baldinaccio's death, his son, Catellino, renewed the partnership with Giovanni.<sup>254</sup> By the time he became Matteo Scolari's father-in-law, Catellino had been in the money-changing business for at least thirty years. Piera's dowry of 1000 Florentine florins, by no means of insignificant size, shows that the Infangati had indeed obtained a certain financial stability in business life.<sup>255</sup> The family seemingly had no earlier connection to the Kingdom of Hungary, but they belonged to the same social strata as the Scolari, which made them an excellent choice for a marriage alliance.

### **Antonio (b. 1387) and Baldinaccio (b. c. 1395) di Catellino Infangati: The In-Laws**

The marriage between Piera Infangati and Matteo Scolari took place sometime before 1407, which is the approximate birth year of their eldest daughter. Around the same time, the Scolari brothers moved their family home from the Via Panzano to the Borgo degli Albizzi, thus becoming neighbours to the Infangati, who kept houses and workshops just opposite the Scolari palace.<sup>256</sup> In 1424, after Catellino's death, his two sons, Antonio and Baldinaccio, kept two separate households, though they physically remained residents in the very same paternal house and cooperated closely in business life by continuing their father's profession in the money-changing business. In addition to the wedlock between Matteo and Piero, the in-law ties between

252 Only one member of the family, named Uberto, is mentioned as speaker at the secret councils. ASF, CP 1. fol. 7v. (1349)

253 ASF, Arte del Cambio 44. fols. 68r-v, 180v (1353). For the two brothers as partners, see: Arte del Cambio 14. fol. 37v (1359, libro di compagnie). They continuously renewed their partnership: Arte del Cambio 14. fols. 41r (1361), 43v (1362), 46r (1363), 48v (1364).

254 ASF, Arte del Cambio 14. fol. 53r. (1366).

255 See the tax declaration of Matteo's heirs, submitted in 1427: 'Madonna Piera, dona fu di messer Matteo de'avere per sua dota coll'aggiunta fe messer Matteo fiorini 1000.' ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 875v.

256 See Antonio's tax declaration, submitted in 1427: 'Una chasa possta nel populo di San Piero Maggiore al lato all Abergho alla Corona che da primo e secondo Giovanni Buonafe, da terzo via, da quarto sopradetto Antonio. Stavi a pigione Seraffo sarto [...] Una bottegha sotto la detta chasa con detto confini. Stavi a pigione Martino di Lionardo saponao [...] E più ne tiene della detta chasa dietro Romanello aberghatore alla Corona [...] Una chasa al lato alla sopradetta chasa che da primo il detto Antonio, secondo Giovanni Buonafe, terzo Bernaro Ghuadagni, quarto via.'. ASF, Catasto 56. fol. 47r.

the two families were reinforced by another marriage in 1418 when Antonio took Caccia di Palmieri Altoviti's daughter, Matteo's niece, for his wife.<sup>257</sup>

The Infangati brothers' enterprises in Hungary exemplify the ways the Scolari brothers helped their relatives in acquiring business connections there. The Infangati brothers ventured to Hungary for the first time in the 1410s, probably at the invitation of their in-laws. According to the testimony of Antonio's ledger, opened in 1417 upon their return to Florence, they had left Florence for Hungary together and consequently returned together as well.<sup>258</sup> However, Baldinaccio, after a short period of time spent in Florence, decided to relocate to Hungary and settle in Andrea Scolari's court in *Varadinum* (Oradea, RO), where he stayed until the bishop's death.<sup>259</sup> Antonio, instead, remained at home to run their businesses. Meanwhile in Hungary, Baldinaccio's textile workshop, which he operated with Matteo Scolari, might have provided him with some income.<sup>260</sup> In the proximity of the workshop, located in Via Vaccareccia, he owned four other workshops, three of them rented by important goldsmiths of the time, who were engaged in entrepreneurial activity.<sup>261</sup> The leading masters of these workshops, as we shall see in Chapter Five, were closely related to the Scolari. It might

257 'Ricordo come'io onore di Dio e della Vergine Madonna Santa Maria e di tutta la corte di Paradiso menai moglie la figliuola del Chaccia Altoviti a dì primo di magio 1418. Che al Dio ci dià grazia che noi viviamo in pace e chon onore e salvamento del'anima e del corpo.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 97. 13. fol. 112r.

258 'Ricordanza chome io tornai d'Ungheria insino a dì xxii di marzo 1416 e viene con eso mecho Baldinaccio, mio fratello e tornossi indietro a dì d'aprile 1417 [...]. ASF, Copr. Rel. Sopp. 97. 13. fol. 112r. (25/03/1417).

259 He was among the witnesses of the Bishop's testament. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 291r. The close cooperation between the Bishop and the Infangati brothers is also illustrated by Andrea's deposit made in 1425, in favour of Antonio Infangati that he would pay taxes on his behalf. ASF, Monte ser. II. 2439. fol. 25r.

260 Baldinaccio's business activity should have been sizeable, shown by the fact that after Matteo's death, his heirs were obliged to pay 640 florins to him. Part of the money, 500 Florentine florins, was left to him by Matteo's testament: ASF, Catasto 56. fol. 493r. He had not yet received the sum by 1431. Catasto 385. fol. 343r. Sources do not explicitly refer to the type of textiles they produced. See Matteo's testament, made in 1424. ASF, NA 5814. fols. 271r-v.

261 See Baldinaccio's declaration, presented in 1427: 'Una botegha in Vacherecia nel popolo di Santa Cecilia, che da primo via, secondo Tomaso di Scholaio Ciachi, terzo via dietro, quarto lui medesimo. E detta botegha tiene a pigione Giovanni di Bandino orafo [...] Una botegha in detto popollo, da primo via, secondo rede di Jachopo di Latino de Pigli, terzo via dietro, quarto lui medesimo. E tiello a pigione Dino di Monte orafo [...] Una bottegha in detto popollo, da primo via, a secondo e terzo le rede di Jachopo di Latino de Pigli, quarto lui medesimo. E detta bottegha tiene a pigione Piero di Giovannino richamatore [...] Una botegha in detto popollo, da primo via, secondo Toso d'Albizo del Toso, terzo rede di Jachopo de Pigli, quarto lui medesimo. E detta botgeha tiene a pigione Michele di Sezi orafo [...]'. ASF, Catasto 56. fol. 493r.

be that Baldinaccio and Matteo Scolari, thanks to the know-how of these masters, were also engaged in silk textile production in their workshop.

In 1424, it may have been his absence from Florence or his financial situation that forced Baldinaccio to repudiate his father.<sup>262</sup> Either way, after 1426 his business expectations surely did not match the reality in Hungary; despite this, he decided to stay in Hungary even after the Scolari's deaths.<sup>263</sup> In 1431, Antonio informs us in Baldinaccio's tax declaration that his brother's workshops were kept by the Commune for his unpaid taxes.<sup>264</sup> Two years later, he referred to two of the workshops as his own, which suggests that he had actually paid his brother's debt in exchange for the ownership of the two places. At that point, Baldinaccio did not possess any other immovable properties in Florence.<sup>265</sup>

Besides Antonio, the other person in charge of Baldinaccio's businesses was Matteo Scolari's son-in-law, Francesco di Vieri Guadagni. In 1427, he submitted a tax return in Baldinaccio's absence. Six years later, in the second *Catasto*, Francesco noted that he was still obliged to pay him 900 Florentine florins, which he might never have received, since Baldinaccio was detained in the King's prison.<sup>266</sup> Following this brief notice, we have no more information on whether he was ever released. Meanwhile, Antonio continued to live in Florence at least until 1477, the date of the last entry in his account book.<sup>267</sup>

## 10 The Della Rena Family

The Della Rena were in-laws of the Infangati brothers, since sometime in the early 1400s, when their second sister, Tommasa, married Piero di Bernardo della Rena.<sup>268</sup> Even though Tommasa died early, her orphans secured Piero

262 ASF, Ripudie d'eredità 10. fol. 186v.

263 'Baldinaccio di Catellino Infanghati deto d'anni 32 incircha, e quello è in Ungheria e no' sapemo chome i fatti suoi li pasano apparerne piùosto malle [...]'. ASF, Catasto 56. fol. 493r.

264 Baldinaccio's declaration, presented in 1431: '[...] Le dette botteghe tiene el Chomune per suoi chatasti e quelli che non à mai paghato nesuno [...]'. ASF, Catasto 385. fol. 343r.

265 Baldinaccio's declaration, submitted by his brother, in 1433: 'La persona sua è sostenuta ne paesi d'Ungheria già fa più tempo e da llui non posso sapere niente [...]'. ASF, Catasto 478. fol. 463r.

266 See Francesco Guadagni's declaration, which he presented in 1433: 'Antonio di Chatelino Infanghati e Baldinaccio suo fratello m'anno a dare fiorini novecento i quali sono perduti per rispetto che Antonio c'è qui è chativo iscritto e Baldinaccio è in Ungheria in prigione [...]'. ASF, Catasto 478. fol. 772v.

267 ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 97. 13.

268 The Infangati brothers, besides Piera, had two other sisters. One of them, Caterina, became nun in the monastery of San Francesco. Matteo extended his generosity even to her, by donating

an alliance with the Infangati and through them an alliance with the Scolari. The Della Rena was a *popolani* family with earlier Ghibelline loyalties. They were originally from Certaldo and moved to Florence sometime before the end of the thirteenth century. In 1378, they had three households located in the golfalon of Chiavi, among them two in the Borgo San Pietro (Borgo degli Albizzi) and one in Via degli Albertinelli.<sup>269</sup> In 1433, they also had three households, composed of thirteen family members, located in the same Borgo.<sup>270</sup> Out of the three households, one paid *composto* and the other two *catasto* in the value of seven florins, 36 soldi, and 20 denari. The total assets of the three households were 5018 Florentine florins. At the turn of the fifteenth century, the Della Rena were active members of the Por Santa Maria Guild as retail cloth merchants (*ritagliatori*).<sup>271</sup> They also sporadically appear as speakers at the meetings of the secret councils; among them is Piero's father.<sup>272</sup> Sources do not reveal any earlier connection which might have linked the family to the Kingdom of Hungary or to the Scolari family. Their case may illustrate eloquently that not only the Scolari but also their kin and in-laws brought their relatives to Hungary, a phenomenon which resulted in the highly endogamous nature of the local Florentine community.

### Piero di Bernardo della Rena (c. 1378/1380-1431): The In-Laws' In-Law

Piero, therefore, was born into a family of a certain social status, even though they were neither powerful nor played an important role in the business life of the city. He might have been about a decade younger than the Scolari brothers, enough to be able to rely on their help at stages of his life. Following his father's footsteps in politics, Piero became an active, though

an annuity of 100 Florentine florins. 'Suora Caterina degli Altoviti de' avere fiorini 100, lasciò a sua vita, badessa in Santa Maria del Fiore, fiorini 100.' ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 875v.

269 Bernardo di Piero, Borgo San Pietro. ASF, Prestanze 369. fol. 75r. Geri di Doffo, Borgo San Pietro. Prestanze 369. fol. 75r. Corso di Piero, Via degli Albertinelli. Prestanze 369. fol. 90r.

270 Antonio di Corso. ASF, Catasto 499. fol. 71v. Bernardo di Piero. Catasto 499. fol. 193v. Maso di Geri. Catasto 499. fol. 534r. The fourth declaration was submitted in the name of Niccolò di Corso's heirs. Catasto, 499. fol. 743r.

271 Corso di Piero della Rena, ritagliatore. ASF, Arte di Por Santa Maria 7. fol. 41r. (1404). Bartolomeo di Bernardo di Piero, fundacio Arte di Por Santa Maria 7. fol. 45r. (1421) Balduino di Piero di Bernardo. Arte di Por Santa Maria 7. fol. 45v. (1421) Gianozzo di Bernardo di Piero, ritagliatore. Arte di Por Santa Maria 7. fol. 80v. (1405) Niccolò di Corso di Piero, ritagliatore. Arte di Por Santa Maria 7. fol. 143r. (1405) Two of them enrolled also in the Wool Guild. Balduino di Piero di Bernardo. ASF, Arte della Lana 25. fol. 7v. (1408) Corso di Piero. Arte della Lana 25. fol. 11v. (1408).

272 Bernardo di Piero della Rena spoke two times between September 1390 and June 1404. ASF, CP 28. fol. 170r, CP 37. fol. 66r.

not influential, member of the Florentine political elite. He enrolled in the Por Santa Maria Guild as a retail cloth merchant and later was elected once to guild consul.<sup>273</sup> He first covered a city office in 1407, which was followed by seven other occasions, among them the priorate twice.<sup>274</sup> In the secret councils, he participated ten times as a speaker and, in 1418, he led a small embassy to Urbino.<sup>275</sup>

His ties to the Scolari were multiple, starting with their shared neighbourhood, through business, and then further social ties.<sup>276</sup> In Matteo Scolari's absence from Florence, Piero acted as his legal representative.<sup>277</sup> He also received a minor share in the company founded by Matteo with Tommaso di Domenico Borghini and Antonio di Geri Bardi for the trade in Hungary.<sup>278</sup> It is unclear if Piero ever travelled to Hungary, though this might have been one of the reasons his daughter was brought up in the Scolari palace.

Since his first wife, Tommasa Infangati, died early, leaving behind their small children, the help of his sister-in-law, Piera Infangati, was likely indispensable. However, Piero remarried sometime before 1427, taking for a wife Guglielmo Adimari's daughter, but his children with Tommasa secured him a life-long bond to the Scolari.<sup>279</sup> Their daughter Sandra was taken in by her aunt and brought up with the Scolari girls in the neighbouring Scolari palace.<sup>280</sup> She grew to become a family member, to the extent that Matteo, in his testament, left her a generous dowry of 500 Florentine florins.<sup>281</sup> Thirty years later, her adopted sister, Francesca di Matteo Scolari,

273 ASF, Por Santa Maria 246. fol.15r. Por Santa Maria 7. fol. 162v (1414).

274 For his election to prior, see: *Online Tratte of Office Holders*, record n. 122690, 122697.

275 For his speeches see: ASF, CP 39. fol. 166v (1409), CP 40. fol. 28r, CP 42. fol. 156v, CP 45. fol. 47r, CP 46. fols. 102v, 106v, 193r, CP 49. fols. 113r, 116r, 117r. (1431) For the embassy see: ASF, Signori, Rapporti e relazioni di oratori fiorentini 2. fol. 54r.

276 Bernardo kept a house in the Borgo degli Albizzi. See his tax declaration, submitted in 1433: ASF, Catasto 480. fol. 306r.

277 In 1413, Matteo made a deposit, which was managed by his wife and Piero della Rena. ASF, Monte ser. II. 1806. fol. 144v.

278 ASF, NA. 5814 fol. 30r.

279 See Piero's tax return, which was submitted in 1427: 'Ghuiglielmo di Piero di Corso Adimari per resto della dota di monna Chaterina sua sirocchia e donna del detto Piero della Rena, de quali denari il detto Piero in sino a poi non à auto scritto niuno, fiorini 700.' ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 646r.

280 In 1427, Piera Infangati's tax declaration mentions the following: 'La Sandra, sua nipote che s'ela senpre tenuta è figliuola di Piero della Rena e à promesso di maritalla tra di suo e de lascio le fa messer Matteo, d'anni 10.' ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 775v.

281 The tax declaration of the Scolaris' heirs refers to the donation: 'La Sandra, figliuola di Piero di Bernardo della Rena de'avere le lasciò fiorini 500.' ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 875v. In 1424, Matteo left a certain sum for Sandra's dowry. ASF, NA 5814. fol. 32v.

even wished to bestow upon Sandra her entire patrimony.<sup>282</sup> At the time of Piero della Rena's death in 1431, among his three children only Sandra had reached the legal age.<sup>283</sup> Two years later, in 1433, we hear about her marriage to Francesco Zati's son Antonio.<sup>284</sup> The Zati was a triple-rooted merchant family, with connections in Florence, Venice, and the Kingdom of Hungary. Andrea's brother, Antonio, had worked earlier as an agent of the Carnesecchi-Fronte firm in Buda. Years later, he became officer of a minting chamber in Hungary.<sup>285</sup> The marriage, therefore, would have been arranged well before Piero's death, maybe by Matteo Scolari himself, and it represented an advantageous social and economic bond in Florentine long-distance trade.

282 Francesca, at that time, was Tommaso di Neri Capponi's widow. ASF, Ginori Conti, serie Rinuccini 127. n. 4.

283 The children's declaration was submitted in 1431. ASF, Catasto 480. fols. 306r-307r.

284 ASF, Catasto 665. fol. 264r.

285 Draskóczy, 'Olaszok a 15. századi Erdélyben'. See the balance of the Carnesecchi company, submitted in 1427: 'Antonio di Francesco Zati sta con noi a Buda [...]'. ASF, Catasto 28. fol. 1009r.



## IV The Outer Circle of the Network: Friends of Business

Another circle of the Scolari's social network in Hungary consisted of those individuals who established more distant links to the centre of the network – Pippo Scolari and his closest male relatives – but had no blood or marriage ties with them. Some of these men were neighbours to the Scolari and others were supporters of the Albizzi faction. But the most important features in their relations to the Scolari were their common business interests. John Padgett and Paul McLean claimed that company partnership may indicate existing friendship ties among individuals in this period.<sup>1</sup> As we have already seen, the prevalence of the Medici faction which, according to Dale Kent, was built on networks of patronage, might have been closely related to their well-connectedness in business life.<sup>2</sup> Following this argument, it might be safe to say that the Scolari's success in the Kingdom of Hungary was also highly dependent upon their business network, which they built in both states. This web of relations in Hungary might have worked in a similar way to the patronage network of the Medici, facilitating the access to various city offices for their friends' friends.<sup>3</sup>

However, not all neighbours, political allies, and company partners necessarily became close friends to the extent that they might have wanted to cooperate with each other on other levels as well. For those who did, friendship most commonly included several other aspects too. Participation in legal matters is most commonly associated with strong friendship ties among Florentine individuals. Thomas Kuehn has widely investigated how neighbours, partners, and kin dealt with various sorts of disputes by means of private arbitrators. Given the importance of such mediation between individuals and their families, arbitrators were commonly chosen from their

1 'Florentines saw no contradiction between friendship and making money. There was an instrumental conception of friendship. One purpose of helping each other was to make money [...] Amicitia language often escalated smoothly into the language of fictive kinship, which conveyed a sense of real loyalty.' Padgett and McLean, *Economic Credit and Elite Transformation*, p. 27.

2 Padgett and Ansell, 'Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici'. The existence of patronage ties inside the Medici faction is illustrated by the numerous letters of recommendations addressed to them. Kent, *The Rise of the Medici*, pp. 83-135.

3 McLean, *The Art of the Network*.



closest relatives and friends.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the role of guarantor (*fideiussor*, *mallevadore*) in business disputes implied a close friendship tie with the beneficiary. Just as in the case of arbitrators and guarantors, witnesses and executors of documents had similarly important legal and private roles. These persons, therefore, should have been carefully selected among those acquaintances of the interested parties whom they trusted the most.<sup>5</sup>

In order to establish the circle of those businessmen in whom Pippo Scolari put his trust in business as well as in private matters, I have used the most important documents that concern the patrimony of the family. These sources include a document in which Pippo named the executors of Matteo's testament, the enforcement of Andrea's and Matteo's inheritances for Filippo di Rinieri Scolari and his brothers, and Pippo's deposit made for the painter, Masolino. These documents were issued in 1426, following Andrea's and Matteo's deaths, in which several Florentines who were important members of the resident Florentine community in Hungary were cited by name. Except for the last source, which was enacted thanks to an intermediary person who accepted Pippo's deposit in the first place, the other two documents are dated in Hungary. These acts, in my understanding, represent key moments in Pippo Scolari's life, in which he surely wished to rely on his most trustworthy friends.

The first source was issued on 25 March 1426, in Pippo's Buda house, in which he nominated the executors of Matteo's testament. Among them were Matteo's in-law, Vieri di Vieri Guadagni, their relative Simone di messer Andrea da Montebuoni, and three other Florentines: Bartolomeo di Giovanni Carducci, Pietro di messer Luigi Guicciardini, and Antonio di Pietro di Fronte. Furthermore, there were also four Florentine merchants living in the Kingdom of Hungary who were listed as witnesses of the document: Giovanni d'Andrea Lamberteschi, Gianozzo di Giovanni d'Amerigo Cavalcanti, Antonio di Bonaccorso Strozzi, and Nofri di Bardo de'Bardi.<sup>6</sup>

4 Kuehn, *Law, Family and Women*, pp. 19-74.

5 Kent has stressed the active role kinsmen played as executors of wills and as arbiters in disputes over property. Kent, *Household and Lineage*, 1977, p.132.

6 'Data in Buda con la presenza di domini Iohannes Andree de Lamberteschis, Gianozio Iohannis domini Emerici de Chavalcantibus, Anthonio Bonaccursi de Strozis, Iohannes Puccio Luce, Onofrio Bardi.' ASF, CS serie IV. fols. 635r-v. The document is also preserved in a copy: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 296r-298v (with the wrong date: 05/03/1426), Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 259. Another document connected to the same issue: Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 292r-293r. (07/03/1426) Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 271.

The second source is dated 26 August 1426 and testifies that via an intermediary, Pippo deposited a generous salary for Masolino, who was supposed to serve him for three years. The several guarantors of the execution of the commission included: the woodcarver-architect Manetto Amannatini, Nofri di Bardo de'Bardi, the Bishop Giovanni di Piero Melanesi, Simone di Lapo Corsi, Antonio di Piero Fronte, Ridolfo di Bonifazio Peruzzi, and Filippo di Simone Capponi, all of them important members of the Florentine community in Hungary.<sup>7</sup>

Months later, on 30 November 1426, in Brassov, Pippo reinforced the inheritance of Filippo di Rinieri Scolari and his brothers in the presence of Giovanni di messer Andrea da Montebuoni, Giovanni di Piero Melanesi, Currado di Piero Cardini, Lorenzo di messer Andrea da Montebuoni, Francesco di Vieri Guadagni, Giovanni d'Andrea Lamberteschi, Filippo d'Amerigo Frescobaldi, and Ricoldo di ser Paolo Ricoldi, and a certain Jacobo d'Antonio da Bologna.<sup>8</sup>

The performance of these Florentines might have contributed to Pippo's success in the Kingdom of Hungary to a remarkable extent. Only some of them served him in administrative positions, as it was customary in contemporary Hungary that barons placed their most able and trustworthy *familiares* in charge of their castles, territories, and anything they might have possessed or administered. In Pippo's case, Pál Engel has pointed out that he employed several of his wife's Hungarian relatives who were bound to him by feudal ties.<sup>9</sup> Florentine businessmen who worked as officials or held ecclesiastical positions typically also made it into the Hungarian feudal structure and became Pippo's or Sigismund's *familiares*, or even both. Having possessed reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, these businessmen received employment in the royal or ecclesiastical administrations, thanks to Pippo's influence. These were the competencies which also led Pippo and other Italians into the royal administration, including, for example, the Saracino

7 Molho, 'The Brancacci Chapel', p. 93.

8 ASF, Diplomatico, Lunghe, Badia fiorentina, 30/11/1426. For the copy of the document see: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 278r-279v. For the publication of the copy see: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc.1432. There is very little evidence at our disposal on any further connections between Ricoldo and members of the Scolaris' network. Among them, appearing in Ricoldo's tax documents are Giovanni di Matteo Corsini and Giovanni di Rinieri Scolari, the first in the capacity of business partner. ASF, Catasto 62. fol. 561r. 81. fols. 142v-143r. (1427) In his later declaration appear Costanza Scolari, sister of the Bishop of *Varadinum*, as well as Tommaso Corsi and Tommaso Davizi, silk manufacturers. ASF, Catasto 500. fol. 452r.

9 Engel, 'Ozorai Pipo', pp. 275-276.

brothers from Padua, who made a notable career in Louis I's service; one of them was also later elected to consul of the Italian community in Buda.<sup>10</sup>

## 1 The Bardi Family

Among the witnesses of the document naming the executors of Matteo's testament was Nofri di Bardo de' Bardi, who also served as one of the guarantors of Masolino's payment. The Bardi was one of the most ancient and extended lineages of Florence. They were also magnates and lived in the Oltrarno.<sup>11</sup> Among the families in this study, they had the far highest number of households (54) registered in the 1378 *Estimo*. Most of them, like Nofri's father, Bardo di Migiotto de' Bardi, lived in the gonfalon of Scala, quarter of Santo Spirito.<sup>12</sup> By the end of our period, in 1433, the number of their households increased to 62 and included 269 family members all together.<sup>13</sup> Given the high number of households, they also declared by far the highest total assets of 142,093 Florentine florins. Among the registered households, only seventeen, less than one-third, did not have any taxable assets and only one was listed as *miserabile*.<sup>14</sup> The wealth of the lineage might have come mainly from their business. During the fourteenth century, several of them settled in various parts of Europe, including London, Barcelona, and Valencia.<sup>15</sup>

As for their earlier connections to Hungary, in 1400, one member of the lineage, named Benedetto, was collecting ecclesiastical taxes in Kalocsa in the name of Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici's firm.<sup>16</sup> Another member of the lineage, named Antonio di Geri de' Bardi, appears as a minor partner in the company based in Hungary that was owned by Matteo Scolari, Tommaso Borghini, and Piero di Bernardo della Rena.<sup>17</sup> In 1388, there was also a certain

10 For the Saracino brothers' participation in the royal administration, see: Weisz, 'A szerémi és pécsi kamarák', pp. 39-46. Prajda, 'Justice in the Florentine Trading Community'.

11 Other branches of the lineage have been studied in detail by Christiane Klapisch-Zuber. Klapisch-Zuber, *Retour à la cité*. See also: Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates*, Appendix.

12 Four households were located in various other parts of the city. ASF, *Estimo* 268. fols. 51r, 59r, 111r-v. For Bardo's household see: ASF, *Estimo* 268. fol. 3r.

13 Most of them continued to live in the same gonfalon, though already thirteen households were located elsewhere in the city. ASF, *Catasto* 488. fols. 78v, 153r, 159r, 161v, 169v, 189r, 207r, 287v, 347r, 348v, 329r; *Catasto* 490. fols. 66v, 174v, 331v, 437r; *Catasto* 491bis. fol. 294v.

14 Lorenzo di Leonardo di Francesco. ASF, *Catasto* 499. fol. 471r.

15 Soldani, *Uomini d'affari*, pp. 398-400.

16 Esch, 'Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma', p. 375.

17 ASF, NA 5814. fol. 270r.

Nofri di Francesco de'Bardi registered in the sources. He purchased a house in Buda and continued to live there even after 1390, the year he sold his property.<sup>18</sup> Though the two Nofries were contemporaries, it might not be possible to tell if and how they were related to each other.

### Nofri di Bardo de'Bardi: The Royal Administrator (d. 1426)<sup>19</sup>

By the late fourteenth century, the Bardi family and their companies had been operating in the Kingdom of England for more than a century, and they had also entered royal service. The research of Martin Allen has demonstrated that the central administration employed several Florentines through the fourteenth century.<sup>20</sup> Among them was Walter (perhaps Gualtieri?) di Filippo de'Bardi, who, in 1380 was appointed to master of the London exchange; he also retained the administration of the London mint for the first time in history. Thanks to his various offices, between the 1360s and the 1390s royal minting was kept in his hands.

Parallel to the examples in the Kingdom of England, during Louis I's reign there were some Italians receiving employment in the royal administration. However, their number, especially of Florentines, increased considerably with Pippo Scolari's success in the court. Although these administrative positions did not come with real power, they offered Florentines a solid income and the chance to get acquainted with members of the court, which might have further facilitated their trade and integration in the country.

Nofri (Onofrio) di Bardo de'Bardi might have been a royal administrator like his distant relative, Walter. There is nothing known for certain about his life prior to his employment or how exactly he ended up in the Kingdom of Hungary. Some sources suggest that from his mother's side, he might have been related to the Buondelmonti family.<sup>21</sup> Maybe this family connection led him to Pippo Scolari's service in the salt chambers. In 1409, eight years

18 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 648. (12/07/1388) He sold his house to Miklós Kanizsai. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, I. doc. 1379. (27/02/1390) He might have been one of Bardo di Francesco di messer Alessandro de'Bardi's brothers, who was employed in the Medici bank. Kent, *The Rise of the Medici*, p. 73. The close family connection is also supported by the frequent appearance of the Scolari's relatives in Bardo's account book, dated to 1426. Among them; Vieri Guadagni and Piero di Bernardo della Rena. ASF, Libri di commercio e di famiglia 361. fols. 27v, 28v, 29r. I thank Sergio Tognetti for calling my attention to the source.

19 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*.

20 Allen, 'Italians in English Mints', pp. 53-62. *Ibid.*, *Mints and Money*.

21 A certain Bardo de'Bardi married Bartolomea di Lorenzo di messer Gherardo Buondelmonti. ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Rinuccini, 16/07/1362. (Though the inventory includes a reference to the document, it might have been consequently lost.) In a balance, prepared after the Bishop's

following the baron's nomination as count of the salt chambers, he would have already been a middle-aged man when the first source mentions him.<sup>22</sup> Between 1413 and 1418, he managed the Buda salt chamber as well as the Kremnica chamber, where Pippo began his career as a royal officer.<sup>23</sup> More than a decade later, he was also granted the castle of Pölöske in Zala County.<sup>24</sup> By this, Nofri became the owner of feudal lands with a noble title in Hungary and obtained the right to use the name of Pölöskei Noffry. In August 1426, the King conferred upon him also the administration of the thirtieth chamber, earlier occupied by another Italian.<sup>25</sup> During his years in royal service, Nofri developed into a respected man in Buda, where he purchased a house in proximity to the court and benefited from the support of Pippo and the King. Nofri's influence in their service increased to the extent that following the baron's death, he and his four sons were trying to take over Pippo's position in the court and in the Florentine community too.

By the late 1420s, Bardo, Giacomo, Giovanni, and Leonardo di Nofri performed in various capacities for the King.<sup>26</sup> In 1427, Giovanni served as Sigismund's ambassador to Florence.<sup>27</sup> Leonardo, between 1427 and 1435, was relator in the royal court like his father.<sup>28</sup> He also handled Gianozzo di Giovanni Cavalcanti's case on Sigismund's behalf. The possible rivalry with the Scolari nephews led to the consolidation of the Bardis' social position in Hungary. Nofri, though, died sometime before 1430, but his sons seemingly had no major problem in maintaining their father's former offices and social status. In 1430, Sigismund granted the brothers the castle of Bojnice (SK) in exchange for Pölöske.<sup>29</sup> In the same year, they took over the thirtieth chamber, which they administered at least until 1437.<sup>30</sup> In the same period, Giovanni and Leonardo served the King together as captains of the

death, Lorenzo Buondelmonti and Bardo de'Bardi figured together as Andrea Scolari's creditors. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 260v.

22 Rinaldo degli Albizzi, who stayed in his Buda house, mentioned him as Pippo Scolari's former factor. *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. p. 580. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II. 2. doc. 7240. (27/12/1409).

23 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, IV. doc. 226. (25/02/1413); VI. doc. 47. (25/01/1417).

24 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I. 396.

25 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 990. (19/08/1426).

26 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I. pp. 176, 271.

27 ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie 7. fol. 76v.

28 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancellaria, 32. fols. 52v-53r (12/03/1429), ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 235r, 262r-v. The same document: ASF, Miscellanea Repubblicana 10. Insetto 260. I wish to thank Péter E. Kovács for calling my attention to the last document.

29 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I. p. 271.

30 MNL, DF 202473 (15/08/1430), DF 227547 (23/05/1437), DF 249985 (25/11/1432), DF 239550 (13/10/1430), DF 286310 (23/05/1437). See also: Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', p. 206.

castle of Skalica (SK).<sup>31</sup> In 1437, they were mentioned as counts of the royal chambers.<sup>32</sup> The Bardi brothers had managed to consolidate their positions in the royal administration to the extent that they were able to remain in royal service even following Sigismund's death.<sup>33</sup> The leading role gained by the Bardi brothers inside the resident Florentine community is clearly indicated by the brothers' election to Latin consul, sometime before 1431.<sup>34</sup>

In 1433, in the same year that we find Leonardo in Sigismund's entourage while visiting Siena, their paternal uncle, Migiotto di Bardo de' Bardi (b. 1378) declared only a few pieces of land and two houses in Florence.<sup>35</sup> But the document does not refer to any large-scale business activity that would suggest an economic cooperation between him and his nephews in Hungary.<sup>36</sup>

Administrative positions of these sorts came with other advantages as well, including access to deposits of salt, a commercial good in high demand on the domestic market. In 1431, the balance of Giovanni di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi's firm in Hungary mentioned that Nofri di Bardo owed them 11801 florins for goods, for which he promised salt from Maramures (RO) in return.<sup>37</sup> In the same year, the old balance of the company run by Antonio di Piero di Fronte and Pagolo di Berto Carnesecchi in Buda listed Leonardo and Giovanni di Nofri as debtors, saying that they were protected by the King and, therefore, they could not be forced to pay.<sup>38</sup> Following Pippo's death, given the Bardis' noble titles and positions in the

31 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I. p. 419.

32 Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, II. p. 176.

33 In 1438, Leonardo was appointed to royal treasurer. Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, I. p. 53.

34 Both Leonardo and one of the former consuls, Giovanni Saracino, served the King as counts (comes) of the thirtieth chamber around the years of their election to consul which may or may not imply that there was a connection between the two offices. '[...] dominum Leonardum Nofrii Bardi de Florentia iudicum latinorum et egregio Hungarie et suos fratres et eorum socios et societatem [...]'. ASF, Mercanzia 271. fol. 118v. (14/11/1436). '[...] Al nome di Dio a dì 2 di dicembre 1431. Già manifesto a qualunque persona vedrà o udirà la presente scripta come dinanzi a voi Sano degli Ugorgieri da Siena vice giudice de latini in luogo di messer Lionardo di messer Giovanni di Nofri da Boymoy [...]'. Mercanzia 4379. fol. 98v. (In reality, the document talks about the brothers, Leonardo and Giovanni di Nofri). See also: Mercanzia 4379. fols. 114v-115r. I wish to thank Lorenz Bönninger for calling my attention to the documents.

35 *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. pp. 551-552.

36 ASF, Catasto 432. fols. 162r-163v. Catasto 487. fols. 312r-314v.

37 However, the payment did not arrive. ASF, Catasto 381. fol. 43v.

38 ASF, Catasto 381. fol. 91r. Bardo di Nofri de' Bardi was a business client of the wool workshop run by Giovanni di Gualtieri Portinari and Jacopo d'Andrea de Pazzi. See Portinari's tax document, submitted in 1433. Catasto 482. fol. 615r.

royal administration, they fully integrated into the Hungarian society, which gave them an extraordinary advantage when dealing with other Florentines or subjects of the Hungarian crown.

## 2 The Melanesi (Milanesi) Family

Like the Bardi, the Melanesi brothers – Giovanni, Simone, and Tommaso di Piero – were among the Scolari's closest friends of those with whom they did not share any blood or marriage ties.<sup>39</sup> Giovanni himself appears both in Masolino's payment and in reinforcing the Scolari nephews' inheritance. Earlier, in January 1426, Simone witnessed Andrea Scolari's testament in the episcopal palace of *Varadinum*.<sup>40</sup>

The Melanesi (Milanesi) family originated in nearby Prato, which explains why we do not find their names in the 1378 city census. The brothers' uncles worked as merchants in their hometown.<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile their other distant relatives joined the clergy, among them a certain Niccolò, who was probably their fourth brother.<sup>42</sup> By the end of the studied period, four of their households were registered in various parts of the city in the 1433 *Catasto*.<sup>43</sup> They had a modest total asset of 6165 Florentine florins; only one of them possessed taxable assets, and one was even listed as *miserabile*.<sup>44</sup> The brothers' two uncles, Luigi di Ricovero and Melanesi di Ridolfo, established business interests in the Kingdom, though it is not clear if these enterprises went back before Pippo Scolari's time.<sup>45</sup> At the beginning, the Melanesi

39 For a genealogical tree, see: Prajda, 'Unions of Interest', Appendix.

40 ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 291v.

41 Baldassare and his father Luigi di Ricovero kept a money-changing desk at the Mercato Nuovo. ASF, Catasto 474. fols. 289r-290v. In 1408, Luigi also figures among Francesco di Marco Datini's business partners. Luigi's letter to Datini. AD, busta 1097. Insetto 18. (05/05/1408).

42 In 1390, Michele di Matteo was mentioned as clergyman. ASF, Diplomatico, Pergamene, Arte di Calimala, 23/04/1390. Nicholozzo di Neri Melanesi, provost of Prato. ASF, Catasto 484. fol. 581r. (1433) In 1426, Niccolò was a protonotary apostolic. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Obligationes et Solutiones 60. fol. 157r. Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár XIII*. doc. 504. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Camera Apostolica, Obligationes Communes. fol. 121v. (27/04/1426)

43 Baldassare di Luigi. ASF, Catasto 498. fol. 65r. (gonfalon Drago, quarter of San Giovanni); Matteo di Vanni. Catasto 497. fol. 522r. (gonfalon Leon d'Oro, quarter of San Giovanni); Filippo di Filippo. Catasto 496. fol. 193v, Tommaso. Catasto 496. fol. 499v. (gonfalon Leon Bianco, quarter of Santa Maria Novella).

44 Matteo di Vanni Melanesi's household was listed as *miserabile*.

45 One of their uncles, Luigi di Ricovero, kept a servant of Hungarian origins. 'Martino d'Ungheria mio famiglia'. ASF, Catasto 474. fols. 290v. (1433). Meanwhile another, Melanesi di Ridolfo, died in Hungary. See his sons' declaration in 1433, saying 'Il detto se n'andò in Ungheria



might have entered into the Hungarian market thanks to their cooperation with the Portinari family, who, together with the Panciatichi, ran what was probably the oldest continuously operating firm in the region.<sup>46</sup>

**Giovanni (d.1427), Simone (1387-1427/1431), and Tommaso di Piero Melanesi (1391/93- c. 1437): The Double Citizens of Florence and Buda**

Buda, as the financial and administrative centre of the Kingdom and place of the royal court, developed into the favorite destination for itinerant Florentine businessmen who even established a joint consulate there. Because of the city laws that prevented harsh competition between local and foreign merchants, becoming a citizen of Buda might have offered Florentine merchants with considerable advantages in long distance trade. Non-indigenous merchants were not allowed to engage in any commercial activity without the consent of the town court judges and the local merchant community, and once they arrived in Buda, they were required to sell their goods there.<sup>47</sup> They were not allowed to have their own measurements or to sell their goods to other foreign merchants. It was strictly observed how much they bought or sold of different types of goods, including textiles and leather.<sup>48</sup> The statutes also prohibited domestic merchants from forming partnerships with their foreign counterparts.<sup>49</sup> In addition, Buda citizens were free everywhere in the Kingdom of Hungary from paying tolls, except the royal thirties.

The Melanesi brothers held dual citizenships; they still paid taxes in Florence, but at the same time they paid taxes in Buda, as local citizens.<sup>50</sup> Citizenship, for early Renaissance Florentine businessmen, was a key to success. Reinhold C. Mueller's studies on Venetian citizenship have revealed that during the studied period a significant number of Florentines received the right to trade under the Venetian flag. Dual citizenships might not have

e llà si morì.' ASF, Catasto 457. fol. 550v. (1433). This last source is not entirely clear; it may refer to Melanesi's in-law, Piero di Gherardino as well.

46 In 1427, the Melanesi rented their house in Florence from the Portinari. 'Tegniamo una chasa a pigione nel gonfalone del vaio, da primo e secondo via, terzo Bernardo Portinari, quarto Folcho Portinari. La quale chasa è di Giovanni di Gualtieri Portinari al presente, avemola noi a pigione da Giovanni d'Antonio Portinari [...]. ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 653v.

47 *Buda város jogkönyve*, pp. 348-349, articles 68, 69.

48 *Buda város jogkönyve*, pp. 352-354, articles 74-77.

49 *Buda város jogkönyve*, p. 360, article 387.

50 See Simone Melanesi's Florentine tax return, submitted in 1427: 'E più à d'incarico che pagha alla terra di Buda ogn'anno per la colta, cioè per la taglia come cittadino di Buda [...]'. ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 655v.



been rare; there are examples of a Florentine merchant family who paid taxes in both Florence and Venice. Among them, besides the Scolari nephews, the Gaddi and Zati families surely possessed citizenship and immovable properties in both places.<sup>51</sup> This, as we have seen in the Scolari nephews' case, facilitated their commercial enterprises remarkably.

The Melanesi brothers' attempt to set foot in Buda served a similar purpose. Their father, Piero di Filippo, was member of the Florentine Moneychangers' Guild, and around the turn of the century he formed a company with another businessman from Prato.<sup>52</sup> At that time, their uncle, Filippo di Filippo (1363-1433), with whom Piero worked in close cooperation, maintained his businesses as well as his immovable properties in Prato. By 1382, Filippo and Piero appeared together as business partners in Francesco di Marco Datini's correspondence.<sup>53</sup> Following their father's death, the Melanesi brothers remained closely linked financially to their uncle; they belonged to the same household and even paid taxes together in Florence.<sup>54</sup>

If their father and uncle had any business interests in Hungary like their other relatives, the sources do not tell us. The precise date of their arrival in the Kingdom of Hungary is also unknown. Simone, probably the eldest of the brothers, was documented for the first time in Buda in 1416.<sup>55</sup> Back then he was working as an agent of Antonio di Piero di Fronte and Pagolo di Berto Carnesecchi's firm in Buda, which suggests an early relation to the Scolari's business network. This helped him to find some stability in Buda where he married Lucia, the daughter of a local Buda citizen.<sup>56</sup> To obtain citizenship in Buda, foreigners would have needed either immovable properties in the city or guarantors who would have ensured the payment of their taxes.<sup>57</sup> Simone's marriage probably was designed as a way to facilitate his attempt to obtain citizenship. He rented his house, located in the *Via dei Latini*, from the heirs of a Venetian merchant, where he kept horses and servants like many well-off businessmen in Florence.<sup>58</sup>

51 See for example Taddeo di Zanobi Gaddi's tax return, presented in 1427: ASF, Catasto 79. fol. 61ov. Giuliano, Niccolò and Uberto d'Amerigo Zati's tax return, in 1433: Catasto 452. fols. 897r-901r.

52 Niccolao di Marco da Prato ASF, Arte del Cambio 12. fol. 61v. (1401?).

53 Piero's and Filippo's letter to Datini. AD, busta 183. Inserto 24. (42/11/1382).

54 Their joint tax return, submitted in 1427: ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 649r.

55 Nuti, 'Un mercante', pp. 1-5.

56 In 1427, Lucia was 22 years old. ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 655v. In 1433, she was mentioned as 34 years old. Catasto 467. fol. 512r.

57 *Buda város jogkönyve*, p. 346, article 66.

58 '[...] una casa a pigione posta in Buda nella Via de Latini, dalle rede di Daniello Cini da Vinegia, pagha l'anno fiorini 30. E più tiene 6 famigli e 8 chavagli [...] E più à d'incaricho che

In a similar way as their father and uncle, Simone and his brother Tommaso cooperated closely in business life both in Florence and in Hungary.<sup>59</sup> In April 1424, their uncle, Melanese di Ridolfo, who later died in Hungary, allowed them to use his movable and immovable properties for their commercial activity in the Kingdom.<sup>60</sup> Seemingly the entire family, including their two uncles, Milanese and Filippo, put faith in their success, helping them with financial means to the extent that they were risking even their properties in Prato.

Tommaso, by following the already described social pattern, might not initially have had the intention to set foot in Buda. In contrast to Simone, he chose a Florentine girl for wife, the daughter of Luca del maestro Niccolò Falcucci. The marriage took place in 1425, probably years after Simone's wedding, and ensured them a further business connection to the Scolari, since Luca Falcucci's brother Giovanni traded as Andrea Scolari's agent in Hungary.<sup>61</sup> By then, the Melanesi brothers set up their own business in Buda. The company, which was first mentioned in 1427, dealt with long-distance trade and offered safekeeping as well. Besides the Scolari, their business clients in Hungary included the Lamberteschi, Giovanni del maestro Niccolò Falcucci, and Antonio di Piero di Fronte, as well as several members of the court and Sigismund himself. Around the same date, the Melanesi brothers were operating a silk manufacturing firm with the Corsi brothers.<sup>62</sup> Their firm even handled Masolino's payment on Pippo Scolari's behalf.<sup>63</sup>

Giovanni, the third Melanesi brother, was a clergyman. In 1424, we find him on Sigismund and Pippo's side in Hungary, witnessing the meetings of the imperial court.<sup>64</sup> It is not clear if he had any previous appointments in Hungary, when on 22 April 1426, following Andrea Scolari's death, Martin V nominated him as Bishop of *Varadinum*.<sup>65</sup> His brother, Tommaso, who

pagha alla terra di Buda ogn'anno per la colta cioè la taglia come cittadino di Buda l'uno anno per altro fiorini 60.' ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 655v.

59 ASF, Catasto 381. fols. 89r-v, 91r.

60 Bettarini, *La comunità pratese*, p. 234.

61 *Priorista*, p. 177. In 1427, Smeralda, according to the Melanesi's tax document, was 17 years old. ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 653v. In 1433, he mentioned his wife in the tax return. ASF, Catasto 467. fol. 512r.

62 Tommaso became a member of the Por Santa Maria Guild. For the renewal of his membership see: ASF, Arte della Seta 7. fol. 188r. (1426).

63 Molho, 'The Brancaccia Chapel', pp. 93-94.

64 *Regesta Imperii*, XI. doc. 5894 (28/06/1424).

65 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri Lateranensi 264. fols. 217v-218v. Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 478. *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, I. doc. 88o.

had kept contacts in the Apostolic Chamber, carried the papal bull from Rome.<sup>66</sup> A letter written by Simone Corsi states that Giovanni was made bishop by virtue of Pippo Scolari.<sup>67</sup> However, Giovanni did not have the fortune to enjoy the incomes of the bishopric for long, and at the beginning of 1427 he had already been replaced by another clergyman.<sup>68</sup> In fact, in 1431, their cousin Baldassare di Luigi Melanesi claimed that Simone and Tommaso had lost everything in Hungary because of Giovanni's premature death.<sup>69</sup> In the meantime, Simone died too, leaving behind a child named Piero.<sup>70</sup> Following these events, Tommaso settled in Buda with his family and lived in the household of his sister-in-law. By 1433, there was no way back to Florence for the Melanesi, since the Florentine commune took all their properties.<sup>71</sup> Because of their severe business losses, their uncle Filippo di Filippo, as their guarantor, was even detained in prison in Prato.<sup>72</sup>

The family business collapsed in Florence and they had seemingly lost everything there. Tommaso found other means of income in Hungary. His constant travel between Italy and Hungary created a way to export silk textiles from their workshop as well as import copper to Italy.<sup>73</sup> The first news about him engaging in copper trade goes back to 1429, when we receive information about a load of copper, in the value of 1000 Venetian

66 On 27 April 1426, Giovanni paid the *servitium minutum* to the Apostolic Chamber by his brother, Tommaso. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Camera Apostolica, Obligationes et Solutiones 60. fol. 157r, Camera Apostolica, Obligationes Communes fol. 3. 121r; Camera Apostolica, Obligationes Communes fol. 4. fol. 158v. Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. docs. 504, 505.

67 'Tornò Tomaso Melanesi e portava la bolla del fratello cioè messer Giovanni che fatto veschovo di Varadino è andato in sino a Roma [...]'. ASF, CS serie I. 229. fols. 56r-v. (11/04/1426) Published in short: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 415.

68 Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Registri lateranensi 267. fols. 309r-311r. (11/07/1427) Published in short: *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, I. 880. doc. 956. II. docs. 473-78.

69 'Ànno perduto ongni loro sustanza in Ungheria per la morte del veschovo, loro fratello.' ASF, Catasto 380. fol. 269r.

70 In 1427, Piero was four years old. ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 655v. In 1433, he was ten years old. Catasto 467. fol. 512r.

71 In 1433, Andrea Lamberteschi wrote in his tax return that the Florentine commune took Simone's and Tommaso's properties. 'Tommaso e Simone Milanese sono in Ungheria assi il commune preso i beni loro.' ASF, Catasto 445. fol. 81v.

72 In 1433, Filippo in his tax return wrote that '[...]Per non perdere la cittadinanza non darei questa iscritta di catasto perché le cinque degli accordi ànno venduti ogni nostri beni e sustanze per in nostri catasti e nulla me rimasò e per lo resto mi tenghono in prigione qui in Prato.' ASF, Catasto 466. fol. 394r.

73 Tommaso's frequent travels to Venice are also testified by the travel accounts of the ambassador, Luca di messer Maso degli Albizzi, who, on his way to Buda, met him in the port of *Segna*. ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 5. fol. 27v.

ducats, which he was supposed to ship to Giambonino di Rinieri Scolari in Venice.<sup>74</sup> Tommaso was first mentioned as count of the copper chamber only in 1435, but at the time of the shipment he would have had access to copper deposits in Hungary.<sup>75</sup> Since by 1425 both Simone and Tommaso had become Sigismund's *familiares*, we have no reason to doubt that they had already made their way into royal service.<sup>76</sup> Tommaso served the King in official capacities, for instance, by carrying letters for him, and in 1431 he was dispatched to Florence as Sigismund's ambassador.<sup>77</sup> He died around 1436 as count of the Latheran Palace.<sup>78</sup>

### 3 The Falcucci Family

Among the witnesses of the document naming the executors of Manetto Scolari's testament were Giovanni del maestro Niccolò Falcucci, the Melanesi brothers' in-law. The Falcucci, like the Melanesi, were not of Florentine origins; rather, they came from Borgo San Lorenzo, a town of local interest, in the Florentine *contado*. It was maestro Niccolò di Francesco who decided to settle in Florence, and he built a notable career as one of the most respected doctors of his time.<sup>79</sup> In 1360, we find him enrolled in the Doctors' Guild, and in 1378 he was among the tax payers of the parish of Santa Reparata, gonfalon Vipera, quarter of Santa Maria Novella.<sup>80</sup> However, his descendants do not appear in the 1433 *Catasto*, which might suggest that the family had died out or remained in Hungary. Maestro Niccolò's reputation was based on a single voluminous medical treatise, entitled the *Sermones* or *Practica*, which gained such fame that it was mentioned even in contemporary chronicles.<sup>81</sup> Thanks to his medical practice, he was able

74 The correspondence between the Scolari brothers: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 367r, 354v, 348r, 361r, 355r.

75 Draskóczy, 'Kamarai jövedelem', pp. 152-153.

76 Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', p. 198.

77 In 1427, the King sent messages from him to the ambassador, Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 337r. See the Signoria's letter to Sigismund: '[...] Pro pace tractando atque habenda cum illustri domino duce Mediolano prout honorem Thomme Melanesi oratori vostro, nos factures executorus.' ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 33. fols. 61r. (6/03/1431).

78 *Regesta Imperii*, XI. 2. doc. 11303. (20/03/1436).

79 Park, *Doctors*, p. 32.

80 Park, *Doctors*, p. 182, n. 95. ASF, Prestanze 369. fol. 67r.

81 Park, *Doctors*, pp. 133-134. In his tax declaration, Giovanni reported a copy of his father's book: 'Un libro fece maestro Niccolò, mio padre [...]. ASF, Catasto 53. fol. 1096v.

to marry off at least three of his children into important merchant families, like the Corsini, for example.<sup>82</sup> Falcucci, as a doctor of medicine, might have studied in Bologna, which may have given him the opportunity to meet Andrea Scolari or members of his circle.<sup>83</sup> There were at least two doctors living in Andrea's court in *Varadinum* (Oradea, RO) who would have been familiar with Falcucci's work.<sup>84</sup>

### Giovanni del maestro Niccolò Falcucci (1379-a. 1433): The Agent of Precious Metals

Like his brothers, Giovanni also married into a Florentine merchant family of little importance, taking as his wife the daughter of Giorgio d'Andrea di Tiello.<sup>85</sup> Maybe his father's connections to Andrea Scolari's network helped him to establish contacts in Hungary. Doctors and merchants of precious metals (*speziali*) were traditionally enrolled in the same guild in Florence, which might explain in some way Giovanni's choice of a profession. He was already about forty years old, when, in 1419, we hear about him in Hungary for the first time. However, by then he might have been trading there for a while, mainly with silk and wool textiles. His business contacts included the Melanesi, the Corsi brothers, and Tommaso Borghini.<sup>86</sup> A letter, written by Giovanni himself, alluded to the volume of his commerce.<sup>87</sup> On one occasion,

82 Others married a Tolosini and a Raugi. Park, *Doctors*, p. 166.

83 Park, *Doctors*, p. 211.

84 The doctors, Geronimo da San Miniato and Alessandro di messer Antonio, were among the witnesses of Andrea's testament: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 290v.

85 See Giovanni's declaration, submitted in 1427, in which he mentions his father-in-law. At that time, his household included his wife, Nanna (aged 36), his daughter, Sandra (aged 14), Mona Lodovica, his niece (aged 30), and Bernardo di Matteo, probably his nephew (aged 23). ASF, Catasto 79. fol. 263r. Giorgio also refers to his son-in-law in his tax document. ASF, Catasto 297. fol. 110r.

86 'E più ò debitori e creditori in Ungheria e quali non vi posso dare perché non sono salde le ragioni [...]'. ASF, Catasto 53. fol. 1096v. His tax declaration submitted, in 1427: 'Debitori ed altre mercatantie [...] Panni mandati a Buda per le mani di Tommaso Melanesi furono otto panni de fecondi e de fini fi. 392 s. 11. Drappiera di seta dati a Melanesi, detti per mandare a Buda la somma di fi. 1020. Drappiera di seta dati a Giuliano Centinai, portati a Buda la somma di fi. 295 s. E più fe' dare Andrea Viviani portò a Buda drappi fi. 136 [...] Restami nelle mani di Melanesi di Buda cioè Simone e Tommaso a saldare conto di mie robe e di denari paghati [...]'. ASF, Catasto 53. fols. 1096r-v. 'Tommaso Borghini e chompagni per drappi auti fi. 236 s. 10 [...] Tommaso Corsi e chompagni per promesse fatte per me a più persone come disse Tommaso Melanesi per ragioni vecchie fi. 597 [...]'. Catasto 53. fol. 1097r.

87 '[...] Sentito in quest'anno di più mercatantie mandate così a Lamberteschi atenenti a questa ragione che ogni dì mi rimangono in debito di fiorini venti milia in fiorini xxv milia [...] e io sono

the Lamberteschi brothers, Pippo's *familiars*, purchased goods from him in the value of 25,000 Florentine florins and remained indebted to him for 20,000 florins. His following letter, written from *Hermannstadt*, Transylvania (Sibiu, RO), seems to clarify that these high numbers were connected to the precious metal trade in which Giovanni was heavily involved. In that letter, Giovanni informed Andrea Scolari about marketing a piece of 18-carat gold, which was sold for 522 Florentine florins, 66 denari. Besides writing about his business success, he also encouraged the Bishop to send him more silver and gold that he might possess.<sup>88</sup> Five years later, Giovanni was still staying in *Hermannstadt*, which indicates that he actually settled there.<sup>89</sup>

Transylvania, especially the region near *Hermannstadt*, was rich in salt and precious metals. Furthermore, the town, thanks to its German merchants, was well connected to other nearby and more distant markets as well. By the early fifteenth century, most precious metal deposits in Europe had already been exhausted. However, the Kingdom of Bohemia remained the most important source of silver, while the mines in the Kingdom of Hungary were the richest in gold and copper, though silver was found in considerable quantity there as well. Gold and silver processed in the Florentine mint and in the city's goldsmiths' workshops might have come from various locations, including the Iberian Peninsula, the Balkans, and north Africa. Until the 1405 occupation of Pisa, precious metals reached Florence mainly by Genoa and Venice. Paola Pinelli has shown that agents of Florentine businessmen, like Giuliano di Marco Marcovaldi from Prato, were responsible for shipments of silver from *Ragusa* to Florence and elsewhere.<sup>90</sup> Marcovaldi's correspondence, which covers the period between 1419 and 1434, seemingly testifies to the *Signoria's* claim that, 'Ragusan merchants (or those working in *Ragusa*) have filled up our commune with silver.'<sup>91</sup> King Sigismund's orders prevented the exportation of copper and precious metals abroad; yet, Florentines working in the mining areas and in the minting chambers still managed to 'smuggle' them into Italy.

As we have seen, Giovanni's in-law, Tommaso di Piero Melanesi, was employed at least as early as the 1430s in the administration of copper

qui in debito con questi cittadini con altri merchatanti di migliaia di fiorini e vogliono essere paghati non posso che non ò di che [...]'. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 328r-v. (17/05/1419).

88 [...] Mando a uno merchatante un pezzo d'oro di fiorini 522 denari 66 [...] anchora se avete altro oro o argento lo potete arditamente mandare qui [...]'. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 388r. (04/06/1419).

89 ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 277r. (09/08/1424).

90 Pinelli, 'L'argento di Ragusa'. Pinelli, 'Giuliano di Marco da Prato'.

91 Guarnieri, 'Intorno alle relazioni commerciali marittime'.

mines. He, along with Giovanni, obtained an interest also in the trade of gold, silver, and copper. In 1431, a certain Piero di Parigi *affinatore*, that is, a skilled worker whose job was to refine precious metals, claimed that he was employed by Tommaso Melanesi in Hungary.<sup>92</sup> This alludes to the fact that Florentines imported processed precious metals into Italy. Besides them, other Florentine citizens, like Rinaldo di Deigo Rinaldeschi da Prato (c. 1398-1442), were also working in the Melanesi's service in the copper mines.<sup>93</sup> The *affinatore* also mentioned that by January 1431, Giovanni di messer Niccolò's business had already failed, years before Tommaso Melanesi's first mention as count of the copper mines.<sup>94</sup>

One of the final destinations of precious metals extracted in Hungary was Venice. There, Giovanni Falcucci's most important business contact was the Zati firm; he sold precious stones, goldsmiths' articles, and jewels for them.<sup>95</sup> One of the Zati, named Antonio di Francesco, was appointed to count of the minting chamber in Sighisoara, a town nearby *Hermannstadt*.<sup>96</sup> Another of Giovanni's contacts in Venice was the Gaddi-Borghini firm, which traded in precious metals and stones. Because of the shortage of precious metals in Italy, the Sclaris' network, which was involved in its extraction, administration, and trade in Hungary, was given an enormous advantage. They were present in the mines and chambers and on the scene of international transport as well. In this enterprise, they seemingly cooperated with a group of businessmen that originated in nearby Arezzo, probably

92 'E ò ne avere da Tomaso di Piero Melanesi da Prato che abita nelle parti d'Ungheria fiori venti cinque, i quali danari gli ò serviti in Ungheria, credo e ttengho mi sarà fatica esser paghato. fiorini 25.' ASF, Catasto 375. fol. 532r. (31/01/1430) I wish to thank Lorenz Böninger for calling my attention to the source. Four years later, in 1427, the 38-year-old Piero did not refer to any activity in Hungary or that he was in any way connected to the Sclaris' network. ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 743r. Therefore, his employment likely took place sometimes between 1427 and 1431.

93 ASF, Catasto 47. fols. 522-523, Draskóczy, 'Kamarai jövedelem', p. 153. See his later tax declarations: Catasto 370. fol. 400r (1431); Catasto 467. fol. 363r. (1433). He returned from Hungary before 1442, and according to his tax document, he was suffering from some illness. ASF, Catasto 621. fol. 472r.

94 '[...]E ò ne avere da Giovanni del maestro Nicholo, ch'è falito e resto avere da lui fi. circha a quaranta. Non ò saldo il chonto. fiorini 40.' ASF, Catasto 375. fol. 532r.

95 See also the debtors' list of his declaration, submitted in 1427: 'E abbiamo nelle mani de Zati di Vinegia tre anelle e bocchette con rubinetti e altre pietre stimatemi 2 anni fa fi. mille. Ora perch' el tempo è peggiore come vedete, la ragiono fi. 800 d'oro, metete voi come vi pare, sono cose lunghe a finire [...]'. ASF, Catasto 53. fol. 1096v.

96 Draskóczy, 'Olaszok a középkori Erdélyben', p.126. Filippo Zati went with the king to England. Bárány, 'Zsigmond király 1416-os angliai kísérete', p. 8.



headed by a local nobleman, named Mariotto di Biagio Griffolini.<sup>97</sup> We also find among them a certain Agnolo, citizen of Buda, who developed an interest in the precious metal trade.<sup>98</sup> However, given the unavailability of sources that would allow us statistical calculations, the volume of precious metal trade between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Italian Peninsula cannot be estimated.

#### 4 The Corsi Family

Simone di Lapo Corsi was one of the guarantors of Masolino's payment, which the firm they kept with the Melanesi handled on Pippo Scolari's behalf. The Corsi were of *popolani* origins, and starting from 1367 its members were active participants in the meetings of the secret councils.<sup>99</sup> Over the course of the century, they were also elected as priors several times.<sup>100</sup> In 1378, they had perhaps three to five active households in Florence located in the two distinct gonfalons of Ruote, quarter of Santa Croce and Leon d'Oro, quarter of San Giovanni.<sup>101</sup> Back then, three members of the family were listed as retail cloth merchants.<sup>102</sup> In 1433, they had eight households, which counted 35 members.<sup>103</sup> Four households declared 15,271 florins as total assets, but the other four did not have any taxable assets at all.

97 Black, *Benedetto Accolti*, p. 7. He also figured as debtor in the balance of the Buda company of Antonio di Piero di Fronte and Pagolo di Berto Carnesecchi: 'Mariotto d'Arezzo e Biagio da Saghabria'. ASF, Catasto 381. fol. 90v.

98 A Florentine company in Buda, in exchange for a business debt, received silver from a Hungarian baron which was taken to Agnolo's house to be weighed. This suggests that he had a trustworthy beam balance used for precious metals: '[...] si pesò il detto argento in casa d'Agnolo d'Arezzo, cittadino di Buda [...]'. ASF, Mercanzia 7120. fol. 254v. See Bernardo di Sandro Talani's declaration, submitted in 1433: '[...] Agnolo d'Arezzo dimora in Buda per retratto di suo rame [...]'. ASF, Catasto 450. fol. 254v.

99 For further information about the family see: Preyer, *Il Palazzo Corsi-Horne*, pp. 33-35.

100 Bardo Corsi, silk manufacturer, and Francesco di Lapo, wool manufacturer, were elected several times as priors. Brucker, *Florentine Politics and Society*, p. 68.

101 Giovanni di Lapo. ASF, Prestanze 367. fol. 52r; Lapo di Francesco. Prestanze 367. fol. 53r; Domenico di Filippo. Prestanze 369. fol. 15v; Also the heirs of Simone di Lapo were listed separately. Prestanze 367. fol. 53v. The other two households might not belong to the same family. Francesco Prestanze 369. fol. 18v; Giusto. Prestanze 369. fol. 22r.

102 Domenico and Giovanni di Filippo, who lived in the same household, and Francesco. ASF, Prestanze 369. fols. 15v, 18v.

103 Corso di Lapo. ASF, Catasto 491bis. fol. 133v; Simone di Lapo. Catasto 491bis. fol. 472r; Bartolo di Domenico. Catasto 492. fol. 85v; Matteo di Domenico. Catasto 492. fol. 346v; Niccolò di Francesco. Catasto 492. fol. 378r; Piero di Domenico. Catasto 492. fol. 415r; Benedetto di Niccolò. Catasto 497. fol. 161v; Antonio di ser Bartolo. Catasto 496. fol. 38v.



The Corsi might be thought of as typical of those new men who made their name and fortune thanks to their participation in the early development of the domestic silk industry. By 1350, one member of the family was registered among the members of the Por Santa Maria Guild as a silk manufacturer.<sup>104</sup> Another, Domenico di Francesco, from 1380 until his death in 1423-1424, kept a silk workshop in Florence, which was consequently taken over by his three sons. In the 1390s, he also appeared in Francesco di Marco Datini's account books as a silk manufacturer.<sup>105</sup> In 1410, the two brothers, Domenico and Lapo di Francesco had two separate silk manufacturing companies.<sup>106</sup> If they were connected to the Scolari earlier we do not know; they seemingly did not share marriage or neighbourhood ties with them.

### Simone (1389/1390-p. 1434) and Tommaso di Lapo Corsi (1383/1384-p. 1434): The Third Generation of Silk Manufacturers

The early development of the Florentine silk industry, similar to the Venetian case, was characterized by the activity of a group of immigrant Lucchese manufacturers who, starting from 1314, brought their *know-how* into the city.<sup>107</sup> By 1378, there were 44 silk manufacturers (*setaiuoli*) and retail cloth merchants (*ritagliatori*) registered in the city census, which might indicate the development of the sector.<sup>108</sup>

However, among the actors of the industry, very few families had also acquired a family name until that point, so it is not easy to tell if some or any of these manufacturers represented a second generation in the silk business. Florence Edler de Roover, in her analysis of the beginnings of silk production, mentioned the Corsi, Banchi, Antinori, Del Benino, and Parenti families among those few that, by the end of the studied period, had already obtained generational experience in the sector.<sup>109</sup>

104 De Roover, *L'arte della seta*, pp. 14-15.

105 For the letters see as examples: AD, busta 1150. inserto 28. codice 10655. (29/01/1396); busta 983. inserto 2. codice 421504. (26/09/1396); busta 487. inserto 35. Codice 302524 (26/12/1396).

106 AFL, 3339. fols. 18r, 16r. (*libro di debitori e creditori* of Lazzaro di Giovanni di Feo Bracci's Florentine firm).

107 Franceschi, 'I forestieri e l'industria della seta'.

108 ASF, Estimo 268. fols. 3r, 34v, 35v, 77r, 82r, 84v, 87r-v, 88r; Prestanze 367. fol. 5r; Prestanze 368. fols. 11r, 19r, 24v, 46v, 47r-v, 70v, 73v, 74r, 77r; Prestanze 369. fols. 2r, 3v, 4r, 8r-v, 17r-v, 18v, 19r, 22v, 24r, 34v, 38r-v, 40v, 59v, 68v, 73r, 83r, 86r, 128v.

109 She claimed that among those enrolled in the Por Santa Maria Guild between 1328 and 1400, 40% were related to another member of the guild by family ties, even though many of them worked as retail cloth merchants and had nothing to do with silk manufacturing. Edler de Roover, *L'Arte della Seta*, pp.13-23.

In fact, Lapo di Francesco Corsi's two sons belonged to the third generation in the industry. Simone, the youngest among the brothers, enrolled in the Por Santa Maria Guild in 1389.<sup>110</sup> He and his brother Tommaso set up a silk firm in 1411, which might have been identical to the one reported on their 1427 tax return.<sup>111</sup> Their silk workshop back then was located in the Via Porta Santa Maria. The place itself, as in many cases, was a rental; only the usufruct was of the company.<sup>112</sup> The shareholders included Tommaso Corsi with 400 florins of investment, Simone Corsi with 1500 florins, Tommaso Melanesi with 2326 florins, Tommaso Davizi with 1815 florins, and Lodovico di ser Viviano with 500 florins of investments.<sup>113</sup> The major shareholders were, therefore, the Melanesi and Davizi, and the manufacturing work seemingly remained the Corsi brothers' competency. Their second firm, declared in 1433 and kept with Zanobi Lottieri and Niccolò Cambini, might have had a completely different profile.<sup>114</sup>

The business clients of the silk firm included Simone di messer Andrea da Montebuoni and Pippo Scolari.<sup>115</sup> For instance, the latter ordered silk textiles for Andrea's and Matteo's funerals.<sup>116</sup> The firm might have been among the most prestigious in Florence, which explains the presence of foreign workers in their workshop. In 1427, a certain Niccolò di Giovanni, silk weaver of Hungarian origins, was mentioned as working for the Corsi brothers.<sup>117</sup> In the very same year, the ambassadors heading to Hungary

110 ASF, Arte di Por Santa Maria 28. fol. 1v.

111 Edler de Roover, *L'arte della seta*, p.15. In 1420, the firm included as partners: the two Corsi brothers and Lodovico di Piero Cavalcanti. AFL, 3340. fol. 146v.

112 The workshop itself was Betto di Giovanni Manzuoli's. See Simone's tax declaration, submitted in 1427: 'Una meza entrata della bottega dove facciamo l'arte della seta in Porta Santa Maria, la quale bottega è di Betto di Giovanni Manzuoli, che da primo via, secondo, terzo rede di Pagholo di Tadeo Tomaso, quarto Benvenuto d'Ugholino Michi. La quale meza entrata la metto nella nostra chompagnia per parte del mio chopo per stima di fiorini 250, benché in verità a vendita non varebe tanto. Trovomi in sulla bottega tra merchatantie e denari chorenti fiorini 1050, i quali sono per chonpimento del mio chorpo dovevo mettere per insino alla soma di fiorini 1500 [...]'. ASF, Catasto 29. fol. 631r.

113 'Tommaso Corsi proprio tra capitale e ghuadagno fiorini 400 s. 28 d. 3. Tommaso Melanesi proprio tra capitale e ghuadagno fiorini 2326 s. 18 d. 10. Tommaso Davizi proprio tra capitale e ghuadagno fiorini 1815 s. 8. d. 11. Simone Corsi proprio tra capitale e ghuadagno fiorini 851 s. 28 d.3. Lodovicho di ser Viviano questi stanno per corpo di Simone Corsi e sono dati a catasto in nome di detto Simone, fiorini 500.' ASF, Catasto 29. fol. 654r.

114 ASF, Catasto 447. fol. 584r, The declaration of Michele di Jacopo Lottieri: Catasto 484. fols. 495v- 496r.

115 ASF, Catasto 29. fols. 653r-v.

116 Simone Corsi's letter to Lodovico di ser Viviano. ASF, CS serie I. 229. fol. 55r. (04/07/1426).

117 '[...] Sustanze e incarichi di me, Nicholò di Giovanni d'Ungheria, tessitore di drappi di seta [...] Devo avere da Tommaso di Lapo Chorsi e chompagni per lavorio tesuto è venduto loro

received the task of recommending several Florentines to the King's favour, among them Tommaso Corsi.<sup>118</sup> If the two pieces of information are somehow related to each other, it is not easy to tell. However, since the silk weaver surely had no possibility of learning weaving in Hungary, we must presume that he was employed in the Corsi's workshop to learn his profession. He was 24 years old, and the only entry of income in his declaration shows that he was weaving heavy silk velvet exclusively for the Corsis and that he also employed an apprentice. Though there is no further supporting evidence on the Corsis' connections to the court, Sigismund frequently purchased Florentine silk textiles and the lack of payments of considerable size to Florentine merchants might have inspired the King to consider installing experts of silk manufacturing in his court. A few liturgical robes, datable to the first decades of the fifteenth century and made of Italian silk textiles, have survived in the northern part of the Kingdom of Hungary, like Košice, Zipser Kapitel (Spišská Kapitula), and Bartfeld (Bardejov, SK).<sup>119</sup> These towns served as local religious or market centres; therefore, local clergymen might have obtained silk textiles either by purchasing them from Florentine tradesmen or, more plausibly, via donations by members of the court. The workshop of the Corsi brothers, already famous for their generational experience in silk manufacturing, might have represented the best original firm to set up a silk weaving workshop in the proximity of the royal court.

The Corsi brothers occasionally traveled to Hungary, but they always kept their family home in Florence where they were involved in politics on the Albizzis' side. Simone appears only once as a speaker in the registers of the *Consulte e pratiche*. But Tommaso, starting from 1420, appears ten times in the corresponding volumes.<sup>120</sup> Because of their filo-Albizzi sentiments, the two Corsi were sent to exile after Cosimo de' Medici's return to the city.

## 5 The Lamberteschi Family

Giovanni di Andrea Lamberteschi emerged as one of the witnesses at Pippo's Buda house, when he named the executors of Matteo's testament. Earlier,

bottegha chome dichono aparire per loro libri. Uno telaio da tesere zetani velutati chon ogni sua apartenenza [...]. ASF, Catasto 31. fol. 853r. Arany, 'A cipész, a céhszolga és a szövőmester'.

118 ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie 7. fol. 80v.

119 Wetter and Sipos, 'Kasel aus Kaschau', pp. 630-632. Ibid., 'Kasel aus Zipser Kapitel', pp. 632-633. Ibid., 'Kasel aus Bartfeld', pp. 633-634.

120 Simone: ASF, CP 47. fol. 60r. (1427) Tommaso: CP vols. 44, 46, 49, 50. (1420-1433)

one of his brothers, Piero, testified with his presence at the writing of Andrea Scolari's last will. Since 1398, Andrea Lamberteschi's family were also in-laws of the Del Bene family, when Filippo di Giovanni del Bene married Andrea's daughter, Lena.

Despite the fact that the Lamberteschi was not a new family in Florence, in 1378 we find only one household registered under Bernardo's name, in the gonfalon of Carro, quarter of Santa Croce.<sup>121</sup> In 1433, they had two households, including twenty-three family members.<sup>122</sup> Compared to the other households studied in the present volume, the total assets of the Lamberteschi were very high; they declared 41,349 Florentine florins and the two households paid 160 florins, 21 soldi, and 16 denari of tax. The heads of the two households, Bernardo di Lamberto and Andrea di Tommaso, were probably second cousins who, by the turn of the fifteenth century, had developed into the most significant actors in the Florentine wool industry.

### **Giovanni (b.1382/83), Piero, Niccolò (b. c. 1390), and Vieri d'Andrea Lamberteschi (b. 1389/1390): The Anti-Ottoman Military Captains**

Andrea Lamberteschi had five sons. Among them, Giovanni, Niccolò, Piero, and Vieri, settled in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>123</sup> His fifth son, Tommaso, remained in the paternal house, helping his father with the wool business.<sup>124</sup> Andrea imported raw wool from Flanders and, after processing it in the workshop on the ground floor of his Florentine palace, exported finished cloth to various destinations.<sup>125</sup> Until 1396, the workshop was registered under Leonardo and Arnolfo Arnoldi's names, but most likely Andrea was its senior partner. Andrea's company also kept a permanent agent in Venice, in the person of Giovanni di Cenni Ugolini, who might also have been a minor shareholder.<sup>126</sup> Andrea shared business interests with a number of

121 ASF, Prestanze 367. fol. 3v.

122 Andrea di Tommaso. ASF, Catasto 491. fol. 27v; Bernardo di Lamberto. Catasto 491. fol. 42r. There is another household registered under the name of Lamberteschi, that of ser Giocco di ser Goccio di ser Manfredi, but in my opinion, they were unrelated to the previously mentioned two households. Catasto 496. fol. 223v.

123 See Andrea's declaration, submitted in 1427: 'In Ungheria sono ii miei figliuoli, cioè Johanni e Nicolò. Giovanni d'anni xLv costui à moglie que non à figliuoli. Nicolò d'anni xxxvii, non à moglie.' ASF, Catasto 27. fol. 92v.

124 He was enrolled in the Wool Guild. ASF, Arte della Lana 25. fol. 46v. (1408).

125 ASF, Arte della Lana 325. fol. 82r. He sent also wool textiles to Alessandria on the first Florentine galley. ASF, Catasto 27. fol. 92r.

126 For the company between the Lamberteschi e Giovanni Ugolini see for example: ASF, Mercanzia 4366. fol. 273v. (25/10/1426), Mercanzia 4366. fol. 337r. (15/11/1426), Mercanzia 7117.

merchants belonging to the Scolari's network, like Jacopo di Bartolomeo da Calenzano, Antonio d Bonaccorso Strozzi's in-law, Andrea Scolari, and Simone and Tommaso Melanesi.<sup>127</sup> Also his cousin Bernardo had two wool workshops-warehouses: one in Pisa and another in Florence.<sup>128</sup> He imported raw wool on the first Florentine galley directly from Flanders, employing his son as agent.<sup>129</sup> Both Bernardo and Andrea regularly sent wool textiles to the Kingdom of Hungary. Bernardo used the services of the Melanesi firm in the distribution of his goods, but Andrea sold his high-quality wool cloth via one of his sons, Piero. After a certain point, Giovanni, Niccolò, and Piero seemingly became independent from their father by initiating their own business in Hungary in cooperation with Giovanni and Currado di Piero Cardini, the latter of whom served as the provost of *Varadinum*.<sup>130</sup> There are no references in the sources to the way the Lamberteschi brothers entered into royal service. By 1422, Piero was already connected to the court, as he offered to mediate between Sigismund and the humanist Poggio Bracciolini.<sup>131</sup> By the first years of the 1420s, the brothers were already serving the King in a military capacity.

The use of companies of adventure and mercenary captains, called *condottieri*, was a widespread phenomenon in the battlefields of north and central Italy. William Caferro has pointed out that these 'bands emphasized their corporate nature by referring to themselves [...] as societies, the same term used by contemporary Italian businesses.'<sup>132</sup> According to him, the terminology and the structure of the companies stressed their strong entrepreneurial character, and the captains of such companies were similar to owners and shop managers of industrial firms, seeking profits in the highly speculative business of war. Taking into account Caferro's argument, it is not surprising

fol. 132r. ASV, Giudici di petizion, Sentenze a giustizia 21. fol. 104v (20/08/1411).

127 See Andrea's declaration, submitted in 1431: ASF, Catasto 348. fol. 35r.

128 See Bernardo's declaration, in 1427: ASF, Catasto 27. fols. 202v- 203r.

129 'Mandai Lamberto, mio figliuolo in sule ghalee andarono in Fiandra [...]'. ASF, Catasto 27. fol. 203v.

130 In 1423, the two of them appear together several times in the account book of the silk manufacturers, Bartolomeo and Giulio di Vieri Guidi and Francesco di Niccolò di Buto. AOI, Estranei 193. fols. 29r, 30r, 31r. In 1422, Piero Lamberteschi witnessed a donation of Andrea Scolari to Currado Cardini. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 334r. In 1414, Giovanni enrolled in the Florentine Wool Guild. ASF, Arte della Lana 25. fol. 24r. Tommaso and Giovanni also became members of the Merchants' Guild. Tommaso: ASF, Calimala 6. fol. 9v. (1407); Giovanni: Calimala 6. fol. 12v. (1409).

131 John XXIII took with him to Constance several humanists, among them Poggio Bracciolini and Leonardo Bruni, which offered them the opportunity to meet King Sigismund. Davies, 'Poggio Bracciolini as Rhetorician and Historian', p. 167.

132 Caferro, *John Hawkwood*, p. 67.

that the sons of one of the most important wool entrepreneurs at the time became military captains in Sigismund of Luxembourg's service.

We do not know if the Lamberteschi ever received military training; it is very plausible that they learned the art of war on Pippo Scolari's side. The baron himself served the King as a military captain against the Hussites, the Venetians, as well as against the Ottomans. Other Florentines – like the Archbishop Da Montebuoni, the Bishops of *Varadinum*, Andrea Scolari, and Giovanni Melanesi – were obliged as members of the royal *aula*, to take part in Sigismund's anti-Ottoman campaigns. In fact, in 1427, the ambassador Piero Guicciardini mentions that the Archbishop Da Montebuoni was with Sigismund and the other barons in his camp, which was set up at the borders of the Kingdom while waiting for the Ottomans' attack. The sources are very scarce regarding these early conflicts with the Ottomans near Hungary. However, Pál Engel maintained that in the support of voivode Davan II, there were three military campaigns to Wallachia, in the years 1423, 1425, and 1426, all of which were headed by Pippo Scolari as captain-in-chief of the royal troops.<sup>133</sup>

Pippo, who might have acquired his military skills thanks to his distant uncles, relied on the assistance of his fellow Florentines on the battlefield. In 1424, we find Niccolò and Vieri Lamberteschi on his side at the Danube while he was organizing against the Ottomans.<sup>134</sup> In 1426, their third brother, Piero, might have lost his life while fighting against the Ottomans with Pippo.<sup>135</sup> Following the Spano's death, Niccolò remained in royal service as a military captain. Piero Guicciardini, who was on his way to Sigismund, reported on 30 August 1427, that the King, accompanied by his barons, was staying in his camp in Barcs at the borders of Serbia. His entourage included several Florentines; among them were the Archbishop Da Montebuoni, Filippo di Giovanni del Bene, Leonardi di Nofri Bardi, Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari, and Simone Melanesi. The King informed them of the outcome of his battle on the Danube against the Ottomans, in which he lost an island located in the lower Danube area, 5000 men, among them 2000 *Latini*, and 25 armed *fuste*, which is a narrow, light type of galley. His captain (*colonello*) and commissary (*comesser*) in the battle were Niccolò Lamberteschi and

133 Engel, 'Török veszély', p. 281. Engel, 'Ozorai Pipo', pp. 53–88. About the conflicts in 1428 see: Veszprémy, 'King Sigismund of Luxembourg at Golubac'.

134 'Un valaccho venuto da Sangnia dire questa mattina chome messer lo Spano à tratto di là Viero e Niccolò Lamberteschi.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 277r. (9/8/1424).

135 See Bernardo Lamberteschi's tax return, submitted in 1427: 'Piero e Nicholò Lamberteschi. Mori Piero, rimane Nicholo atende i facti d'arme in servizio dello imperadore contro a turchi.' ASF, Catasto 27. fols. 204r.

Gasparre de Colle, respectively.<sup>136</sup> Because of the severe losses, Sigismund decided to punish Gasparre, while he left Niccolò at the head of his troops. However, days later, in September, Niccolò was also imprisoned by the King's order, and he was released only following Guicciardini's and the Venetian ambassadors' audiences. The King declared him innocent and Guasparre de Colle guilty. Guasparre was captured and 20,000 florins were sequestered from him. But after a short period of freedom, probably in late October, the King newly ordered both Niccolò and Giovanni Lamberteschi's capture and confiscated everything from them.

The ambassador Guicciardini once again begged Sigismund for the Lamberteschi's release, but the King's answer was that he would prefer shooting them one by one.<sup>137</sup> Following Guicciardini's request, Sigismund's men even captured Niccolò's servant, Gianozzo Cavalcanti.<sup>138</sup> Niccolò and Giovanni's imprisonment lasted far longer this time, since we find them in prison in the summer of 1428 when the Florentine ambassador was still fighting for their freedom. In fact, a royal hearing took place at the square of the Buda castle, in front of some barons as well as the Florentine, Milanese, and Venetian ambassadors. Niccolò, with compelling testimony, accused Guasparre de Colle of the disaster of Sigismund's fleet. There is no information at our disposal on who should have been held responsible for the events. In any case, the King did not accept Niccolò's explanation. In February 1429, the

136 'L'omperadore si trovava ai confini di Rascia in sul Danubio a una villa che si chiama Barccia sotto Buda otto giornate e da Saghabria a Buda sei giornate e da Sagabria a Barccia giornate cinque [...] meser l'arcivescovo Da Montebuoni, per comandamento del re, andava a campo chome gli altri baroni [...] e giugnemo a dì 14 di questo una villa in sul Danubio alla fore della Sava che si chiama Zemelin (Zemun, RS) presso dove il re à due miglia latini [...] e se non fosse disavventura che avvenne alla sua armata di Danubio della quale era chapitano Nicholò Lanberteschi le cose passavano con gran danno de turchi [...] e si trovato poi per tradimento d'un valacho e chativi provvedimenti d'un chomesser de re che aveva nome Guasparre da Colle. Sono seguiti quegli inconvenienti e N. Lanberteschi rimane colonore suo, ringrazie del re e quegli altri siano puniti, perdendosi non dimeno 25 fuste armate di quelle s'usano in Danubio [...]'. Piero Guicciardini's letter to the Dieci di Balìa. ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fols. 5r-6r. (1427) I thank Neven Isailović for the identification of Zemun.

137 '[...] Ier mattina solicitando disse volea principiare e a uno a uno sparargli di ragione, essendo sulla piazza del chastello, fece tirare fuori N. Lanberteschi e mandò l'ambasciadore viniziano que del ducha di Milano, messer Brunoro della Scala e me e alcuni baroni a udire quello didea Nicholò. Parveci volesse gravare Guasparre da Colle e così segnò che Nicholò non partendosi dal vero...e così parve a tutti d'acetare le sue scuse.' ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fol. 19v. (14/07/1428).

138 '[...] Per sue chagioni perduto l'Isola di Sagnia e xxv ghalea con vegogna e danno suo e v milla huomini [...]'. See another of Guicciardin's letters: ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fol. 9r.



Florentine chancellery delivered an official letter to the royal court, asking Sigismund for the liberation of the Lamberteschi brothers.<sup>139</sup> In April, a similar letter arrived at the royal court; both brothers remained imprisoned without any significant impact.<sup>140</sup> In 1433, Andrea Lamberteschi claimed in his tax return that his sons were captured and robbed in Hungary by the King, and that they had already spent approximately seven years in prison.<sup>141</sup> Even before that, the Lamberteschi brothers were considered unreliable businessmen by Giovanni Falcucci, so the charges against them might have had some foundation. However, their imprisonment was definitely related to the King's changed attitude toward members of the Florentine trading community, which characterized the period following the Spano's death.

## 6 The Cardini Family

Among the witnesses of Pippo Scolari's donation to the Scolari nephews was also Currado di Piero Cardini, back then provost of *Varadinum*. The Cardini would have been a completely new family in fourteenth century Florence, since there are no references to them among the Florentine office holders.<sup>142</sup> In 1378, they had only Giovanni's (named Freschetta) household registered in the *Estimo*, who lived in the gonfalon of Ferza, quarter of Santo Spirito.<sup>143</sup> By 1433, Giovanni's sons, Antonio and Piero, formed two separate households, including ten family members, except Currado, who does not appear at all in the tax documents.<sup>144</sup> The Cardini had 1229 florins of total assets, and none of them paid *catasto*, which shows their modest economic circumstances. They might not have had any earlier connection in Hungary, and their name did not appear among the Scolari relatives either.

139 'Supplicamus igitur supplicamus vestre ut de singulari dono gratie ac desolira liberalitate et clementia vostra Iohannes et Nicolaum de Lamberteschis liberare at as larger nobis dignetur.' ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 32. fols.178v-179r.

140 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 32. fol. 65r.

141 'In Ungheria rubato dal re e da certi altri singnori grande soma di denari a Giovanni e Nicolò, suoi figliuoli in prigione già sono più anni [...] Giovanni, figliuolo d'Andrea, anni 50, Nicholò, figliuolo d'Andrea, annni 43; costoro sono in prigione in Ungheria; suti, presi e rubati da questo re e convenii di qui proeedere alia loro vita già è circha anni vii.' ASF, Catasto 445. fols. 82r-v.

142 *Online Tratte of Office Holders*.

143 ASF, Estimo 268. fol. 55r.

144 Piero. ASF, Catasto 489. fol. 441r. Antonio. Catasto 498. fol. 49r. Currado's father was Piero di Currado Cardini. See Filippo di Rinieri Scolari's tax correction, submitted in 1431. Catasto 296. fol. 160r.



### Currado di Piero Cardini (d. p.1439): The Trading Churchman

Currado appears for the first time in Hungarian sources in 1418. Like other Florentine clergymen in Hungary – including Giovanni da Montebuoni, Carniano Scolari, Andrea Scolari, and Giovanni Melanesi – Currado, too, came from a merchant family. His father Piero died before the first general census and only a cousin, named Piero di Giovanni Cardini (c. 1377-p. 1433) remained in Florence; he was active as a wool manufacturer between 1406 and 1428.<sup>145</sup> Currado's brother Giovanni worked as a merchant and developed business interests in Hungary and in Naples as well.<sup>146</sup>

Sources do not reveal anything about Currado's career as a churchman or his life prior to his first mention in 1418, as legate and collector of the tithe on Pope Martin V's behalf.<sup>147</sup> As Tamás Fedeles has noted, he is the latest known example of a collector operating in Hungarian territory.<sup>148</sup> Currado's activity is documented by several entries in the corresponding account book of the Apostolic Chamber, dated to 1421, in which he transferred the ecclesiastical revenues coming from different religious places in Hungary to the depositary, Bartolomeo de'Bardi.<sup>149</sup> In the same year, he was also referred to as lector of the chapter of *Varadinum* (Oradea, RO).<sup>150</sup> Currado might have been brought to Hungary by Andrea Scolari himself, who built a small court composed mainly of Florentines and Bolognese in his episcopal palace. In 1421, Currado was appointed the provost of *Varadinum*.<sup>151</sup> However, a year later, in the presence of Piero Lamberteschi as witness, he agreed to transfer the incomes of his provost to the Bishop.<sup>152</sup>

145 ASF, Arte della Lana, 413. fol. 64v. (1406). He sentenced another Florentine at the consuls of the Wool Guild. ASF, Arte della Lana 329. fol. 12v. (1428).

146 In 1429, the Florentine Merchant Court addressed a letter to the Florentine consul in Naples in the case of Giovanni. ASF, Mercanzia 11313. (19/05/1429).

147 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, VI. doc. 1797.

148 He made his vow as collector on 14 August 1419. Fedeles, 'Petrus Stephani collector', p. 37.

149 'Die xxiiia mensis prefatiis dominus Antonius thesaurarius habuit recipiente dicto Bartholomeo de Bardis depositario nomine quo supra per manus domini Conradi canonici et lectoris ecclesie Varadiensis [...]'. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Camera Apostolica, Introitus et exitus 379. fols. 60r, 62v.

150 In 1418, he was the lector of the chapter in *Varadinum*, papal legate and collector of the tithe in Hungary. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, VI. docs. 2172, 2218. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Obligationes et solutiones 58. fol. 173v. (26/11/1420).

151 In 1421, he was already provost. *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, I. doc. 429. See also the tax declaration of Currado's family, submitted in 1427: 'Messer Churrado è proposto di Varadino [...]'. ASF, Catasto 36. fol. 239r.

152 'Io Churado di Piero Cardini, preposto di Varadino fo manifesto per questa chome di ciò che monsignor messer Andrea, veschovo di Varadino avesse aministrato de frutti della prepositura

The earliest information about his business activity is dated to 1423, when he and Andrea settled their balance with each other, which may in fact mark the dissolution of their business partnership.<sup>153</sup> Their areas of operation included Hungary, Florence, and Rome, and the main profile of the firm was textile trade. In addition, Currado's continuous appearance as a papal collector suggests that their firm should have been involved in the international transfer of money as well.<sup>154</sup>

Despite their good connections to the Scholaris' network, the two Cardini seemingly did not successfully run their businesses in Hungary. In 1427, their stepmother, who prepared the tax return on their behalf, declared only a few parcels of land and some outstanding debt in Giovanni's name.<sup>155</sup> In the same year, the two were among those Florentines who were captured and detained in the King's prison.<sup>156</sup> The charges against them are unknown. In 1429, the *Signoria* recommended Currado to the King's favor, probably in the hope of his release.<sup>157</sup> Two years later, Giovanni was still detained on the King's order.<sup>158</sup> Following this news, in 1433, Currado petitioned the Pope to allow him to make his testament, which would indicate that his freedom had actually been restored.<sup>159</sup> In fact, six years later, we find him again in the capacity of provost of *Varadinum*, which he probably retained until his death.<sup>160</sup>

Since the fourteenth century, Florentines in the papal court were engaged in banking activity as well as providing churchmen with commercial goods. Rome, at the end of the Great Schism, with the return of Pope Martin V

di Varadino, in detto mi chiamo qontento.' ASF, Corp. Re. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 334r. (02/06/1422).  
 153 'Già manifesto a ciaschuna persona che legierà o vidirà a legiere la presente scritta chome messer Andrea Scholari veschovo di Varadino d'una parte e messer Churado Chardini preposto di Varadino dall'altra parte ambedue d'achordo ànno fatto ragione e salldo isieme di più diverse chose ànno avuto a ffare insieme chosi di danari chontanti chome di panni o d'altro o di promessi o pagamenti o chomessioni o lettere di chambio fatti l'uono all'altro o l'altro al uno [...] ne' reame d'Ungheria chome fuori de' reame in Italia o altrove, a Firenze, Roma o qualunque altro luogho [...]' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 332r.

154 *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, II. doc. 657.

155 See the declaration of Nanna, widow of Piero di Currado Cardini and his step-sons. ASF, Catasto 37. fol. 997r. The brothers' joint declaration, submitted in 1427: 'Giovanni non à nulla se non debito chon diverse persone [...]'. ASF, Catasto 36. fol. 239r.

156 See the ambassador Piero Guicciardini's letter to the Signoria: ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balìa, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 7. fol. 19v. (14/07/1428).

157 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 32. fol. 65r. (07/04/1429).

158 Filippo di Rinieri Scolari wrote in his tax document 'Giovanni di Piero Cardini, il quale è preso in Ungaria [...]'. ASF, Catasto 385. fol. 800r.

159 *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, II. doc. 298.

160 *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, II. doc. 657.

(1417-1431) to the city, attracted a considerable number of Florentine businessmen, studied mainly by Arnold Esch. Some of them, like Vieri Guadagni, were heavily involved in banking activity at the Apostolic Chamber.<sup>161</sup> In Florence, St. Bernardino (1380-1444), from the Observant Franciscan order, had heavy influence on the ways Florentines related to trade and usury.<sup>162</sup> He preached in 1417 and in 1424-1425 in Fiesole and Florence, and, later in his life, he dedicated an entire work to the subject. Bernardino took a stand in defending the work of businessmen and justified the social need for manufacturing and distributing commercial goods.<sup>163</sup> However, the pattern observed in the case of Florentine-born Hungarian churchmen like Andrea Scolari and Currado Cardini, might not have been a widespread practice in the period. Besides the Hungarian examples, no other cases have come to light so far which would indicate that clerics of Florentine origins took part in local finance or in long-distance trade.

## 7 The Capponi Family

Filippo di Simone Capponi was also among the guarantors of Masolino's payment. As early as 1210, the Capponi, as an extended and ancient lineage, were listed as residents of the Oltrarno, and several of them were enrolled in one of the five major guilds of Florence.<sup>164</sup> In 1378, the lineage had ten households, located mainly in the gonfalon of Nicchio, quarter of Santo Spirito.<sup>165</sup> In 1433, the number of households increased to fourteen, comprising 73 family members who lived primarily in the same gonfalon.<sup>166</sup> They

161 In 1422, the Cambini firm kept open branches in Florence and in Rome as well. Tognetti, *Il banco Cambini*, p. 34. For later examples, see: Weissen, 'Das deutsche Handesnetzwerk der Florentiner Banken'; Esch, 'Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schiasma.'

162 Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 584-587.

163 De Roover, 'San Bernardino of Siena and Sant'Antonio of Florence'. On Bernardino as preacher see: Mormando, *The Preacher's Demons*.

164 Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth*, p. 187. The branch of Gino di Neri Capponi, studied by Goldthwaite, was one of the most important in Florentine business and politics.

165 Agostino di Neri. ASF, Estimo 268. fol. 76r; Capponcerio di Michozo. Estimo 268. fol. 76r; Sandro di Berto. Estimo 268. fol. 76r; Filippo di Tecco. Estimo 268. fol. 76r; Manetto di Mico. Estimo 268. fol. 76r; Andrea di Cappone. Estimo 268. fol. 76v; Giovanni d'Agnolo. Estimo 268. fol. 76v; Bartolomeo di Cappone. Estimo 268. fol. 82r; Bonaccorso di Cappone. Estimo 268. fol. 82r; Nanni di Cappone? Prestanze 368. fol. 55v.

166 Agostino di Gino. ASF, Catasto 488. No folio number; Bastiano di Bastiano. Catasto 488. fol. 78v; Giovanni di messer Andrea. Catasto 488. fol. 153r; Giovanni di Sandro. Catasto 488. fol. 159r; Giovanni di Mico. Catasto 488. fols. 161v, 169v; Giovanni di Piero di Agnolo. Catasto 488. fol. 189r; Jacopo d'Agostino. Catasto 488. fol. 207r; Neri di Gino. Catasto 488. fol. 287v; Lorenzo

declared 34,732 florins of total assets, and paid 60 florins, 94 soldi, and 55 denari of tax. There were four households among them that did not possess any taxable assets, and a fifth was listed as *miserabile*.<sup>167</sup>

Before Filippo's arrival to the Kingdom of Hungary, Filippo's brother Andrea was appointed as prior of Vrana, in the Kingdom of Croatia.<sup>168</sup> In 1408, the Florentine government had dispatched an official letter to Pippo Scolari on his behalf, asking him to help Andrea in entering into his office.<sup>169</sup> Andrea previously lived in Rome as a member of the Congregation of the Hermits of St. John the Baptist, which suggests a connection to the Apostolic Curia.

Simone di Filippo, their father, is regarded as one of the most important politicians of the early Albizzi period, having been involved in diplomacy as well.<sup>170</sup> In 1412, he and Antonio di Fronte were in charge of mediating between Sigismund and Ladislaus of Durazzo, in the name of the *Signoria*.<sup>171</sup> In 1404, Simone was sued by Matteo di Scelto Tinghi, a merchant who had been working for decades in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>172</sup> Simone and Matteo might have been either partners in a business firm or important clients to each other, which indicates that Simone had already established business ties in the Kingdom. In 1390, as Standardbearers, they took part together in

di Gino. Catasto 489. fol. 329r; Bartolomeo di Piero. Catasto 490. fol. 66v; Giovanni di Piero. Catasto 490. fol. 174v; Nicola di Piero. Catasto 490. fol. 331v; Zanobi di Niccolò. Catasto 490. fol. 437r; Jacopo di Leonardo. Catasto 491bis. fol. 294v. In addition, there were two households that included only the heirs. Among them, one was registered under the name of Filippo di Simone's heirs. Catasto 488. fol. 348v.

167 The household of Jacopo di Lionardo. ASF, Catasto 491bis. c. 294v.

168 In 1406, Andrea nominated his brother Recco di Simone as procurator. Esch, 'Florentiner in Rom um 1400', p. 498.

169 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 25. fol. 3v. Another letter of recommendation on Andrea's behalf was sent by the Signoria to the King. Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 25. fol. 4r. He probably never entered into office since his name was not mentioned in Hungarian sources. He might also be identical with Andrea di Cappone Capponi, who in 1378 was registered as a resident of the gonfalon of Nicchio, quarter of Santo Spirito. ASF, Estimo 268. fol. 76v.

170 He gave about 126 speeches at the secret councils: ASF, CP vols. 18-40. (1380-1409). Goldthwaite, in his book, did not discuss the branch of Simone.

171 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, III. docs. 2468. (23/07/1412), 2536. (13/08/1412).

172 Matteo Tinghi sued Lorenzo and Simone Capponi at the consuls of the Wool Guild which might allude either to a partnership or to a close cooperation between them. 'Io Matteo dello Scelto mi richiamo delle rede e beni possessori di Lorenzo di Filippo Capponi e di Simone di Filippo Capponi [...]'. ASF, Arte della Lana 38. fol. 5r. (1404) Years earlier, in 1375, at the beginnings of the conflicts between Florence and the Papacy, Matteo Tinghi and his apprentice, Bonaccorso Pitti, were accused of spying in Avignon and were thrown in the papal prison. Trexler, *The Spiritual Power*, p. 39.

the political discussions at the secret councils regarding Naples and King Charles.<sup>173</sup>

### Filippo di Simone Capponi (1367/68-c. 1431): 174 The Junior Partner of the Earliest Florentine Firm in Buda

Maybe it was Andrea, or maybe it was their father, Simone, who helped Filippo build contacts in the Kingdom of Hungary. Filippo did not inherit his father's interest in politics; his name never appears among the speakers of the secret councils, or among the consuls of the major guilds and the Merchant Court. He might have been living in the Kingdom of Hungary for quite some time before he was mentioned for the first time in Hungarian sources. In 1412, when the Florentine chancellery dispatched a letter to him and Fronte di Piero Fronte in Hungary, Filippo was already in his forties.<sup>175</sup> Filippo and Fronte were probably bound together by in-law ties, which would explain their close cooperation in business.<sup>176</sup> In 1418, the two of them were operating together in the Kingdom as collectors of papal revenues for Martin V.<sup>177</sup> At that time, Filippo was employed as agent of the Panciatichi of Buda, the earliest Florentine firm found so far that was established in the city.

The Panciatichi were nobles, originally from Pistoia. The founder of the lineage left the city as an exiled Ghibelline in 1281 and made a fortune in service to the French king.<sup>178</sup> The family, who were closely associated with Rinaldo degli Albizzi by marriage, had been trading in the Kingdom of Hungary for several decades.<sup>179</sup> By 1387, Gabriello di messer Bartolomeo, Florence's third richest citizen, had been selling wool textiles via his agent,

173 ASF, CP 28.

174 The date of his death was stipulated on the basis of the *Tratte*. *Online Tratte of Office Holders*, n. 37831.

175 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 29. fol. 26r.

176 Niccolò di Marco Benvenuti and Fronte di Piero deposited money for the firms of Pagolo Carnesecchi and Giovanni Panciatichi. ASF, Mercanzia 11778. fol. 31r. Fronte appeared as guarantor for Recco, Filippo's brother. See the declaration of Giovanni di Bartolomeo Panciatichi. ASF, Catasto 79. fol. 130r. In 1429, Giovanni di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi sued the heirs of Antonio di Piero di Fronte for Venetian ducates, which in 1414 he promised to pay through Recco di Simone Capponi. ASF, Mercanzia 7117. fols. 340v-341v.

177 In 1418, Pope Martin V commanded the Archbishop of Esztergom to pay a certain sum to Filippo di Simone Capponi and Fronte di Piero Fronte. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, VI. doc. 1483.

178 Herlihy, *Medieval and Renaissance Pistoia*, p. 167.

179 In 1420, Rinaldo degli Albizzi's son Maso married one of the daughters of messer Bandino Panciatichi of Pistoia. Kent, *The Rise of the Medici*, p. 179.

Maruccio di Pagolo Marucci, in Zagreb.<sup>180</sup> His nephew Antonio di Giovanni also merchandized cloth on a regular basis in Buda, by other merchants and maybe by his own local branch.<sup>181</sup>

In the last decades of the fourteenth century, the Panciatichi firm in Buda probably grew into the most significant local Florentine firm. The senior partner, Giovanni di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi (1356-*p.* 1431), was one of the wealthiest citizens in Florence, and he ran another merchant firm with Giovanni di Gualtieri Portinari in Venice.<sup>182</sup> Part of the success of the Buda branch was due to Filippo Capponi's presence; he likely lived there for more than two decades.<sup>183</sup> Thanks to the marriage between Giovanni Panciatichi and Filippo's sister, the two of them became brothers-in-law.<sup>184</sup> Employing in-laws at the head of a merchant-bank or its branches was still not a rare practice, which is clearly exemplified by the organization of the Medici Bank. Bartolomeo di Bartolomeo Bardi (1397-1429), manager of the Rome branch, Ilarione Lipaccio Bardi (1379-1433), general manager of the Medici bank, and Giovanni d'Adoardo Portinati (1363-1436), branch manager in Venice, were all bound to the Medici by marriage ties.<sup>185</sup> The Panciatichi's intention to keep the firm in the hands of its family members

180 'Dinanzi a voi signori consoli dell'Arte della Lana, io Gabriello di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi lanaiuolo mi richiamo di Giovanni e Michele di Benedetto da Carmignano di fiorini centoquarantadue di s. Lxxvi a fiorini di buona moneta d'Ungheria che valgono rechatì a moneta di Firenze per s. Lxxxi a fiorini [...] i quali denari me deono dare per resto di peze quatro e mezo di panni fiorentini e due coltri che vende de mia ragione in Sagabria d'Ungheria Maruccio di Pagolo Marucci di Firenze per me insino a dì xvi di giugno MCCCLXXXVII e però vi priegho mi facciate pagare e rendere le spese.' ASF, Arte della Lana 542. fol. 28v.

181 'Peze nove di drappi mandamo a chomune tra Bartolomeo di Lucha Rinieri e io a Buda [...]. ASF, Catasto 474. fol. 878r. 'Una ragione vecchia chomunico in sino l'anno 1410 in Ungheria [...] Una ragione nuova comunicai in Ungheria l'anno 1431 in achomanda in Antonio Popoleschi [...]'. Catasto 474. fol. 881r. 'Antonio di Aghinolfo Popoleschi di Buda de' avere fiorini ottanta cinque d'oro per le spese m'asegnia avere, fatte a drappi mandati a compagnia tra me e Bartolomeo Rinieri [...]'. ASF, Catasto 474. fol. 879r.

182 The local agent was Bernardo di Sandro Portinari. ASF, Catasto 482. fol. 371v. The earliest information on Gualterio di Sandro Portinari dates back to 1380 when he was mentioned in *Zara* (Zadar, HR) as a Venetian citizen. He traded with textiles and copper between *Zara* and Buda. His partners were Andrea di Ugo and Antonio di Santi, and he also became partners with Vieri de' Medici's company. In 1392, he was partner to Corso di Ricci and Jacobo da Prato. Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', p. 132. The company was mentioned in Bernardo di Giovanni Portinari's declaration, submitted in 1433: ASF, Catasto 484. fol. 263v.

183 Filippo as local manager of the Panciatichi firm in Buda: 'Filippo Capponi governatore della compagnia di Zanobi Panciatichi'. ASF, Mercanzia 7120. fol. 254v.

184 Giovanni Panciatichi married Caterina di Simone Capponi. ASF, Monte serie II. 2439. fol. 56v. (1420).

185 De Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, pp. 383-387.

is clearly underlined by Giovanni's son, Zanobi's (1393-*p.* 1431), presence on Filippo Capponi's side in Buda.<sup>186</sup> In 1427, Filippo was already of advanced age, and, by then, Zanobi might have acquired skills sufficient to take over the family business from his uncle.

Back then, as branch manager, Filippo owed Giovanni 9287 florins for his capital and profit. The declaration also mentions that the firm had huge outstanding credits of 36,398 florins in Buda, which they were unable to recuperate.<sup>187</sup> Among their business clients were: Pippo Scolari, the Melanesi brothers, Currado Cardini, Leonardo and Giovanni di Nofri Bardi, and Filippo del Bene.<sup>188</sup> The main profile of Giovanni's firm would have been textile trade.<sup>189</sup> The Buda branch probably had such a good reputation that merchant families sent their sons to them for their apprenticeships. Among them, Biagio d'Antonio Spini, in 1429, and the Corsini brothers – Battista (b. c. 1408) and Matteo di Giovanni (b. c. 1406) – in 1431 spent some time at the Panciatichi firm to complete their training as international merchants.<sup>190</sup> Filippo Capponi died in Buda sometime before 1433, probably leaving the direction of the branch to Zanobi.<sup>191</sup>

186 'Filipo di Simone Chapponi e Zanobi Panciatichi i quali per me dimorano in Buda [...]'. ASF, Catasto 79. fol. 130r.

187 ASF, Catasto 53. fol. 1014r.

188 See the balance of the company, submitted in 1431. ASF, Catasto 381. fols. 43v-44v.

189 Among the luxury textiles sold by the company in Buda were 'velluto, turchino, chermusi, domaschino'. ASF, Catasto 381. fol. 44v.

190 '1429. Ricordo che questo dì 5 d'aprile io manciapai Matteo, Battista, miei figliuoli [...] E questo dì detto di sopra andò Matteo sopradetto a stare a Buda d'Ungeria cola compagnia di Giovanni Panciatichi e de' figliuoli [...] E a dì detto andò Batista insieme col sopradetto Matteo per istare a Buda o dove a loro paresse ne' reame d'Ungeria con Simone e Tomaso di Melanesi.' *Il Libro di Ricordanze dei Corsini*, p. 131. Matteo di Giovanni Corsini is also mentioned in one of Antonio di Bonaccorso Strozzi's letters: 'Lo portatore di questa Matteo di Giovanni Chorsini, el quale viene tosta per suo facciende viene molto bene informato delle chondizioni e modi di questo reame, da llui saprai tutto [...]'. ASF, CS ser. III. 131. fol. 22v. (10/05/1431) The young Matteo Corsini, while in Buda, even went into business with Francesco, son of Guido di messer Tommaso del Palagio, who, in the 1380s, had already developed business interests in Hungary. 'Pretende aver avere certi denari fiorini da Francesco di ser Guido di messer Tommaso la quale è in Ungheria per cagone di certe faccende habiamo avere insieme in Ungheria.' ASF, Catasto 340. fol. 799r. Catasto 438. fol. 205v. Furthermore, Strozzi's letters also referred to Biagio Spini: 'Lo portatore di questa sarà Biagio d'Antonio de Spini ch'era qua per Panciatichi da llui sarete avisato [...]'. CS ser. III. 131. fol. 288r. (10/05/1429). Spini was among those Florentines who witnessed the payment to Masolino. In 1431, Biagio was probably away from Florence. Tripodi, *Gli Spini*, p. 153.

191 In 1433, Antonio di Giovanni Panictichi mentions him in his tax declaration. 'Filippo di Simone Chapponi stava in Ungheria fiorini 600 novi, facerò messi nulla perché è morto [...]'. ASF, Catasto 474. fol. 88ov. In 1428, he was still in Hungary when he figures in the testament of Miklós Perényi, master of the horse in the royal court. Arany, 'Firenzei kereskedők, bankárok és hivatalviselők'.



## 8 The Fronte Family

The Fronte family might have also been closely connected to the Scolari by friendship ties, since Antonio di Pietro di Fronte was named as one of the executors of Matteo Scolari's testament. The Fronte was a small, new family in Florence, which probably traced its ancestry back only to Antonio's grandfather Fronte who lived sometime in the first part of the fourteenth century. As early as 1350, many notary documents refer to Antonio's father Piero di Fronte as a resident of the parish of San Pietro Scheraggio.<sup>192</sup> In 1378, Piero's household was the only one that shall be associated with Antonio's extended family.<sup>193</sup> Piero was an active politician around the time of the consolidation of the Albizzi regime; his name as Standardbearer appears several times among the speakers in the meetings of the secret councils.<sup>194</sup> Similarly, in 1433, only Antonio's nephew Antonio di Fronte di Piero di Fronte submitted a tax declaration.<sup>195</sup> He declared 919 florins and 15 soldi of total assets, and he paid 16 soldi, 4 denari of *catasto*. The Fronte shared marriage ties with the Tosinghi, the Scolari's neighbours in the Via Panzano, which might have helped them find their way into business in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>196</sup>

### Antonio (c. 1381-1426/1427)<sup>197</sup> and Fronte di Piero di Fronte (c. 1380-c. 1418): The Business Brothers

By 1392, Antonio had settled in *Zara* (Zadar, HR) and worked there for a couple of years as a representative of a Florentine firm.<sup>198</sup> In 1406, after his sojourn in Dalmatia, his name appeared again in sources as the Florentine chancellery dispatched a letter of recommendation to Pippo Scolari on his

192 Michele di Jacopo da Rabatta acted as notary for the Fronte. ASF, NA vols. 14004, 14006, fols. 16v, 22r, 24v, 33r, 40r.

193 ASF, Prestanze 367. fol. 6v.

194 ASF, CP 14. fol. 19v (25/02/1376), 19. fol. 61v (14/09/1380); 21. fols. 86v (26/09/1382) 90r (08/10/1382), 94r (15/10/1382), 95v (20/10/1382), 104r (07/11/1382), 118v (09/12/1382).

195 Antonio di Fronte di Piero di Fronte. ASF, Catasto 491 fol. 10v. Ser Fronte di ser Tommaso di Fronte, Soldo di Fronte and Giovanni di Fronte di Giovanni probably did not belong to the same family. Catasto 492. fol. 206r, 495. fol. 465v, 492. fol. 268r.

196 Antonio di Piero di Fronte married Bindella di Bindo Tosinghi. ASF, Catasto. 27. fol. 248r.

197 Antonio's birth and death years are calculated based on the *Tratte*. *Online Tratte of Office Holders*, n. 10988. (1400), n.10991 (1402), n.10944. (1426), n. 10945 (1427). Fronte's possible birth year is calculated based on the *Tratte*. *Online Tratte of Office Holders*, n. 45971 (1400), n. 117541 (1401).

198 Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', p. 211. n.9.



behalf.<sup>199</sup> His brother Fronte was first mentioned in the sources only in 1404, when the chancery recommended him to Sigismund.<sup>200</sup>

The brothers appear frequently together in documents, which indicates that they went into business jointly whenever possible.<sup>201</sup> It was customary in merchant families that brothers work together in business life and run their firms jointly. As we have already seen, similar patterns can be observed in the case of several Florentine families in Hungary: the Scolari, the Da Montebuoni, the Infangati, the Bardi, the Melanesi, the Lamberteschi, the Corsi, and the Cardini, which seemingly challenges Richard A. Goldthwaite's hypothesis that family relations had lost their importance in the management and organization of business partnerships.<sup>202</sup>

The Fronte brothers developed quite a varied business profile, which included participation in wool as well as in merchant companies. In 1406, Antonio was running a wool firm with Goso di Francesco di Goso<sup>203</sup> and another wool firm he set up with Andrea del Palagio.<sup>204</sup> In the early 1410s, Fronte was also involved in a third firm with Niccolò di Marco Benvenuti and Jacopo di Ubaldino Ardinghelli, which was trading in Hungary.<sup>205</sup> Besides, in all these business interests, the Frontes' most important business partners were the Scolari and the Carnesecchi. Before 1411, Fronte founded a firm with Matteo Scolari and Antonio di Santi for trade in the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>206</sup> The close relations between them are also shown by the fact

199 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 27. fol. 14v.

200 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria, 26.f ol. 51v. (11/07/1404) Not much later, Pippo received a similar recommendation in Fronte's name. ASF, Signori, Missive, I Cancelleria, 26. fol. 108v.

201 Antonio di Fronte wrote in his declaration, submitted in 1427: 'Diferenza chon Antonio di Piero di Fronte, mio zio, di più ragioni [...]'. ASF, Catasto 27. fol. 100v. Antonio di Piero's declaration in the same year: 'Ho una diferenza con Antonio di Fronte, mio nipote [...]'. Catasto 27. fol. 117r.

202 Goldthwaite, 'La famiglia', pp. XXV-XXXIV.

203 ASF, Arte della Lana 25. fol. 3r, Arte della Lana 327. fol. 23r.

204 Antonio di Fronte's declaration, submitted in 1431: ASF, Catasto 348. fol. 18r.

205 'D'avere dal signore re d'Ungheria per fatti di mio padre circha a fiorini vi milla in più partite di quali s'apartiene alle rede di Nicholò di Marcho Benvenuti e 3/8 e alle rede di Jacopo Ardinghelli circha a fiorini cccc [...]'. ASF, Catasto 27. fol. 100v. Jacopo Ardinghelli was relative to the Guadagni, since Nanna di Filippo di Neri Ardinghelli married Bernardo di Vieri Guadagni. ASF, Guadagni 12. docs. 4-5. See the declaration of Niccolò's son, Francesco in 1427, detailing his father's businesses in Hungary: 'Abbiamo una ragione pendente inchontesa chon Antonio di Piero di Fronte [...] Abbiamo alchuno credito nelle parti d'Ungheria e a Firenze, li quali pocha stima ne facciamo [...] Manonna l'omperatrice, donna dell'omperadore per 2/3 toccha a noi, fiorini 400. Lo imperadore d'Ungheria per 3/8 toccha a noi fiorini 1800 [...]'. ASF, Catasto. 29. fol. 168v.

206 Matteo Scolari left a certain amount of money by his last will for Fronte's heir. ASF Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 279v, 260v. (1424)

that Antonio di Piero Fronte received financial aid from Andrea Scolari to provide his daughter with a dowry.<sup>207</sup>

Maybe their friendship with the Scolari led them into politics as well. In the 1410s, Antonio participated as a speaker in the secret councils on a regular basis.<sup>208</sup> However, in 1411, he was not elected to a city office because of his absence from the city, which also suggests that at that time he was staying in Hungary.<sup>209</sup> In 1412, the Florentine government commissioned him and Filippo Capponi to mediate between Ladislaus of Durazzo and Sigismund.<sup>210</sup> Antonio was even captured during the Venetian wars and, in 1413, the *Signoria* thanked Sigismund for requesting his release.<sup>211</sup> His service to the Florentine government resulted in Antonio's employment in the royal court. In the same year, Antonio urged the town court judges and the town council of Košice, Hungary, to provide the ruler with a new year's gift, an indicator of his employment in the royal administration.<sup>212</sup> Sigismund surely appreciated Antonio's work to the extent that, in 1419, Antonio became royal *familiaris* and later was granted trade privileges.<sup>213</sup> Fronte, through Simone Capponi, also obtained connections to the papal Curia, maybe as a collector or as someone closely related to the administration of papal revenues in Hungary.<sup>214</sup> Fronte died sometime around 1418, and it remained for his son, Antonio (b. c. 1406) to close his business.

The business settlement following Fronte's death included the dissolution of a merchant company he established in 1415 with Pagolo di Berto Carnesecchi (c. 1374-1427), in Buda.<sup>215</sup> The Carnesecchi were close neighbours to the

207 'Ho a dare alle rede del vescovo di Varadino fiorini novanta denari, mi presto in sino quando maritai la mia figliuola.' ASF, Catasto 27. fol. 117r.

208 Between 1410 and 1426, he spoke 32 times at the secret councils, in the capacity of Twelve Goodmen and Eight of custody. ASF, CP 40. fols. 178v, 186v, 195r; CP 42. fols. 146v, 155r, 160v, 168r; CP 43. fols. 5v, 6v, 10r, 18r, 24v, 25v, 39r, 137v, 143r; CP 44. fols. 113r, 115r, 125v, 141v, 164r; CP 45. fols. 37v, 45v, 71r, 101v, 106r; CP 46. fols. 10v, 48v, 154r, 158v, 187v.

209 *Online Tratte of Office Holders*, n. 11018.

210 ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria, 29. fol. 26r.

211 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, IV. doc. 730.

212 *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, IV. doc.152.

213 Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', pp. 195-196.

214 In 1418, Pope Martin V ordered the Archbishop of Esztergom to settle his debt with Fronte and Simone Capponi. *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, I. doc. 54.

215 See Antonio's declaration, submitted in 1431. ASF, Catasto 348. fols. 18r-v. The date of Fronte's death is calculated based on the Online Tratte, as well as on the documents regarding his company with Ridolfo di Bonifazio Peruzzi. ASF, Mercanzia 271. None of the Fronte brothers lived until the end of our period, so only Fronte di Piero's son, Antonio, then 27 years old, presented a tax declaration. Catasto 445r. fols. 29v-30r. In 1427, the Carnesecchi brothers declared in their tax return that: 'Anchora troviano che dell'anno 1415 Pagholo, nostro padre fecie chonpagnia chon

Scolari in Via Panzano, parish of Santa Maria Maggiore, gonfalon of Drago, quarter of San Giovanni.<sup>216</sup> Their ancestry traces back to the beginnings of the fourteenth century, and by the end of that century they had established a name and a social status for themselves. In fact, Pagolo di Berto grew into one of the most active politicians of his time.<sup>217</sup> His three sons, Simone, Piero, and Giovanni, followed their father's footsteps in business life and continued to cooperate with the Fronte in selling silk textiles in the Kingdom.<sup>218</sup> The firm, which was reformed between the Fronte and Pagolo sons, operated with that organization at least until 1433.<sup>219</sup> The Carnesecchi were involved in both wool and silk manufacturing in Florence; therefore, the joint company with the Fronte most likely sold their own products.<sup>220</sup> The firm seemingly provided banking services, as well, and therefore became involved in the payments of the woodcarver-architect, Manetto Amannatini, and the painter, Masolino, on Pippo Scolari's behalf.<sup>221</sup>

Antonio di Piero di Fronte al traficho d'Ungheria, dove la resedenza di detta chonpagnia nella terra di Buda.' Catasto 55. fol. 789r.

216 ASF, Monte ser. II. 1805. fol. 38v. (1405).

217 He was elected several times to consul of the Doctors' Guild. ASF, Arte dei Medici e Speciali 46. fols. 35v (1408), 39v (1416), 40v (1418), 41v (1420), 43v (1424), 44v (1426). Starting from 1395, he delivered at least 179 speeches. ASF, CP vols. 31-47.

218 See their joint declaration, submitted in 1427: ASF, Catasto 55. fols. 786r-792r.

219 ASF, Catasto 485. fol. 294r. In 1431, Pagolo's heirs prepared the balance of their father's old company, which he ran with Antonio di Piero di Fronte. 'Al nome di Dio a dì gennaio 1430. Apresso faremo nota a voi signori uficiali del chatasto del Comune di Firenze in che forma e stato si truova lla chonpagnia e traficho suto per l'adietro per Antonio di Piero di Fronte e per Pagholo di Berto Charnesechi nelle parti d'Ungheria e de parti di Firenze, che dipendono amendue da uno medesimo chorpo e per amendue le parti, cidè per Simone e fratelli per la metà e per le redi d'Antonio di Piero di Fronte per l'altra metà.' Catasto 381. fol. 89r. Furthermore, see a business quarrel between Simone di Pagolo Carnesecchi's firm, which in 1426 was registered under the name of Antonio di Piero di Fronte, and the firm of Zanobi and Antonio di Giovanni Panciaticchi of Buda. ASF, Mercanzia 7120. fol. 254r-v.

220 They previously had a company with Piero di Stefano di ser Piero and Francesco di Cionaccio Baroncelli, which sold and probably produced silk textiles. In 1427, in their declaration: 'Anchora ci troviano queste merchatantie chome apresso diremo la quale ci resta d'una chonpagnia suta fra Piero di Stefano di ser Piero e Francescho di Cionaccio Baroncegli e noi in prima; una pezza di velluto chermusi [...] una pezza di velluto nero [...] una pezza di velluto alesandrino [...] una pezza di marermatto tutto macchiato [...] una pezza di zetani raso nero [...] Anchora ci troviano dovere avere da Matteo del maestro Lucha setaiuolo per merchatantia avuta da noi [...]'. ASF, Catasto 55. fol. 789v. In 1427, they were running a wool workshop in Florence, under Simone's name, with Giuntino di Guido di Giuntino. Catasto 55. fol. 790r. Before 1422, Antonio had shares in a silk workshop. Catasto 380. fol. 46v.

221 'Simone di Pagolo Carnesechi e fratelli deono dare per la ragione d'Ungheria fiorini 120 di ungheri fiorini 128 s. [...]'. Declaration of Manetto's mother. ASF, Catasto 31. fol. 846r. Molho, 'The Brancacci Chapel', p. 93.

In 1427, at the time of the general census in Florence, Antonio di Fronte was also sojourning in Hungary, and he was among the merchants recommended by the Florentine ambassadors to King Sigismund.<sup>222</sup> While busy with closing his father's businesses, Giovanni di Pagolo Carnesecchi submitted the declaration in his name.<sup>223</sup> We learn from the document that his uncle, Antonio di Piero, in founding the firm, invested 2500 Florentine florins as capital, which increased over the years, and in 1425 his investments reached 3876 Florentine florins.<sup>224</sup> The major business profile of the firm was silk trade and it appears as an important buyer of the silk manufacturing companies run by Parente di Michele di ser Parente and Nofri di Giovanni di ser Parente.<sup>225</sup> Their business clients included: King Sigismund, Pippo Scolari, Andrea Scolari, Tommaso Melanesi, Piero Guicciardini, Scolaio Tosinghi, Giovanni Falcucci, Filippo Capponi, Lorenzo da Montebuoni, Leonado and Giovanni di Nofri Bardi, Baldinaccio Infangati, and Piero Lamberteschi.<sup>226</sup> At the beginning, the agent of the firm was Simone Melanesi, and later he was replaced by another young Florentine, Antonio di Bonaccorso Strozzi.<sup>227</sup>

## 9 The Strozzi Family

In March 1426, Antonio di Bonaccorso Strozzi, back then an agent of the Carnesecchi-Fronte firm, was also present in Pippo Scolari's house as one of the witnesses of the document naming the executors of Matteo Scolari's testament. His lineage, the Strozzi, was of *popolani* origins, but their history

222 ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie, 7. fol. 76v.

223 'Io Giovanni di Pagolo Charnesecchi opero redetta questa scritta di volontà d'Antonio.' ASF, Catasto 27. fol. 116r.

224 'Feci una compagnia in sino l'anno 1415 con Pagolo di Berto Charnesecchi, e mise in corpo di compagnia fiorini dumila cinquecento denari, cioè fiorini 2500 [...] e l'ultimo saldo faciamo de detta compagnia fu a di primo di marzo 1424, nel quale mi trouai creditore di fiorini tremila ottocento settantasei s. xi d. 3 [...]'. Catasto 27. fol. 116v. See also Antonio di Fronte di Piero's tax declaration, submitted in 1431. Catasto 348. fol. 18r.

225 See Parente di Michele and Nofri di Giovanni Parenti's tax return, submitted in 1433: ASF, Catasto 485. fol. 294r.

226 See the balance of the company: ASF, Catasto 381. fols. 89r-90r.

227 See the balance of the company, in 1427: 'Anotnio di Bonachorso degli Strozi nostro fattore in Buda [...]'. ASF, Catasto 28, fol. 1009. 'Antonio di Bonachorso fu nostro fattore de' dare, sono perduti in tutto stassi nelle parti d'Ungheria [...]'. Catasto 381. fol. 89r. (1431) Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', p. 196.

goes back at least to the thirteenth century.<sup>228</sup> By the beginning of the fourteenth century, they had already been conducting banking activity in the Kingdoms of England and France and had established one of the leading companies at the papal court. The lineage was one of the most extended in Florence at the time; in 1378, they had 38 households.<sup>229</sup> Since the early thirteenth century, they resided mainly in the parish of San Pancrazio, gonfalon of Leon Rosso, quarter of Santa Maria Novella. In 1433, the number of their households increased to 43, comprising 220 family members.<sup>230</sup> They declared as total assets 153,165 Florentine florins and paid 312 florins, 251 soldi, 126 denari of *catasto*. Among them, eight of the above mentioned families did not possess any taxable assets.<sup>231</sup> If the Strozzi had any previous connections in Hungary or to the Scolari, it is unclear. Despite the well-researched studies on their history, there is very little known about Antonio's family. His father Bonaccorso di Pinaccio did not participate in politics, and there is no reference to any members of his nuclear family as speakers at the secret councils.

### Antonio di Bonaccorso Strozzi (b. c. 1398): The Commercial Agent

Antonio, like several Florentines, including Simone Melanesi in Buda and Giovanni di Cenni Ugolini in Venice, initiated his own business activity by working first as an agent of local Florentine firms. In 1426, when Antonio was first mentioned in Buda, he must have been almost thirty years old. Therefore, he had been working as a merchant for quite some time. At that point, he was employed by the Carnesecchi-Fronte firm, and, in 1427, following its dissolution, he decided to stay. Around that date, he was also referred to as governor and factor of Antonio Popoleschi's firm in Buda.<sup>232</sup> A year later, due to some unresolved issues between him and his former employers, Antonio complained in his letters addressed to his relative,

228 Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth*, pp. 31-32. Crabb, *The Strozzi of Florence*. Fabbri, *Alleanza matrimoniale*.

229 ASF, Prestanze 368, fols. 12r, 15v, 16r, 44r-v, 45r-v, 46v, 47r, 57r, 64v, 65v, 66r, 67r, 69v, 72r, 76v.

230 ASF, Catasto 489. fols. 430r, 489r; Catasto 494. fols. 389v, 422r, 426r; Catasto 495, fols. 8v, 9r, 49r, 83v, 87r, 103r, 148r, 159r, 170r, 177v, 213r-v, 252v, 304v, 320r, 337v, 382r, 423r, 428v, 435r, 439r, 446v, 455v, 469v, 471r, 491v, 498v; Catasto 496. fols. 41r, 56v, 99v, 214r, 331r, 384v, 396v, 399r, 426r, 486r.

231 ASF, Catasto 494. fol. 308r; Catasto 495. fols. 170r, 213r, 213v, 435r, 469v, 471r; Catasto 496. fol. 399r.

232 ASF, Mercanzia 7120. fol. 254v.

Piero di Filippo Strozzi, that the Carnesecchi-Fronte firm still owed him 100 Florentine florins for his salary.<sup>233</sup>

While in Buda, he probably traded with the Strozzi's goods.<sup>234</sup> In 1433, he and his brother, Pinaccio, declared a joint wool workshop, which they kept in the Via dei Lanaiuoli.<sup>235</sup> Furthermore, he operated another firm in Florence with Francesco di Simone Rucellai.<sup>236</sup> He was also acquainted with the important members of the local Florentine community, among them, Leonardo di Nofri de' Bardi.<sup>237</sup> His business partner in Buda was a certain Jacopo di Bartolomeo da Calenzano, a merchant who had been living in Hungary for a while. In 1427, Antonio even married Jacopo's sister, ensuring a further social bond between the two of them.<sup>238</sup> Two years later, Jacopo, as many other Florentine businessmen, did not manage to avoid Sigismund's prison and was captured by the King's order.<sup>239</sup> If Antonio followed him to prison, we do not know for sure, but his complete absence from later sources alludes to that possibility.

## 10 The Peruzzi Family

Ridolfo di Bonifazio Peruzzi figured among the guarantors of the commission carried out by the painter Masolino for Pippo Scolari. He was a descendant of the ancient lineage of the *popolani* Peruzzi, which, by the beginning of the fourteenth century, obtained a reputation in international business with its company agglomerate.<sup>240</sup> In 1378, the officers of the *Estimo* reported

233 'Attendo a voi quello avete fatto chon chetesti miei maestri sopra il mio salario [...] non fatte mancho di fiorini 100 d'oro la me chome mi fu promesso da Pagholo di Berto e Antonio di Piero di Fronte e voi ancho' lo sapete e simile Ghorò Serragli.' ASF, CS ser. III. 132. fols. 288r-v. (10/05/1429).

234 In 1429, he demanded silk and wool textiles from Matteo di Simone Strozzi for sale. ASF, CS ser. III. 132. fols. 287r-v. (3/5/1429).

235 See Pinaccio's declaration submitted in their names, in 1433: ASF, Catasto 495. fols. 435r-436v.

236 Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', p. 204.

237 Teke, 'Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok', p. 206.

238 See Antonio's letters sent from Buda to Matteo di Simone degli Strozzi, in Florence. (10/05/1431) ASF, CS ser. III. 131. fols. 22r-v. Jacopo da Calenzano settled in Buda, in 1417. He appears in Andrea Lamberteschi's declaration, presented in 1427. ASF, Catasto 27. fol. 94v. Antonio and Jacopo signed together a business letter, which was sent to Matteo di Simone Strozzi. ASF, CS ser. III. 132. fols. 289r-v. (30/07/1429).

239 In 1431, Jacopo was listed among the debtors of Antonio di Piero di Fronte and Pagholo di Berto Carnesecchi in Hungary. 'Jachopo di Bartolomeo da Chalenzano in prigione e sono perduti fiorini 84 denari.' ASF, Catasto 381. fol. 91r.

240 Hunt, *The Medieval Super-Companies*. Saporì, *I libri di commercio dei Peruzzi*.

20 households of the lineage, which were located overwhelmingly in the gonfalon of Leon Nero, quarter of Santa Croce.<sup>241</sup> By the end of our period, this number increased to 25 households, which had 119 registered family members.<sup>242</sup> The entire lineage reported 67,171 florins of taxable assets and paid 125 florins, 119 soldi, and 68 denari of *catasto*. Of the total number of households, six – that is, almost one-quarter – did not have any taxable assets.<sup>243</sup>

In the fourteenth century, the Peruzzi was not only a leading merchant family, but its members had also become significant actors in domestic politics. In 1376, as one of the most active politicians of his time, Simone di Rinieri Peruzzi was dispatched to the Hungarian royal court in an official capacity.<sup>244</sup> Consequently, his son Benedetto also stayed in the Kingdom for a while.<sup>245</sup>

### Ridolfo di Bonifazio Peruzzi (1370-1434/1436): The Entrepreneur

It is not entirely clear, though, to what extent his relatives' connections in Hungary might have had an impact on Ridolfo's attempt to build business contacts there. Ridolfo, who was approximately the same age as the Scolari brothers, appears for the first time in Hungarian sources in 1409, as Fronte di Piero di Fronte's partner.<sup>246</sup> The company lasted until 1418, the time of Fronte's death, when he and his son, Antonio, reformed it with Ridolfo's participation.<sup>247</sup> The Frontes' financial resources were limited compared to other Florentine long-distance trade merchants, like the Panciatichi, so one might expect that Ridolfo made the major investments in the company. Fronte, who stayed permanently in Hungary, would have provided the work, which offered Ridolfo the freedom to travel only occasionally to the Kingdom. Besides his Hungarian businesses, Ridolfo was involved in several firms of various sorts in Florence, which suggests large-scale entrepreneurial activity. A partnership with Carlo di Piero Benizi was sometimes referred to as a bank

241 ASF, Prestanze 367. fols. 22v, 25r, 31r, 37v, 38r-v, 39r; Prestanze 369. fols. 98v, 120r.

242 ASF, Catasto 492. fols. 15v, 43v, 72v, 77r, 83r, 105r, 123r, 126r, 130v, 147r-v, 186r, 201r, 206v, 267r, 313r, 387r, 403r, 430v, 439r, 446v, 451r, 467v, 476v, 522v.

243 ASF, Catasto 492. fols. 77r, 123r, 147r, 387r, 430v.

244 See the Signoria's instructions to the ambassadors: ASF, Signori, Missive, I. Cancelleria 15. fols. 59r, 61r.

245 'Dì 2 di giugno 1379. Benedetto, mio figliuolo allora era a Padoa ovvero in Ungharia'. Saporì, *I libri di commercio dei Peruzzi*, p. 524.

246 He spoke for the first time at the secret councils in 1401. ASF, CP 35. fol. 11r. (16/07/1401)

247 ASF, Mercanzia 271. fol. 25r. (1424).



(*banco*) and other times as a warehouse (*fondaco*).<sup>248</sup> He also owned a wool workshop with Matteo di Forese Bizari.<sup>249</sup> A third firm specialized in the wheat trade, which he established with Luigi Mannini and Giovanni di Jacopo dello Sciocco.<sup>250</sup> His investments were so fruitful that in 1433, he reported the highest total assets among the persons in this study, and in terms of absolute wealth, his household was ranked 29<sup>th</sup> of the total number of households.

Ridolfo's life might have been like Bonaccorso di Neri Pitti's, who belonged to the inner circle of the regime.<sup>251</sup> After entering politics in 1396, he decided to give up his commercial travels abroad and concentrate his energy on entrepreneurial activity in the cloth business as well as on domestic politics. Gene Brucker claims that Bonaccorso was regularly called to the palace for the meetings of the secret councils to advocate for the *Signoria* on foreign policy-making. However, a detailed analysis of the meetings shows that Bonaccorso spoke only occasionally at the special commissions, the *Pratiche*, and his name was registered only 43 times as a speaker during his political career, which made him far less active in politics than the majority of the Albizzi supporters studied in the present volume.

Ridolfo Peruzzi does not figure in Brucker's analysis among the most influential members of the Albizzi regime, despite the fact that his name appears as a speaker 177 times in the corresponding registers of the *Consulte e pratiche*.<sup>252</sup> With this, he grew into one of the most active members of the faction, following speakers like Rinaldo degli Albizzi and Niccolò da Uzzano. He started his political career at the secret councils in 1401, but he engaged in frequent public speaking only from 1413 on. He also took part as a speaker several times in the meetings of the *Pratiche*, restricted to the inner circle of the regime.<sup>253</sup> Ridolfo served multiple times as consul of the Merchant Court and Standardbearer of the urban militia, as well as deputy of the quarter of Santa Croce. In 1434, as one of the most vehement supporters of the regime, he and his family were exiled

248 ASF, Catasto 451. fol. 291r; Catasto 433. fol. 102v.

249 ASF, Catasto 451. fol. 301r; Catasto 447. fol. 206r.

250 ASF, Catasto 450. fol. 486v.

251 Brucker established the inner circle of the regime mainly on the basis of participation in the *pratiche*. Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*, pp. 262-264.

252 ASF, CP vols. 34, 35, 37, 39-50.

253 ASF, CP 45. fol. 145r. (24/09/1423), CP 46. fol. 89r. (25/10/1425), CP 47. fol. 36r. (07/01/1427), CP 47. fol. 62v. (07/08/1427), CP 47. fol. 63v. (23/09/1427), CP 48. fol. 63r. (24/02/1429), CP 48. fol. 65r. (19/03/1429), CP 49. fol. 127r. (24/02/1431), CP 49. fol. 192r. (04/09/1431), CP 49. fol. 192v. (05/09/1431), CP 49. fol. 215v. (16/01/1432), CP 49. fol. 230r. (02/07/1432), CP 50. fol. 93v. (18/08/1433), CP 50. fol. 125r. (09/03/1434), CP 50. fol. 132v. (22/03/1434), CP 50. fol. 143v. (20/04/1434), CP 50. fol. 179v. (09/08/1434).

by Cosimo de' Medici. He died sometime before February 1436, when his heirs turned to the Merchant Court to settle the company balance with Antonio di Fronte.<sup>254</sup>

<sup>254</sup> On 11 February 1436, the sons of Peruzzi and Antonio di Fronte di Piero brought the case to the Merchant Court in Florence. ASF, Mercanzia 271. fols. 11v-12v. On 14 February 1436, his heirs received an exemption from paying the fine at court. Mercanzia 271. fol. 13r. On 28 February 1436, the sons of Ridolfo and Antonio di Fronte di Piero Fronte delivered the account books to the Florentine Merchant Court. Mercanzia 271. fol. 16r. On 19 March 1436, Ridolfo's heirs were trying to negotiate the debt at the Court. Mercanzia 271. fols. 24v, 31v. (27/3/1436), 78v, 120v-121r (16/11/1436), 140v (21/12/1436), 160v-161r. (23/02/1437).

## V The Periphery of the Network: Friends of Commission

In constructing a family image in early Renaissance Florence, as well as contemporary Hungary, commissions to skilled artisans served to build up the fame of the family, as well as to preserve its memory.<sup>1</sup> In her analysis on the artistic patronage of the Nasi and the Del Pugliese families, back then both new to Florentine society, Jill Burke has shown the ways they attempted to create a public image for their lineages by means of visual representation.<sup>2</sup> Even though the Scolari was an ancient lineage, which traced ancestry back three centuries, because of their lost status and influence, they needed to reintroduce themselves to the Florentine ruling elite. Their commissions of objects and buildings testify to the fact that the three elder Scolari's concern in enforcing their family's identity provided a basis for cooperation, or maybe even friendship, with several significant Florentine artisans. Among them were leading goldsmiths, architects, and painters, who, by their innovative spirit, contributed considerably to the development of the early Renaissance material culture.

Artisans in Florence typically did not belong to the same social strata as merchants. Though the most prestigious among them might have had family names that were developed before the studied period, the lack of their political influence as well as their modest family patrimony did not entitle them to intermarry with the mercantile elite.<sup>3</sup> Only exceptions like the Gaddi family, which had both international merchants and important artisans among its members, might have maintained nuptial ties to other merchant families.<sup>4</sup>

However, artisans became part of a similarly complex network of commissions, also including those merchants and their families who wished

1 *Art, Memory and Family*. Jékely, 'Die Rolle der Kunst in der Repräsentation der ungarischen Aristokratie'.

2 Burke, *Changing Patrons*.

3 Goldsmiths constituted probably the wealthiest strata of the Florentine artisan society. Yet, in the studied period, there were only three goldsmiths mentioned as speakers at the secret councils; Bonaccorso di Vanni, Betto, Domenico Dei. ASF, CP 22. fol. 86r (1383), fol. 92v (1383), fol. 118v (1383), CP 45. fol. 8v (1422). Prajda, 'Goldsmiths, Goldbeaters'.

4 For the merchant, Zanobi Gaddi, son of the painter Taddeo (c. 1300-1366) see: Mueller, 'Mercanti e imprenditori fiorentini a Venezia', pp. 9-10. For the social elevation of the family, from painters to businessmen see: Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 418-419.

to establish a name for themselves by means of visual representation. The story of the *Fat Woodcarver* eloquently illustrates such intersections between artisan and merchant networks in early Renaissance Florence, hardly imaginable elsewhere in Europe at the time.<sup>5</sup> These intersections developed into the main driving forces of Florentine artisan migration, an important feature in the spread of the Renaissance in Europe. Also, the protagonist of the anecdote, Manetto di Jacopo Amannatini, emigrated from Florence and matured into an architect in Pippo Scolari's service.

The *Fat Woodcarver's* story starts with the description of a dinner party, which probably took place in 1410, in the house of the respected citizen, Tommaso di Jacopo Pecori, back then Standardbearer of the urban militia (*gonfaloniere di compagnia*).<sup>6</sup> The dinner company also included Giovanni di Bernardo Rucellai, descendant of a preeminent merchant lineage, the sculptor Donatello di Niccolò Bardi, and the architect Filippo di ser Brunellesco.<sup>7</sup> The cooperation between these citizens of various social status – merchants and artisans – in playing the cruel joke on the *Fat Woodcarver* shows that outside of the norms and formalities that Florentines of a certain social standing might have kept in political and business lives, patrons and their clients occasionally socialized together.<sup>8</sup> In fact, the Pecori and other Florentine families of some rank probably did not wish to marry their sons and daughters to artisans of far inferior social status, but they might have shared a dinner and engaged in informal discussions with them. Patrons might have even served as arbitrators in artisan marriages by facilitating the cementing of a social bond between two families.<sup>9</sup>

5 Manetti, *Vita di Filippo Brunelleschi*.

6 ASF, CP 40. fols. 116r, 126r, 130r, 132r, 135r. He had already died by the time of the first general census in Florence, and his sons' declaration shows no connection to any members of the company. ASF, Catasto 474. fols. 627r-631v. He spoke only in 1410 at the secret councils, in the same year when he was also elected to Standardbearer of the urban militia. The period of his office, between January and April, coincides with the possible time of Manetti's story. The Pecori and Giovanni di messer Niccolò Falucci were relatives, since Giovanni's daughter Alessandra married Luca di Francesco Pecori. Catasto 79. fol. 263r. Tommaso Pecori might have died not long before the first catasto, and his heirs shared properties with Luca di Francesco Pecori. Catasto 79. fol. 302r. Gabriello di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi also married a Pecori girl. Catasto 297. fol. 357.

7 In 1427, Giovanni di Bernardo Rucellai submitted his declaration with his cousin, the goldsmith Leonardo di Donato Rucellai. His company kept business ties with Masolino. ASF, Catasto 46. fol. 869v.

8 For an interpretation of the spatial dimensions of the joke, see: Atkinson, 'Getting Lost in the Italian Renaissance'.

9 Bender, *Negotiating Marriage*, pp. 190-229.

## 1 Goldsmiths

By the first decades of the fifteenth century, Florentine goldsmithery had become a major competitor of the Sienese industry, the earliest centre of the sector in Tuscany.<sup>10</sup> During the early Renaissance, goldsmiths constituted one of the most innovative groups among Florentine artisans; several important masters received training in goldsmiths' workshops. Among them, Donatello di Niccolò Bardi (1386-1466) and Lorenzo di Bartolo Ghiberti (1378-1455) grew into leading figures of the local goldsmith industry, while others like Filippo di ser Brunellesco, distinguished themselves with the design and construction of buildings.

Luxury items owned by the Scolari, as visual representations of their wealth and social status in Florence and Hungary, are known to us exclusively by archival sources. A couple of them refer to objects made of precious metals, which required goldsmiths' work, while others to silk textiles decorated with precious metal elements, also typically produced in goldsmiths' workshops at that time.

Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi, while visiting the estate of Ozora, mentioned the rich liturgical robes donated by Pippo Scolari to local religious places. He also detailed the expensive gifts they received with his fellow ambassador, on behalf of their hosts; among the gifts were carpets, a bathing shirt decorated with pendants, silver threads, and gilded silver buttons, and a small purse of gilded silver elements.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, one goldsmith's object might be connected to Pippo's person: a reliquary of the Holy Cross, which according to an earlier legend and a seventeenth century Florentine drawing, he ordered for the Holy Mary parish church of Impruneta, the most important religious place patronized by the Buondelmonti family.<sup>12</sup> The story of the object is unknown, though the treasury of the church still houses a silver cross, datable to around 1425 and attributed to Lorenzo Ghiberti, which alludes to further existing networks of commission between leading Florentine goldsmiths and the Scolari's inner network.<sup>13</sup>

In a similar fashion, written testimonials have survived about the expensive silk textiles and goldsmiths' objects owned by Matteo Scolari and his nuclear family. His purchases at a silk manufacturing company

10 *Il Museo dell'Opera del Duomo*, p. 5.

11 '[...] Due tappetti di braccia tre l'uno, una camicia lunga da bagno di boccaccino, con fregi d'oro filato, e bottoni dalle maniche e dal collare d'ariento dorato [...]'. *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III. pp. 589-590.

12 Tarchi, 'Una lettera di Maria Maddalena d'Austria'.

13 Pisani, 'Il tesoro. Gli argenti', p. 62.

show that his and his wife's garments included silk textiles of the finest quality.<sup>14</sup> The supplies for his horse were similarly decorated with the finest silk fabrics.<sup>15</sup> Besides the expensive silk clothing, Matteo and his wife also wore luxurious jewelry probably made by Florentine goldsmiths. Matteo's big silver belt might have been ornamented with the emblem of the guild he belonged to, a typical accessory of Florentine merchants of a certain social standing. His jewelry included a golden buckle and a ruby valued at 190 Florentine florins. Piera possessed jewelry made of three rubies and three pearls in the value of 300 Florentine florins.<sup>16</sup> The latter might be identical to the shoulder brooch depicted by Fra Filippo Lippi in his *Portrait of a Woman and a Man at a Casement*, which might depict Francesca di Matteo Scolari as the main sitter.<sup>17</sup> An inventory, made in 1425, lists all the silverware found at that time in the Scolari palace, including silver plates of various sizes, tankards, pitchers, and a washbasin, all of them bearing the coat of arms of the family. The most expensive among them was a small casket, most commonly used for sweets and produced by a certain Dino goldsmith.

Andrea Scolari's testament reveals that during his life he considerably enriched the decorations of the various religious places under his protectorate. We learn about a carpet featuring the history of Saint'Apollonia, which he donated to a church near *Varadinum* (Oradea, RO).<sup>18</sup> The carpet, similar to the silk textiles requested by Pippo for the funeral of Andrea and Matteo, might have been a product of one of the silk companies kept by

14 In 1423, Matteo purchased silk textiles for personal use from the company of Bartolomeo di Vieri, Francesco di Niccolò di Buto, Matteo di Niccolò da Cepetello, and Giulio and Giusto di Vieri di Guido: AOI, Estranei 188. fol. 35r.

15 AOI, Estranei 188. fol. 32v.

16 'Una confecteria grande con l'arme degli Scholari la quale fece Dino orafo, una cintola grande d'ariento casciano, due gobbelletti d'ariento dorati col coperchio et con l'arme, due miscirobbe bianche d'ariento con l'arme degli Scholari, uno bacino d'ariento bianco con l'arme, dodici scodelle d'ariento bianco, otto scodellini d'ariento bianco con l'arme, sei piattegli d'ariento bianco con l'arme, tre piattegli d'ariento un pocho minori senza arme, quatro piattelletti d'ariento, due gioielli l'uno a uso di messer Matheo con fibietta d'oro et uno balascio di valuta di fiorini centonovanta, et l'altro a uso di madonna con tre balasci e ttre perle di valuta di fiorini trecento.' For the original document, see: ASF, NA 5814. fol. 34v. The copy: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 276r. For the publication of the inventory see: Prajda, 'A Scolari család és néhány jelentős firenzei textil- és ötvösműhely'.

17 Prajda, 'The Coat of Arms in Fra Filippo Lippi's Portrait'.

18 Andrea's testament: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 290r. Published: Balogh, 'Andrea Scolari', p. 185. For summaries see: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, XIII. doc. 42. Fraknói, 'Flórenczi András végrendelete', p. 120.

the Scolaris' business partners.<sup>19</sup> Besides the carpet, the reliquary of Saint Ladislaus, commissioned for the cathedral of *Varadinum*, burial site of the king, is datable to the period when Andrea served as the local bishop. Given the lack of any further written references on the reliquary, art historians placed the production of the object between 1406 and 1443. Ernő Marosi has proposed the 1420s as the date of the reliquary, based on its stylistic connections to a group of sculptures from the royal court in Buda and to Pisanello's portrait of Sigismund of Luxembourg. He has also pointed out its stylistic similarities to Parisian goldsmiths' works, maybe as a result of Sigismund's attempt to attract French goldsmiths to Buda.<sup>20</sup> According to Zsombor Jékely, the facial features of the reliquary correspond to 'an astonishing degree' to the head of Theseus on a copy of Masolino's lost cycle of the *Famous Men*, which the master painted in Rome after his return from Hungary. Therefore, the reliquary might have been completed around the time of Masolino's arrival in Hungary.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, the head of St. Ladislaus on the wall paintings of the chapel in Ozora resembles to some extent the reliquary and the previously mentioned image. The latter, as well as Andrea Scolari's, seal prove that besides Sigismund, the Scolari were also eager to advance the cult of the holy king and its sepulture.<sup>22</sup> The reliquary is decorated with cloisonné technique, an innovation, that, according to Etele Kiss, might have arrived in the Kingdom of Hungary thanks to its Florentine inhabitants.<sup>23</sup> In fact, the cloisonné technique had been used on goldsmiths' works in north Italian and Tuscan proveniences in the late fourteenth century.<sup>24</sup> Reliquary busts, like the one of Saint Ladislaus, were also popular in Tuscany at that time.<sup>25</sup> However, given the lack of further evidence, besides these historical and technical considerations, it would be challenging to make a direct connection at this point between

19 The Corsi-Melanesi company provided the silk textiles for the funeral. ASF, CS I. 229.

20 Marosi, 'Reformatio Sigismundi', p. 35.

21 Jékely, 'Masolino in Hungary', pp. 120-121.

22 Sigismund wished to be buried in the cathedral of *Varadinum*. Saint Ladislaus also appeared on Andrea Scolari's seal. Balogh, *Varadinum*, pp. 26-28. For the cult of St. Ladislaus's sepulture in *Varadinum* see: Fedeles, 'Ad visitandumque sepulchrum sanctissimi regis Ladislai'.

23 Kiss, 'Die Anfänge des Drahtemails', p. 281.

24 One of the earliest examples is the goblet of Gian Galeazzo Visconti at the treasury of the cathedral of Monza, which is datable to 1396. The workshop of Marco di Bartolomeo Rustici also used the enamel technique for decoration. See one of his commissions in 1453: 'Quattro candelieri di rame dorato con sei smalti l'uno nel piè e con lioncini [...]'. Cohn, 'Un codice', pp. 57-76.

25 Donatello himself prepared a reliquary bust of San Rossore (1424-1427) for the Ognissanti Church in Florence.



the reliquary, the Scolari family, and any of the Florentine goldsmiths' workshops.

Goldsmiths surely were associated with the elite of Florentine artisan society by being enrolled, like silk manufacturers, into one of the five most prestigious guilds of Florence: the Por Santa Maria.<sup>26</sup> Shared guild membership, as well as neighbourhood proximity, also favoured cooperation between goldsmiths' and silk workshops, which were located predominantly in the areas of Via Vaccareccia, Mercato Nuovo, and the Porta Santa Maria. The highest quality of silk cloth decorated with precious metal elements was the result of the fruitful collaboration between silk manufacturers, entrepreneurs, and goldsmiths' workshops. At that point, the Florentine precious metal industry relied exclusively on merchant networks that operated in the mining areas of Europe or they developed interests in extra-European territories. Among them, as we have already seen, the Scolari's business network played an important role in transporting precious metals from the Kingdom of Hungary to the Italian Peninsula.

#### **Dino di Monte (1379-1431?) and Marco di Bartolomeo Rustici (1392/1393-1457)**

In the 1420s, Baldinaccio di Catellino Infangati, Matteo Scolari's brother-in-law, rented out his three workshops, located in Via Vaccareccia, to leading goldsmiths of the time. Among them was Dino di Monte (Montuccio), who, starting in 1403, was a registered member of the Por Santa Maria Guild.<sup>27</sup> The acquaintanceship between Dino and the Infangati brothers, however, went back at least a decade. By 1417, Dino's company had established a business relation with the Infangati brothers.<sup>28</sup> Antonio Infangati had even ordered a silver belt from Dino for his personal use, which might have been similar to the one listed among the silverware of the Scolari palace.<sup>29</sup> Dino also kept business contacts with other merchants belonging to the Scolari's business network, like Ridolfo di Bonifazio Peruzzi.<sup>30</sup> Dino

26 Prajda, 'Goldsmiths, Goldbeaters'.

27 ASF, Arte di Por Santa Maria 7. fol. 52r. (parish of San Lorenzo).

28 According to Antonio Infangati's account book, the intermediary bank which handled the transaction between him and Dino's workshop was Niccolò di Giovanni del Bellaccio's firm. ASF, Corp. Rel Sopp. 97. 13. fols. 2v, 3r-4r, 7r.

29 'Dino di Monte orafo e compagni deono avere a dì 31 di marzo per una cintola d'ariento bianco per me [...]'. ASF, Corp. Rel Sopp. 97. 13. fol. 3r.

30 In 1427, his brother and Dino shared some businesses; Dino took silk textiles from the already mentioned workshop for Peruzzi. AOI, Estranei 188. fol. 331v.

also knew Matteo well, as it was Matteo who ordered silverware from the goldsmith, including the already mentioned small silver casket and several plates, all of them decorated with the coat of arms of the family, which was part of the furnishing of the Scolari palace. Besides his purchases, the two of them were probably engaged together in some business activity; following Matteo's death, Dino petitioned the Merchant Court demanding payment from the heirs for silver and other goods.<sup>31</sup>

By that time, Dino's goldsmiths' workshop was among the most respected ones and it might have also provided its leading masters with a fair living. Dino set up his partnership sometime before 1410, with a considerably younger goldsmith named Marco di Bartolomeo Rustici (Rustichi).<sup>32</sup> In the 1420s, the two of them had already been engaged in some entrepreneurial activity in the workshop by cooperating with the neighbouring silk manufacturing firms, which explains the frequent appearance of Dino and Marco's partnership in the account books of the nearby silk workshop run by Bartolomeo di Vieri, Francesco di Niccolò di Buto, Matteo di Niccolò da Cepetello, and Giulio and Giusto di Vieri di Vieri di Guido.<sup>33</sup> This was also the very same silk firm that provided Matteo Scolari and his family with silk textiles. Since in 1420, it was Matteo's business partner Tommaso Borghini who introduced precious metal threads into the production of silk textiles in Florence, we should suspect that the threads were produced as an example in Dino's and Marco's workshop. After the 1430s, this continuous demand from the silk industry gave rise to the foundation of a number of goldbeaters' workshops in the city, which replaced goldsmiths' work in the silk sector.<sup>34</sup>

Dino surely developed an economic relation with the other two neighbouring goldsmiths' workshops that rented their spaces from Baldinaccio Infangati. Giovanni di Bandino, the leading master of one of the workshops,

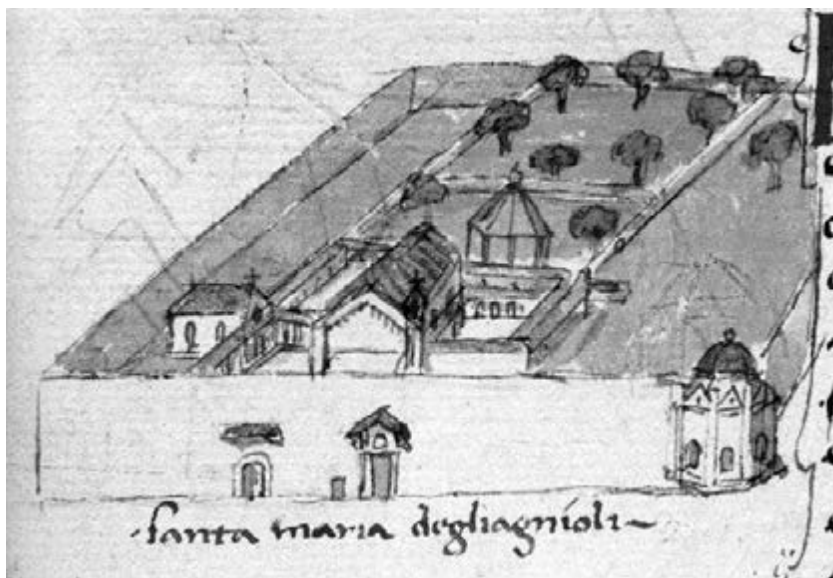
31 [...] Expone e dice Dino di Monte orafo in nome suo e di suoi compagni che l'erede di messer Matteo Scolari furono e sono loro debitori in fiorini 64 s. 4 d. 21 per arienti e mercatanti venduti e dati per esso Dino e compagni al decto per adietro messer Matteo [...]. ASF, Mercanzia 7114bis. fols. 277v-278v. (1427) In 1427, Dino appears as creditor in the declaration of Matteo's heirs. ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 875r. Dino was included in Matteo's testament: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 260r, 316r.

32 ASF, Arte della Lana 543. fol. 70r. For Marco's tax declaration, submitted in 1427, see: ASF Catasto 50. fol. 561r. Cohn, 'Un codice', p. 76. For Marco's life, see: Olive, 'Alla ricerca di Marco di Bartolomeo Rustici'.

33 Dino's company purchased silk textiles from the workshop on a regular basis. AOI, Estranei 188. fols. 135r, 138r, 167v, 325v, 331v.

34 Prajda, 'Goldsmiths, Goldbeaters'.

**Figure 4** The Monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli; on the right, the Scolari Oratory, by Marco Rustici, *Rustici Codex*, fol. 17v.



The publication of the image was authorized by the Biblioteca del Seminario Arcivescovile Maggiore di Firenze.

appears as a creditor in Matteo Scolari's tax declaration; he was also a customer of the Borghini silk firm.<sup>35</sup> The third goldsmith, Michele di Sizzi (Zazzi, Sezi), was also a customer of the silk workshop run by Bartolomeo di Vieri, Francesco di Niccolò di Buto, Matteo di Niccolò da Cepetello, and Giulio and Giusto di Vieri di Vieri di Guido.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, even the priest of the Santo Stefano parish church in Tizzano, which was under Matteo Scolari's protectorate, made purchases from Michele's workshops.<sup>37</sup> Antonio Infangati's fourth workshop was used by Piero di Giovannino, an embroiderer (*ricamatore*), who probably took care of the embroidery and other decorative elements of the silk textiles produced by the previously mentioned firms.

35 Giovanni appears as Matteo Scolari's creditor. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fols. 260r, 316r; MAP, 150. 17. fol. 19r. He bought textiles from Jacopo di Domenico Borghini for processing them. ASF, *Arte della Lana* 325. fol. 40v.

36 AOI, *Estranei* 188. fol. 50r, 145r. Michele was the son of a tailor of German origins. Böniger, *Die deutsche Einwanderung nach Florenz*, pp. 147-148.

37 ASF, *Catasto* 69. fol. 171r.

The close business relation between the workshop of Dino and Marco and the Scolari's network is also manifested in Marco's major surviving work – the manuscript entitled *La dimostrazione dell'andata del Santo Sepolcro* – which he illustrated with a wide range of images of Florentine buildings.<sup>38</sup> The high-quality drawings featuring on the first thirty pages of the codex, as well as some of Marco's other drawings, allude to a goldsmith master of significant talent.<sup>39</sup> In addition to the drawings, the codex, datable to between the early 1440s and around 1455, contains short descriptions of the buildings, among them the Monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli and the Scolari Oratory. This later one is the sole edifice the history of which was detailed at length by the author, stating that it was commissioned by the Bishop of *Varadinum*, 'Filippo Ispanne's relative, who administered the entire Kingdom of Hungary'.<sup>40</sup> Interestingly, Marco, in his image of the Oratory, anticipated the completion of the building and therefore, according to Cristina Acidini, he would have been familiar with the original design of its master, Filippo Brunelleschi.<sup>41</sup>

## 2 Architects

In early Renaissance Florence, those artisans who designed and carried out building projects were originally trained in workshops of different sorts, most commonly as goldsmiths, sculptors, or woodworkers. In fact, no architect is known who might have emerged from the ranks of the masons.<sup>42</sup> These workshops also played a crucial role in terms of networking among the young professionals and their future commissioners. In the first decades of the

38 *Codice Rustici*. For the dates of its execution: Olive, 'Alla ricerca di Marco di Bartolomeo Rustici', p. 43.

39 The illustrations of Saint Augustine's life, written by a certain Andrea di Lorenzo, are also attributed to him. BNCF, Manoscritti, Fondo Nazionale II. I. 112. fols. 315r-v. (earlier: Fondo Magliabecchiano Cl. XXXIX.3.). Dachs, 'Ein neues Blatt'. Lucia Gai claims that Marco might have occasionally practiced painting as well. In fact, he was planning to decorate his own burial chapel, which was meant to be located in the Santissima Annunziata church. Gai, 'La dimostrazione dell'andata dal Santo Sepolcro'.

40 'E in que luogo ordinò (un oratorio) il vescovo di Valadino cittadino fiorentino degli Scolari, parente di messere Filipo Ispanne, il quale ministrava tutto il reame d'Ungheria e gran battaglie fece per la fede di Cristo, tutte ebe vittoria contro al Gran Turco. Quello oratorio ò a otto face, con colonne, con molte capelle, e nel mezzo una trebuna tutta di macigno, lavorata tutta a l'antica, con perfette misure.' *Codice Rustici*, vol.1. fol. 18v.

41 Acidini, 'Un pio racconto', p. 15.

42 Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, p. 357.

fifteenth century, private commissions were not at all widespread, or at least they are not well-documented. Many of the talented artisans-architects had the occasion to work only for corporate patrons, like the five major guilds.

### Filippo di ser Brunellesco Lippi, Brunelleschi (1377-1446)

Filippo, by his training and thanks to his brothers' profession, was well connected to the city's goldsmiths' workshops, even to the ones related to the Scolari's network.<sup>43</sup> Because of his network and talent, Filippo had the possibility of working for both public and private commissioners. In 1419, he started the construction of the Ospedale degli Innocenti, which was under the supervision of the consuls of the Por Santa Maria Guild. The financial resources were left to the Guild by the testament of the wealthy merchant of Prato, Francesco di Marco Datini (1335-1410), who, having had no descendants, wished to preserve his name by the donation.<sup>44</sup> A year later in 1420, Filippo and his former adversary, Lorenzo Ghiberti, were nominated together as the supervisors of the construction of Filippo's invention: the dome of the Florentine cathedral.<sup>45</sup> The project was still ongoing when the master received the commission to design an oratory for the Scolari family.

In Florence, the custom of commissioning family chapels at various religious places dates back to the end of the thirteenth century.<sup>46</sup> The Scolari's contemporaries, like the Brancacci and the Carnesecchi who obtained some wealth in international trade, erected family chapels mainly inside parish churches. However, the Scolari Oratory – like the Old Sacristy (1420-1428) of the Medici at the San Lorenzo Church and the Pazzi Chapel (starting from c. 1429) at the Santa Croce Church, both designed and constructed by Filippo Brunelleschi – was meant to be an independent building, as part of the complex of the Monastery of the Santa Maria degli Angeli.<sup>47</sup> The project,

43 He and his brother Tommaso were trained together as goldsmiths. Tommaso had even established a goldsmith company in Florence. ASF, Arte della Lana 326. fol. 28r (1405). Between 1400 and 1401, Piero di Giovannino and Lunardo di Mazzeo di Duccio were working on the San Jacopo altar in the cathedral of Pistoia. They employed the young Filippo di ser Brunellesco as their assistant. Gai, *L'altare argenteo di San Jacopo*.

44 Francesco left 1000 Florentine florins, while the Guild intended to spend more than 20,000 Florentine florins for the constructions. Battisti, *Filippo Brunelleschi*, pp. 46-68.

45 Haines, 'Myth and Management in the Construction of Brunelleschi's Cupola'. Battisti, *Filippo Brunelleschi*, p. 330. For the documents see: Krautheimer, *Ghiberti*, p. 406. Terenzi, 'Maestre e organizzazione del lavoro negli Anni della Cupola'.

46 Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 98-101.

47 For the description of its architecture, see: Battisti, *Filippo Brunelleschi*, pp. 248-256.

therefore, was surely impressive, clearly mirroring the wealth as well as the inheritance strategy of the three elder Scolari.

Howard Saalman mentions the role Filippo di Rinieri Scolari played in administering his two uncles' inheritances, but he failed to attribute any task in planning the oratory to Pippo Scolari.<sup>48</sup> In my opinion, the conditions of the donation mirror Pippo's intention to erect a family chapel to represent the wealth and fame of the family. Since Andrea, Matteo, and Pippo did not have any surviving male offspring, they might have had a plan comparable to that of Francesco Datini when they decided to leave a considerable part of the family patrimony in the hands of the Calimala Guild. The original wishes of Andrea and Matteo Scolari, expressed in their testaments, were to erect two separate monasteries in the centres of their estates in Tizzano and Vicchiomaggio, which would have been subjects of the Monastery of the Santa Maria degli Angeli.<sup>49</sup> Both building complexes would have housed ten monks. The financial means were stipulated as 12,000 Florentine florins for each of them.<sup>50</sup> Andrea's testaments also explain that the sum should be spent on a monastery composed of a refectory and dormitorium, as well as on clothing for the monks. He also ordered a Bible for the monastery, specifying that it was supposed to be written in Gothic script.<sup>51</sup> In 1426, Pippo Scolari, probably acknowledging the likely high construction costs, asked the Pope for a year of patience in the execution of the two testaments.<sup>52</sup> For the same reason, he also asked the Pope for a revision of the testaments, in order to unify the two heredities and construct a single building.<sup>53</sup> The idea of the

48 Saalman, *Filippo Brunelleschi*, pp. 380-407.

49 See Matteo's testament in January 1424. ASF, NA, 5814. fol. 28v. The copy of the document: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326. fol. 272r. The reinforcement of Matteo's testament, in 1426: Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326. fol. 283v. Andrea's testament made in January 1426: Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326. fol. 289r.

50 ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 256r.

51 ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 290r.

52 *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, I. docs. 903-904.

53 In December 1427, the consuls of the Calimala Guild authorized the construction of a monastery either in Tizzano or in Vicchiomaggio. ASF, Provvisoni 118, fols. 134r-136v. Canestrini, 'Discorso sopra alcune relazioni'. Pippo requested a papal bull in order to be able to unify the two heredities. See the tax return submitted by the consuls of the Calimala Guild in the name of Matteo's inheritance, in 1431: 'Á si a dare Antonio di Salvestro di ser Ristoro fiorini 610 e costi di mesi 6, perchè a lui ciè, li trasse Francesco d'Altobiancho degli Alberti, che paghò a Roma per avere la bolla del papa, che di due luoghi si possa fare uno e altra grazia per fatti di messer Andrea Scolari, fu vescovo di Varadino ch'anche lui lasciò si faciese uno munistero di monaci di chamaldoli [...]'. ASF, Catasto 386, fol. 664r. For an account, prepared in 1427, which refers to the papal bull see: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 259r. Another document mentions the unification of the two heredities. Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 266r.

oratory, therefore, would have been that of the baron, and even though Pippo died without seeing the first stone laid at the construction site, the agreement between the monastery and the Scolari family may have already been set. The monks were obliged to commemorate the days of Andrea's and Matteo's deaths. Furthermore, it was stated in the agreement that the oratory should be decorated with the coat of arms of the family.<sup>54</sup>

The choice of the mother monastery, and therefore the location of the building, would have been the result of earlier connections the Scolari maintained with one of the most preeminent members of the monastery, Ambrogio di Bencivenni Traversari (1386-1439). The hypothesis advanced on Traversari's participation in the planning of the Scolari Oratory seems to be supported by further references.<sup>55</sup> In 1424, Matteo Scolari decided to make a testament to include the Camaldolese monastery of the Santa Maria degli Angeli, in which he wished to leave 1000 Florentine florins to the place.<sup>56</sup> The witnesses testifying the document were all local monks, including the miniator Simone Stefani (d. 1437) and Ambrogio himself. Ambrogio, who had been living within the walls of the Monastery since the turn of the century, appeared a year later once again as witness in Matteo's newly made testament.<sup>57</sup> He stayed in the monastery until 1431, when Pope Eugenius IV made him general of the Camaldolese Order. In that year, a document issued prior to the beginnings of the constructions, stated that the Oratory should be designed in a way that the consuls of the Calimala Guild and the prior of the Monastery would like.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, the project, which started in 1435, was watched over by the consuls of the Calimala Guild and Filippo di Rinieri Scolari, as well as Ambrogio Traversari.<sup>59</sup> The construction of the oratory was disrupted in 1436, probably because of Ambrogio's absence when

54 'Et che in decto oratorio si metta l'arme degli Scolari e dell'Arte secondo parra loro [...]'. ASF, NA 10463. doc. 180. (31/08/1431) Published: Saalman, *Filippo Brunelleschi*, p. 451. 'Item due anniversari ciascuno anno nel dì della morte del vescovo e di messer Mattheo [...]'. NA, 10465. 55 Von Fabriczy, *Filippo Brunelleschi*.

56 ASF, NA 5814. fols. 28r, 34r. (24/03/1425). The witnesses of the document were: Vieri di Giovanni Ser Riducci, Mauro Morelli, Cristofano Franceschi, the miniator Simone Stefani (†1437), Raffaele Vieri, Salvestro Migliori, and Ambrogio di Bencivenni Traversari. In 1427, the Scolaris' heirs reported in their tax return that Matteo wished to leave 20 Florentine florins for the monks of the Santa Maria degli Angeli. 'I frati degli Agnoli devono avere, gli lasciò fiorini 20.' ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 875v.

57 Pontone, *Ambrogio Traversari*, p. 1.

58 'Facciasi uno oratorio nel chanpaccio contiguo al muro dell'orto in quel modo e con quelle qualità che parra a consoli dell'Arte de Mercatandi e al priore di Sancta Maria degli Angeli [...]'. ASF, NA, 10463. doc. 180.

59 The two inheritances were consigned to Filippo Scolari. Saalman, *Filippo Brunelleschi*, pp. 385.



the Pope dispatched him to *Fehérvár* (Székesfehérvár; HU) to negotiate with King Sigismund.

Given Pippo's plans in founding a family chapel for symbolic reasons, it is very likely that he already had an eye on Filippo di ser Brunellesco as a possible architect of the building. So far no scholar has attempted to make a connection between the three elder Scolari and Brunelleschi, maybe because his name never appears in the documents related to the oratory before 1436. Filippo, as we have seen, already had experience in designing private chapels. The Scolari as well as Ambrogio Traversari had the occasion to see the architect working, since the construction sites of both the Ospedale degli Innocenti and the Old Sacristy were located just a few steps away from the Monastery of the Santa Maria degli Angeli. Besides, in 1405, Matteo Scolari and the Lippi (Brunelleschi) brothers shared the neighbourhood, having been registered as inhabitants of the same parish of the Santa Maria Maggiore Church.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, Filippo's friendship with other artisans working for the Scolari family, including the already mentioned goldsmiths, also suggest that he was, indeed, acquainted with members of the family even before the commission. Filippo's biography, composed by Antonio di Tuccio Manetti (1423-1497), is supplemented by the already mentioned anecdote of the Fat Woodcarver, which describes how Filippo had humiliated his friend, the protagonist of the story, Manetto di Jacopo Amannatini. After the cruel joke, Manetto immigrated to the Kingdom of Hungary and received employment as Pippo Scolari's architect.<sup>61</sup> The story, as we shall see later, is based on concrete historical facts, and therefore Filippo's friendship with the Fat Woodcarver might have given him the possibility of obtaining a commission from the Scolari.

### **Manetto di Jacopo Amannatini, The Fat Woodcarver (1385/1387-1450/1452)**

In early Renaissance Florence, another group of craftsmen in charge of building projects was trained as woodworkers: cabinetmakers and carpenters like Antonio di Manetto Ciaccheri (Manetti), who designed a wooden model for the dome of the Florentine cathedral as an adversary to Brunelleschi.<sup>62</sup> The

60 ASF, Monte ser. II. 1805, fol. 40.

61 'El Grasso, e l'compagno giunti in Ungheria si dettono da fare, et ebbonvi buona ventura, imperocchè in pochi anni vi diventarono ricchi secondo le loro condizioni, per favore del detto Spano, che lo fece Maestro Ingegnieri, e chiamasi Maestro Manetto da Firenze, e stettevi con buona reputazione [...]'. Manetti, *Vita di Filippo Brunelleschi*, p. 42.

62 *Gli anni della cupola*, 00204013.0430. (11/10/1432). Haines and Battista, 'Un'altra storia', p. 20.

Fat Woodcarver, Manetto di Jacopo Amannatini, might have been an artisan just like him. The story encapsulated in the *Novella del Grasso legnaiuolo* probably dates to 1410, when Pippo Scolari visited his native Florence as an ambassador of King Sigismund. This might have given Manetto the opportunity to follow his new master to the Kingdom of Hungary, where he was employed as the baron's architect. While there, his experiences were a far cry from the image depicted by Mary Bergstein: 'Compared with the forests of Central Europe, where the woodcarver Grasso ended up, Padua, with its university, its humanist culture, and its Florentine connections, must have looked like paradise.'<sup>63</sup> On the contrary, Donatello might have rightfully developed resentment toward Grasso, who, following Pippo Scolari's death, was employed in Sigismund's court in the company of several Florentines, humanists, and other prestigious foreigners.<sup>64</sup>

Manetto's financial conditions also point to a social status unique among leading Florentine artisans of the time.<sup>65</sup> As Péter Farbaky's research has revealed, Manetto's case might have been the earliest, but it was definitely not the only one; another woodworker of Florentine origins named Chimenti Camicia (1431-c. 1505), was put in charge of the constructions and maybe even the design of buildings by Matthias Corvinus (r. 1458-1490).<sup>66</sup>

In the 1410s and 1420s, the Scolari had important ongoing building projects both in Florence and in Hungary. By the time of Manetto's arrival in Hungary, the brothers had already moved their family home from the Via Panzano (today Via Panzani), located in the parish of Santa Maria Maggiore, to the more prestigious street of the Borgo degli Albizzi, the parish of San Procolo.<sup>67</sup> According to the wine maker Bartolomeo di Michele del Corazza, in 1410, Pippo Scolari was staying in his own palace.<sup>68</sup> The

63 Bergstein, 'The Fat Stonecarver', p.192.

64 In the *Novella*, Filippo di ser Brunellesco says to Grasso: 'You've really gotten rich out of it and become acquainted with the emperor of the world and with Pippo Spano and with many other great princes and barons.' Martines, *An Italian Renaissance Sextet*, p. 211. In fact, we find him in Buda in 1444 when he acted as one of the witnesses of the humanist Pier Paolo Vergerio's last will. Ziliotto, 'Nuove testimonianze'.

65 Prajda, 'Manetto di Jacopo Amannatini'.

66 Farbaky, 'Chimenti Camicia'.

67 See the tax declaration, submitted by the Scolari's heirs in 1427: 'Una chasa posta in Firenze, nel popolo di San Brocholo, che da primo e secondo via, da terzo dette rede, da quarto chiasolino. Nella detta chasa abita Madonna Piera, dona fu di messer Mateo Scholari, colle sue figliuole e cholle maserizie a lloro uso.' ASF, Catasto 59. fol. 871r.

68 '[...] Questo messere Filippo tenne, il tempo che egli vi stette, corte bandita, e fece di molti e nobili conviti a cittadini e a donne, e quasi tutto Firenze traeva, sera e mattina; stava (a casa) sua dirimpetto a l'albergo della Corona, per modo che non vi si poteva capere.' Del Corazza, *Diario fiorentino*, p. 26.

**Figure 5** The castle, Ozora

building in the Borgo degli Albizzi, mentioned briefly by another contemporary chronicle, was not entirely new, but it was constructed by its former owner, messer Gherardozzo Bartoli.<sup>69</sup> However, Brenda Preyer, who has conducted extensive research on the history of the building, maintains that the original commissioners were the Scolari brothers.<sup>70</sup> Either it was a new building, or it was just new to the Scolari, but the brothers definitely needed a skilled master to shape the palace according to their tastes. The Scolari palace itself, being a private property, has never been studied from an archeological-architectonical point of view. Only some elements of the first floor, marked by the appearance of the family's coat of arms on the façade, are seemingly datable to the Scolari period.<sup>71</sup> Because of the lack of any research, the time of the construction of the inner, open courtyard is also uncertain. To what extent it may have shared elements with other palace buildings of the time, we do not know. Only short descriptions support the

69 'Chasa che fé murare Gherardozzo Bartoli et chiamasi quella di misser Matteo Scholari, ché llui vi lasciò dentro la moglie e le fanciulle femine [...]'. Petriboni and Di Borgo Rinaldi, *Priorista*, p. 209.

70 I wish to thank Brenda Preyer for sharing with me her observations and findings.

71 For the coat of arms of the family, see: Prajda, 'The Coat of Arms in Fra Filippo Lippi's Portrait'.

idea that the palace was one of, if not the finest, in contemporary Florence and several preeminent guests of the Florentine *Signoria* sojourned within its walls.<sup>72</sup> Given the Scolari's connections to various Florentine artisans, we shall not exclude the possibility that the architect of the Scolari Palace, as well as of their other building projects, might have been a noted one, if not Manetto himself.

In 1416, a couple of years following the Scolari's displacement from the Via Panzano to the Borgo degli Albizzi, they received the royal privilege to erect a castle ('nobilium castra seu fortalitia') at the heart of Pippo's estates in Ozora, which might have been made of either stone or wood.<sup>73</sup> Seven years later, in 1423, a document issued by King Sigismund informs us that he and his court were on a visit in Ozora.<sup>74</sup> The King's presence in this small town of no strategic importance was definitely due to Pippo's invitation, and we might expect that, by then, the construction work on the castle was at least in a very advanced phase. Three years later, in 1426, the would-be-in-law Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi described the building as *magnifico castello*, an indicator that it was completed.<sup>75</sup> The ambassador also recalled in his report written to the Florentine *Signoria* that, while in Ozora, he met his fellow citizen, Manetto Amannatini, who, in spite of his Florentine origins, was called *Manetto da Osora*.<sup>76</sup> The appellation was surely a result of Manetto's long stay in the baron's estate, and he, being a woodworker, would have participated in the construction work of the castle. His possible contribution is also supported by a short reference to a debt of the Scolari's heirs toward Manetto, in which they owed him 1000 Florentine florins.<sup>77</sup> In addition, the considerable increase of his savings and

72 In 1429, the prince of Salerno was among the guests. Del Corazza, *Diario fiorentino*, p. 70.

73 The royal privilege mentions three co-owners of the building: Pippo, Matteo, and their nephew and heir, Leonardo di Caccia Altoviti: 'Pipo, nec non Mathias et Leonardus, eoros heredes et successores [...]'. MNL, DL 87891 (16/04/1416), '[...] Castra, fortalitia seu castella lapidea vel lignea [...]'. DL 87893. (27/05/1416).

74 Engel, C. Tóth, *Itineraria regum et reginarum*, p. 115.

75 '[...] Venimo a Osora, luogo principale dello Spano, messer Filippo Scolari conte di Temiscivara [...] e fececi mostrare il castello bellissimo [...]'. *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III, pp. 589-590.

76 '[...] Manetto da Osora, bene che sia fiorentino.' *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III, p. 590. On the basis of this evidence, Tibor Koppány developed the hypothesis that Manetto would have participated in the construction of the building. Koppány, 'Filippo Scolari ozorai vára'.

77 'Più capitoli di una lettera da Buda a dì 28 di giugno 1427 de fiorini 1000 si pagharono per messer lo Spano a Manetto di Jacopo da Firenze per lo lavorio del castel(lo) d'Osola.' ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. fol. 370v.

outstanding credits over the years also prove that Pippo Scolari as architect in charge of construction works, in fact, employed him.<sup>78</sup>

The main building of the castle in Ozora, which has been the subject of extensive archeological and architectural research, also shared some elements with early Renaissance Florentine palaces and seigniorial buildings of the countryside. The chief archeologist of the site, István Feld, maintains that the castle follows the style of the buildings commissioned by King Sigismund in its carved details, including gates, doors, and windows.<sup>79</sup> In my opinion, however, other features such as the rectangular and open inner courtyard surrounded by a series of rooms, the *scarpata* of the outer walls, and the Ghibelline-style *merlatura* can be considered as less typical of Hungarian castle-building of the period. Despite the stone components, the castle itself, as well as its surrounding walls and towers, was made of bricks. In fact, the single series of rooms organized around the open courtyard might give the impression of early Renaissance palaces.<sup>80</sup> Meanwhile, the merlatura referred to the Ghibelline heritage of the Scolari, a typical element of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century castles in the Florentine countryside.

The building complex itself might have been the result of cooperation between local masons and stone carvers and a master mason or architect. As the examples of Antonio Ciaccheri and Chimenti Camicia show, woodcarvers might have indeed possessed the skills required to become the architect of a building of this size. The architect's role, as Richard A. Goldthwaite has defined, most commonly included administration and supervision of the production of materials for construction and the supply of equipment, as well as hiring and supervising workers. Therefore, management, technical

78 Prajda, *Manetto di Jacopo Amannatini*. The woodcarver was acquainted with members of the Scolari's business network; salary and payment on behalf of Pippo Scolari was managed by the Carneseccchi. See his mother's tax declaration, submitted in 1427: 'Agiunse d' avere avere Manetto suo figliuolo da Simone di Pagolo Carnesechi e fratelli deono dare per la ragione d'Ungheria fiorini 120 di ungheri [...]'. ASF, Catasto 31, fol. 846r. Since 1437, his brother Niccolò was a member of the Doctors' Guild in Florence. ASF, Arte dei Medici e Speziali, 21. fol. 306r.

79 Feld, *Az ozorai várkastély*, pp. 8-9. Ibid., 'Die regelmäßigen 'Burgschlösser' des Königreiches Ungarn'.

80 Goldthwaite, 'Florentine Palace'. Florentine palaces and building blocks in the 1427 Catasto are typically described as composed of *casa* or *palagio*, *corte*, *pozzo*; sometimes they included also loggias. Such buildings were owned, for example, by several inhabitants of the parish of San Piero Maggiore where the Scolari also lived. Among them were: Giovanni di Filippo Corbizzi (una chasa con torre, con corte, pozzo e volta) ASF, Catasto 80. fol. 32v; Luca di messer Maso degli Albizzi (1 chasa, con corte, stalle e loggia) Catasto 80. fol. 45v. Tita, widow of Antonio d'Alessandro degli Alessandri, the Guadagni's in-law (1 palagio chon corte a volta, orto e stalle) Catasto 80. fol. 67v.

skills, and a talent for designing buildings were the prerequisites.<sup>81</sup> Because of the lack of any detailed evidence, we do not know which of these skills the woodcarver Manetto possessed.

However, besides the castle in Ozora, Pippo had several ongoing construction projects in the 1410s and 1420s which might have required Manetto's assistance. In 1418, he requested permission from Pope Martin V to build an Observant Franciscan convent, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, in Ozora.<sup>82</sup> Three years later, in 1421, the convent was partly built, and by 1423 it was fully completed.<sup>83</sup> During Sigismund of Luxembourg's reign, erecting convents in Hungary for Observant Franciscan friars came into fashion among the barons.<sup>84</sup> In spite of the dubious chronology of the other convents built in the period, we can say that the convent in Ozora would have been one of the earliest used by the Observant branch of the Franciscans.

The Observants gained autonomy inside the Franciscan Order at the Council of Constance (1414-1418), in which some Hungarian barons, among them Pippo Scolari, participated.<sup>85</sup> There are no documents at our disposal to determine whether Bernardino da Siena (1380-1444), an influential preacher of the Order who was present at the Council, might have had any direct connections to Pippo. However, his words would have generated the increased interest for the Observants; in 1417 and in 1424-1425, he was preaching in Fiesole and Florence.

The earliest notice with a direct link between the Scolari and the Observant Franciscans is related to Matteo Scolari's testament, issued in 1422.<sup>86</sup> According to the document, he intended to make a donation for the construction of the earliest building of the San Salvatore al Monte in Florence. Furthermore, he wished to be buried on the property of the Observant Franciscans, located on the construction site of the San Salvatore

81 Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, p. 351.

82 *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, I. doc. 95. The approval of the document arrived a day later: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, VI. doc. 1961. (28/05/1418).

83 *XV. századi pápák oklevelei*, I. doc. 434. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, VIII. doc. 1244. (15/12/1421). Fedeles and Prajda, *Ő olyan vallásosan*.

84 In 1409, János Maróthy received papal permission to erect a Franciscan convent. Because of his imprisonment he received a new permission in 1420 and started the constructions in Gyula. The monastery was mentioned for the first time only in 1452. There is no information on when the Observant branch started to use it. Szatmári, 'Gyula középkori ferences temploma', p. 409. The King himself founded an Observant convent in 1421. Romhányi, 'Das Konstanzer Konzil und die Ankunft der Franziskaner-observanz'.

85 He was at the council of Constance in 1415, when the Franciscan observants obtained autonomy. He was mentioned by Ulrich von Richental. *Chronik des Konstanzer Konzils*, p. 182.

86 ASF, Corp Rel Sop. 78. 326. fol. 267r. *Koldulórendi építészeti*.

near the San Miniato al Monte Monastery. He wanted to have his coat of arms carved on his sepulture and flags bearing his insignia hanging over the tomb.<sup>87</sup>

Similar to the convent in Ozora, the Franciscan Convent of the San Salvatore al Monte was founded in 1418 following the Council of Constance. In that year, the international merchant Luca di Jacopo della Tosa (Tosinghi) donated his properties, located near the San Miniato al Monte Monastery, to the order. The Della Tosa originally lived in the parish of San Salvatore, in the quarter of San Giovanni, which might explain the patron's choice of the new convent. Members of the Tosinghi family had business interests in Hungary, even setting up a merchant company with Matteo Scolari, sometime before 1408.<sup>88</sup> The construction work lasted between 1419 and 1435, simultaneous with the erection of the convent in Ozora.<sup>89</sup> Both convents can be considered among the earliest built for the Observant Franciscans in Florence and in Hungary.

In 1428, two years after his master Pippo Scolari's death, Manetto Amanatini returned to Florence to make his testament in the Convent of the San Salvatore al Monte. According to the document, he wished to leave a certain amount for the construction work of the building complex.<sup>90</sup> The witnesses of the testament were all Franciscan friars and at least one among them was originally from the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>91</sup>

87 ASF, NA 5814. fol. 267r. In his testament, dated to 1423, he wished to donate 20 Florentine florins to the observant Franciscans. NA 5814. fol. 28r.

88 The tax declaration of Giovanni's heir and son, Scolaio, submitted in 1427: 'Dice che debbe avere fiorini 79 s. 15, i quali truova resta avere da Nofri di Andrea e Andrea di Giovanni e fratelli, sono per resto del chorpo della compagnia quando Giovanni Tosinghi fu loro chompagno in Ungheria, la quale compagnia finì nel'anno 1404 [...]'. ASF, Catasto 296. fol. 112v. Scolaio's declaration, presented in 1431. Catasto 381. fol. 924r. In 1391, Giovanni Tosinghi was mentioned as collector of ecclesiastical revenues in Hungary. Esch, 'Bankiers der Kirche im Grossen Schisma', p. 382. In 1410, Branca di Rinieri Scolari owed a certain sum to Riniero and Scolaio Tosinghi. ASF, Diplomatico Normali, 08/10/1410. Giovanni Tosinghi operated in various parts of the Kingdom, including Transylvania. See a business quarel in which a merchant from *Hermannstadt* sued by his procurator, Giovanni di Pagolo Carnesecchi, Tosinghi's heirs for business debt: 'Johanni Tosinghi allora demorant nelle parti di Ungheria, venduti di decto Jacobo da Sibino, mercante nelle parti di Silvana del reame di Ungheria in più diverse et altri partiti tanta seta, panni e altre mercatantie di fi. 6400. s. 100.' ASF, Mercanzia 7119. fol. 393v.

89 Pellecchia Najemy, 'The First Observant Church'. For the donation of Luca della Tosa, cited by Pellecchia, see: ASF, NA 19337. fols. 45r-v.

90 In 1435, Tommaso di Francesco Busini donated the annual interest of his Monte shares of 1000 florins for ten years to the Franciscans in order to construct a family chapel. Pellecchia Najemy, 'The First Observant Church', p. 288.

91 '[...] Vocatis et rogatis fratribus Nicolao Benozzi, Masseo Lapini, Antonio Ugolini, Iohanne Luce omnibus de Florentia, Nicolao Iohannis de Tripoli de Soria, Michaele Bartoli de Florentia,



In the earliest phase of its construction, which falls in the first part of the fifteenth century, the building complex of the San Salvatore al Monte probably included only the area of the convent, the Busini Sacristy (1442), and a smaller church, the location of which is not identical to today's church.<sup>92</sup> Meanwhile, the partial archaeological research, carried out in Ozora at the ruins of the convent, has revealed a church with three aisles, about 35-40m long and a convent of about 55-60m long.<sup>93</sup> In the absence of similar archeological researches at the San Salvatore al Monte, we shall hardly be able to say to what extent the two building complexes shared architectural elements. The only surviving historical evidence seems to allude to the connection between the two convents in Florence and in Ozora, established by the Scolari family and maybe also by Manetto Amannatini as the possible architect.

### 3 Painters

Meanwhile in Hungary, patronizing parish churches situated on the *feudum* of a nobleman was a widespread practice.<sup>94</sup> In Florence, too, parish churches located near houses of well-off merchants became places of artistic commission.<sup>95</sup> Religious buildings of the time were most commonly decorated with wall paintings in Florence as well as in Hungary.

In Ozora, Pippo improved the parish church of the settlement with his donations as well as by renovating and developing the building itself, which was destined to be his burial site.<sup>96</sup> Since the fifteenth-century building was replaced in the eighteenth century with a new one, and there has been no archeological research done on the site, it remains questionable if and how its walls were ornamented.

Besides the parish church, which was connected to the castle by a small bridge, Pippo also felt the moral obligation to build a chapel inside his

Benedicto Martini de Ungaria, Petro Laurentii de Gambasso, omnibus fratribus ordinis Beati Francisci de observantia vulgariter nuncupatis et aliter [...]: ASF, NA 18510. Published: Prajda, 'Manetto di Jacopo Ammanatini'. I wish to thank Lorenz Böninger for calling my attention to the document.

92 For the groundfloor plans and the description of the archeological-architectonical researches and interventions see: Amonaci, *Conventi toscani dell'osservanza francescana*, pp. 172-173.

93 Nagy, 'Ozorai ferences'.

94 Jékely, 'Painted Chancels in Parish Churches'.

95 Najemy, *A History of Florence*, pp. 323-340.

96 Fedeles and Prajda, *Ó olyan vallásosan*.

**Figure 6 The head of Saint Ladislaus, frescoes at the castle chapel, Ozora**

residence, which occupied the space between two sizeable halls on the first floor of the northeastern wing. It was first mentioned in 1438, when his widow, Borbála Ozorai, asked indulgence from the pope for her chapel, dedicated to San Filippo and Santa Barbara.<sup>97</sup> The fragmented paintings, found during the architectural research of the northeastern wall, reveal that some parts or maybe the entire room was decorated with the *al fresco* technique.<sup>98</sup> The high quality of the remaining face of Saint Ladislaus, as well as the technique itself, suggest that its skilled master might have been of northern Italian provenience. He painted the walls of the chapel during or right after the first construction phase of the building.<sup>99</sup> Even

97 *A középkori Magyarország levéltári forrásai, II. doc.* (DL 88142).

98 Feld and Gere and Gerelyes and Kisfaludi and Koppány and Lászy and Vizi, *Jelentés*, pp. 87-88. I wish to thank István Feld for giving me access to the documentation of the architectural-archaeological research of the castle. The existence of the paintings has been mentioned so far only in brief. Feld, *Az ozorai várkastély*. For another short observation regarding the state of the frescoes, see: Szakács, 'Saints of the Knights', p. 321. A similar opinion was expressed in Jékely, 'Masolino in Hungary', p. 118.

99 Verebes, *Ozora*, p. 37. The restoration of the painting was carried out in 2002 by Dóra Verebes. I had the chance to see the fragments before the restoration, during the cleaning phase, and after the intervention. I wish to thank Dóra Verebes for giving me access to the documentation of the restoration.

though the Italian master might not have been familiar with the figures of the Hungarian kings, Pippo's devotion to Saint Ladislaus required him to acquire some knowledge of his legacy.<sup>100</sup>

Among all these religious places, probably the most important constructions took place in *Fehérvár* (Székesfehérvár; HU), when Pippo received the royal privilege to establish a burial chapel in the cathedral. Since the beginning of the Hungarian Kingdom, this cathedral had accommodated the sepultures of several kings and queens, like the first king of Hungary, Saint Stephan, and Louis I of Anjou.<sup>101</sup> It was not unique, but still a considerable honour among the barons, that Pippo obtained the right from Sigismund to construct a family chapel there, which was completed by 1418.<sup>102</sup> Even though Pippo's and Borbála's sepulture was later destroyed, the inscription on their marble tomb was preserved by a Florentine chronicle.<sup>103</sup>

By the beginning of the fifteenth century, erecting private chapels inside both private homes and parish churches became very fashionable in Hungary as well as in Florence. Among the family chapels founded during Pippo's time, the one patronized by Pagolo di Berto Carnesecchi in the Santa Maria Maggiore Church, old parish of the Scolari, and another by Felice di Michele Braccacci in the Santa Maria del Carmine Church were both partly decorated by Masolino.<sup>104</sup> The two commissions, by members of the mercantile elite, suggest that Masolino was among the most successful painters in the city at that time. The compilation of the Carnesecchi-Boni altarpiece in 1423 and his contribution to the decorations of the Carnesecchi Chapel (c. 1423-1425) might have given Pippo Scolari the confidence to offer him employment in Hungary.<sup>105</sup>

100 For the figure of Saint Ladislaus appearing in Italian paintings see: it appears on one of Simone Martini's paintings. Prokopp, 'Simone Martini Szent László képe Altomonte-ben'. For the cult of the holy King see: Kerny, *Szent László-kultusz*.

101 For example, Stiborici Stibor was buried there. Engel, 'Temetkezések'.

102 *XV. századi századi pápák oklevelei*, I. doc. 78. *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, V. doc. 1858. *Okmánytár Ozorai Pipo életéhez*, p. 731.

103 'A di 27 di dicembre al tempo di questi Signori mori in Ungheria Filippo Scolari al quale da l'Imperatore Sigismondo gli fu fatto una cappella et sepolcro di marmo con questo pitaffio latino et posto nella Propositura di Abba Reale. Sepulcrum egregi viri et magnifici domini Philippi de Scolaribus de Florentia Comitit Themisuariensis et Ozorum qui obiit. A.D. 1426 die 27 decembris.' Petriboni and Di Borgo Rinaldi, *Priorista*, p. 193.

104 Joannides, *Masaccio and Masolino*, p. 28. The painting is decorated with the coat of arms of the Carnesecchi and the Boni families. In 1427, Pagolo's sons in their declaration wrote that: 'La chapella di Santa Chaterina di Santa Maria Maggiore de' avere per testamento di nostro padre ogni anno due torchi di valuta di fiorini tre.' ASF, Catasto 55, fol. 791r.

105 The Carnesecchi-Boni Madonna (Madonna of Humility) is the only panel painting by Masolino which has a solid chronology. Joannides, *Masaccio and Masolino*, p. 280, cat. 4. Sometime

### Tommaso di Cristofano di Fino, Masolino (1383/1384-1440?)

Probably because of the great privilege and the extraordinary importance of the work, scholars have advanced the hypothesis that Masolino might have arrived in the Kingdom of Hungary in order to decorate Pippo's burial chapel in *Fehérvár* with wall paintings. Given the unfortunate condition of the remains of the cathedral and the lack of any written sources, we can only make speculations about the actual work carried out by the painter in Hungary.<sup>106</sup> However, after visiting the chapel in 1426, Rinaldo degli Albizzi and his fellow ambassador described it as richly endowed and decorated.<sup>107</sup>

According to a hypothesis advanced by Anthony Molho, Masolino had already been decorating the Brancacci Chapel alone when he stopped his work and left for Hungary in September 1425. He stayed there for at least sixteen months, serving Pippo Scolari until December 1426.<sup>108</sup> Wall paintings located in various parts of the former Kingdom of Hungary prove that the influence of the Italian Trecento had already reached the region.<sup>109</sup> However, until Pippo's time, no Italian master, either architect or painter, working in the Kingdom of Hungary is known to us by name.

The obscurity of Masolino's early life makes it rather challenging to link him directly to any members of the Scolari's network. Miklós Boskovits has suggested that the lack of any written documents on the painter in Florence prior to 1422 might be due to his absence from the city, and that he might have been active elsewhere, in Tuscany, in Lombardy, or perhaps even in Hungary.<sup>110</sup> There are no sources which might confirm or deny Boskovits' hypothesis. However, it is likely that the Scolari's merchant networks helped Masolino get to the Kingdom of Hungary. Maybe it was the Carnesecchi, old neighbours of the Scolari, who introduced them to the painter, we do not know exactly.<sup>111</sup> Masolino also had some indirect connections to goldsmiths who were acquainted with the Scolari brothers. Paul Joannides maintains,

before September 1425, Masolino and Uccello decorated together the Carnesecchi Chapel in the Santa Maria Maggiore Church. In early 1427, it was noted as complete. Idem, p. 30.

106 Jékely, 'Masolino in Hungary', pp. 119.

107 '[...] E vedemo la capella sua fatta di nuovo, per sua sepoltura, adorna molto, e bene dotata e e di ricchi paramenti.' *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, III, pp. 589-590.

108 Molho, 'The Brancacci Chapel'. The only document testifying Masolino's presence in the Church of the Santa Maria del Carmine is datable to July 1425. Beck, *Masaccio*, p. 50.

109 Prokopp, *Italian Trecento Influence on Murals in East Central Europe*.

110 Boskovits, 'Il percorso di Masolino', pp. 48-49.

111 For the Carnesecchi Chapel, see: '[...] Cappellae et altaris Sanctae Catharinae erectae et factae per dictum olim Paulum patrem ipsorum in ecclesia Sancta Mariae Maioris de Florentia (1427).' Proccaci, 'Sulla Cronologia', pp. 37-38.

on the basis of stylistic inference and a critical reading of Giorgio Vasari's *Vite*, that Masolino 'certainly would have had some training before 1403, in all probability as a silversmith' and that he was an apprentice in Lorenzo Ghiberti's workshop as well.<sup>112</sup> In my view, the multiple cross-references to goldsmiths, including Dino di Monte and Leonardo di Donato Rucellai, members of Giovanni Rucellai's household, who appears as Manetto Amannatini's friend in the story of the Fat Woodcarver, support the idea that Masolino was closely related to these goldsmiths' workshops.<sup>113</sup>

Furthermore, the Florentine merchants involved in his payment also underline that the painter was indeed acquainted with members of the Scolari's business network. The mediating company between the baron and Masolino was the one run by Simone di Piero Melanesi and the Corsi brothers in Buda, which had received the Monte payment on Pippo Scolari's behalf.<sup>114</sup> On 26 August 1426, Pippo deposited the sum of 799 Florentine florins, 6 soldi, and 8 denari to Piero di messer Donato Velluti.<sup>115</sup> At the termination of the contract period, one out of the following Florentines – Manetto Amannatini, Nofri di Bardo Bardi, messer Giovanni di Piero Melanesi, Antonio di Piero Fronte, Ridolfo di Bonifazio Peruzzi, or Filippo di Simone Capponi, all of them important members of the Scolari's network – was supposed to confirm that the painter had carried out the commission. In the end, it fell to Filippo Capponi to provide proof of the compilation of the contract

112 Another artisan, named Bernardo di Piero Ciuffagni (1385-1457), was associated with Ghiberti's workshop. Krautheimer, *Ghiberti*, pp. 369-370. doc. 31. In 1422, Masolino rented a house together with Ciuffagni. Joannides, *Masaccio and Masolino*, p. 28. They were both connected to the Por Santa Maria Guild; as Bernardo was a member of the Por Santa Maria Guild. ASF, Arte di Por Santa Maria 28. So did Masolino's grandfather, Fino, who was a goldsmith. Procacci, *Massaccio*, pp. 13-14. In 1427, Bernardo's tax return mentions an outstanding credit in Dino di Monte's name. ASF, Catasto 23. fol. 45iv. Masolino was a debtor of Leonardo di Donato Rucellai's workshop. Catasto 46. fol. 869v.

113 See the notes above. Leonardo Rucellai sued Masolino together with another painter at the Merchant Court on 25 January 1427. Beck, *Masaccio*, p. 51.

114 The circumstances of his payment are detailed in the documents published in Molho, 'The Brancacci Chapel'. See the declaration of Masolino's mother, in 1427: 'Tomaso suo figliuolo sta in Ungheria dicesi dovere avere certa quantità di danari dal erede di messer Filippo Scholari, non è chiarito il che e però non visi da. Sono fi. 360 s. di Monte comune che ànno inseritti in Simone Melanesi e Simone e Tommaso Corsi.' ASF, Catasto 30. fol. 253r.

115 In 1378, he lived in the neighbourhood of twelve with his brothers, Michele and Biagio. Piero's son, Donato, in 1433 had a banking company under his name with Giovanni Rondinelli. ASF, Catasto 433. fol. 327r. Piero's two sons, Guido and Tommaso, were registered as goldsmiths in 1426 and in 1428. ASF, Arte di Por Santa Maria 7. fol. 80r. In 1431, Baldassare di Antonio Santi, business partner of Matteo Scolari, said that he needed to clarify his account with the heirs of the company of Piero Velluti. Catasto 380. fol. 305v.

in the presence of other Florentine businessmen: Giuliano d'Amerigo Zati, Manetto di Bernardo Amidei, and Biagio di Antonio Spini.<sup>116</sup>

Besides the frescoes of the chapel in Ozora, which clearly do not show any significant similarities to Masolino's style, no other paintings can be connected to the Scolari's patronage in Hungary. Scholars might be left rightfully puzzled by the fact that while Masolino was working in Pippo's service, another master oversaw the decoration of the chapel in his castle.<sup>117</sup> The style of the wall paintings, as far as the fragments allow us any speculation, points toward the Venetian provenience of the master. The settlement of the Scolari's nephews in the city might also contribute to the hypothesis that Tommaso had the chance to collaborate with painters of Venetian origin. Furthermore, at the same time that Masolino left for Hungary in September 1425, his former fellow painter, Paolo Uccello (1396/1397-1475), with whom he worked on the Carneseccchi Chapel, departed for Venice, where he stayed at least until 1427.<sup>118</sup> It was customary at that time that painters did not work alone; they employed assistants or even other masters in completing a commission. Therefore, Uccello or the Scolari's network in Venice might have helped Masolino to find an assistant of Venetian origins.

Even though Masolino's original three-year contract ended with Pippo Scolari's death, the painter did not return to Florence immediately, or at least not until July 1427.<sup>119</sup> Zsombor Jékely has suggested that Masolino might have worked elsewhere in Hungary, for example, in the court of the Bishop of *Varadinum*, Giovanni Melanesi.<sup>120</sup> Given the termination of his employment far before the preliminary negotiated contract period, we can expect that Masolino indeed tried to seek employment elsewhere in Hungary

116 Molho, 'The Braccacci Chapel', p. 94. In 1433, Giuliano and Niccolò d'Amerigo Zati were running a business firm in Hungary. ASF, Catasto 453. fol. 824r.

117 Members of the Scolari's network maintained strong connections with Florentine painters. Among them, Giovanni di Gherardo Buondelmonti, who lived for years in the Kingdom of Hungary, rented out his two workshops to painters Marco del Buono and Salvestro di Dino in 1427. See Giovanni's tax return: ASF, Catasto 38. fol. 327r.

118 Paolo Uccello's frescoes of the Annunciation, dated to 1424/1425, have consequently been destroyed. There are no written sources to verify that Masolino and Paolo Uccello, indeed, worked simultaneously on the Carneseccchi Chapel. *Masolino, Storie di San Giuliano*. Before 1407, Uccello, Donatello, and Ciuffagni were all registered in Ghiberti's workshop as assistants. Krautheimer, *Ghiberti*, I. p. 404.

119 Beck, *Masaccio*, pp. 51-52.

120 In support of his thesis, he referred to a debt of 133 Florentine forins which the Menalesi firm owed to Masolino. He also cited a lost image of Masolino, which might have resembled the reliquary of Saint Ladislaus, kept in the cathedral of *Varadinum*. Jékely, 'Masolino in Hungary'.

to make his stay as worthwhile as originally planned. However, because of the lack of any written evidence we can only speculate on where he might have spent the time between December 1426 and July 1427.

Upon his return to Italy sometime after June 1427, Pippo's acquaintanceship with Branda Castiglione, former papal legate in Hungary, helped Masolino to obtain a commission from the cardinal in Italy.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>121</sup> On Branda see: *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, II. doc. 7917 (1410). Joannides, *Masaccio and Masolino*, p. 34. The scarcity of archival evidence on Masolino does not allow us to establish further connection between the painter and other artisans and patrons.



## Conclusions: Network and Migration

The story of the Scolari family and its network of friends draws an image of elite migration and networking in early Renaissance Florence that was occurring side by side. The Florentines' penetration into the Kingdom of Hungary was not forced in any sense and by any means; it was generated mainly by economic interest and included predominantly merchants, as well as a small group of highly skilled artisans.

The catalytic figure of the network, Pippo Scolari, was a true 'social outsider'. During his 57 years of life, he, like artist geniuses of Renaissance Florence, crossed considerable social and geographical boundaries. He was born in Florence into a family that had lost all its political influence, urban properties, and social connections and was forced to live in the countryside, far from the urban mainstream. Pippo arrived in Buda as a young commercial apprentice, a stranger without any considerable support, which might have enabled him to get into the proximity of the royal court. It probably took him about fifteen to twenty years to climb up from Luca del Pecchia's workshop to the *aula regis* as one of Sigismund's most powerful barons. His success in the Kingdom of Hungary raised him into the highest social circles in Florence as well.

Because of the highly centralized politics and economy in Hungary, obtaining access to the royal court and becoming the King's trusted man opened numerous doors for Pippo. The baron, though, developed only weak ties to the majority of Florentines working in Hungary, but Matteo and Andrea Scolari, as his most intimate brokers, controlled his second order network.<sup>1</sup> These two closest male relatives represented the shortest links to the baron, bridging the social and geographical gaps between him and other Florentines.

Some of these Florentine families, the Scolari's friends, had already been collaborating in their business life even before the studied period; therefore, their network shall not be considered as purely egocentric.<sup>2</sup> In its formation, the Scolari brothers had a leading role, but beyond that, members of the network worked with each other on various levels. Some of them established strong ties between each other by overlapping kinship, neighbourhood, and

1 Ibid., p. 148.

2 In the 1390s, the correspondence of the exiled Del Bene, Jacopo and Francesco, testifies that they had developed business ties to members of the Melanesi, Lamberteschi, Guadagni, and the Cavalcanti families. ASF, Del Bene 49.

company partnerships. Meanwhile, others maintained only single relations with other members of the network. Thanks to their high social endogamy, surely everyone knew everyone in the network, and thus they shared their business experiences with each other.<sup>3</sup> Only artisans developed seemingly weak ties to other members of the network.

Richard A. Goldthwaite claims that after the middle of the fourteenth century, kinship ties as building blocks of economic firms had gradually lost their importance.<sup>4</sup> He cites as examples the early fourteenth-century firms of the Acciaiuoli, Alberti, Bardi, Covoni, Peruzzi, and Strozzi, which lasted through several generations. Goldthwaite is probably right in saying that in the fifteenth century it is difficult to find a company of this nature, which was probably the result of the practice of partible inheritance, over the earlier collective ownership exercised by a *consorteria*. However, one of the obstacles in forming a firm view about the topic is that there are considerably fewer available studies on Florentine firms operating during the Albizzi period than prior to or following the middle of the fifteenth century. The later examples cited by Goldthwaite, such as the Cambini, Capponi, Corsi, Della Casa, Gondi, Guicciardini, Martelli, Riccardi, Salviati, Serristori, and Strozzi families, should be thought of as case studies for the structural organization of late-fifteenth-century firms. In the studied period, only the Medici agglomerate might give us a sense of the importance of kinship and marriage ties in the formation of Florentine economic networks.

Even though the fifteenth-century firms, founded as partnerships, typically underwent several reorganizations, the Hungarian case may testify that during the Albizzi period, Florentine businessmen had a strong tendency to work together with their relatives, not necessarily as partners in the very same firm, but actively helping and relying on each other. In this study, I suggest that early Renaissance Florence and its economic networks were still characterized by kinship ties, including both patrilineal and matrilineal extensions of nuclear families. Their unions of interests and the everyday realities of Florentine communities abroad might have still been far away from the 'capitalist entrepreneurial behavior' described by Goldthwaite.

Friendships were indeed instrumental in business life and they were so in politics, too. Increased connectedness resulted in better market possibilities, and probably higher incomes and prospects for social mobility as well. In spite of the high social endogamy in general, the merchant families and

3 See the description of the network of a village. Boissevain, *Friends of Friends*, p. 123.

4 Goldthwaite, 'La famiglia', pp. IV-VI, XXV-XXXIV; *Ibid.*, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence*, pp. 72-77.

individuals analysed in this study had quite heterogeneous backgrounds. Their origins and the roles they played in Florentine domestic politics were considerably different from one another. A minority of them developed filo-Medici sentiments, like Bartolomeo di Giovanni Carducci and Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini, but the majority were supporters of the Albizzi faction. The operational scale of businessmen, who provided the basis for the Albizzi faction, remained seemingly modest compared to the business activity of the Medici faction. The Scolari in-laws were typical of ancient, preminent families, but their business network included new men as well.

Those trading in Hungary came from various strata of the Florentine society. Some of them who settled there belonged to a less economically fortunate group. Others who opened company branches or sent agents to Buda were leading manufacturers of the Florentine wool and silk industries or operated as important bankers. They connected Buda to centres of international trade like Venice and centres of entrepreneurial activity like Florence. The arrival in Hungary of the earliest products of the domestic silk industry suggests that, as early as the 1380s, the royal and baronial courts might have served as important buyers of these new, innovative commercial items. The fact that leading masters of the early Renaissance worked for the Scolari in Florence and in Hungary also implies that the first contacts with the new Florentine taste arrived in the eastern part of the continent in the early phase of its development. Because of the weakening of Florentines' positions in the royal court, the Scolari's early commissions were not followed by others during Sigismund's reign.

Several short- and long-term effects of Florentines', or more generally Italians', migration can be identified. They intermarried with locals and imported a different linguistic and cultural mindset to the Kingdom of Hungary. Words used by northern Italian merchants like *piazza* ('piac', 'market'), *fiorino* ('forint', 'Florin'), *broccato* ('brokát', 'brocade') and *damasco* ('damaszt', 'damask') made their way into the Hungarian language, a linguistic isolate in the eastern part of the continent.

Paul McLean, in the conclusion of his book, addressed the question of the long-term historical implications of his findings by aiming to draw a parallel between the interplay of culture and network in Renaissance Florence and in contemporary society.<sup>5</sup> In fact, as he has pointed out, Florentine merchants' experience in their globalized world might have held many similarities with our reality. Human mobility in early Renaissance Europe can be regarded as a significant driving factor of socially embedded

5 McLean, *The Art of the Network*, Conclusion.

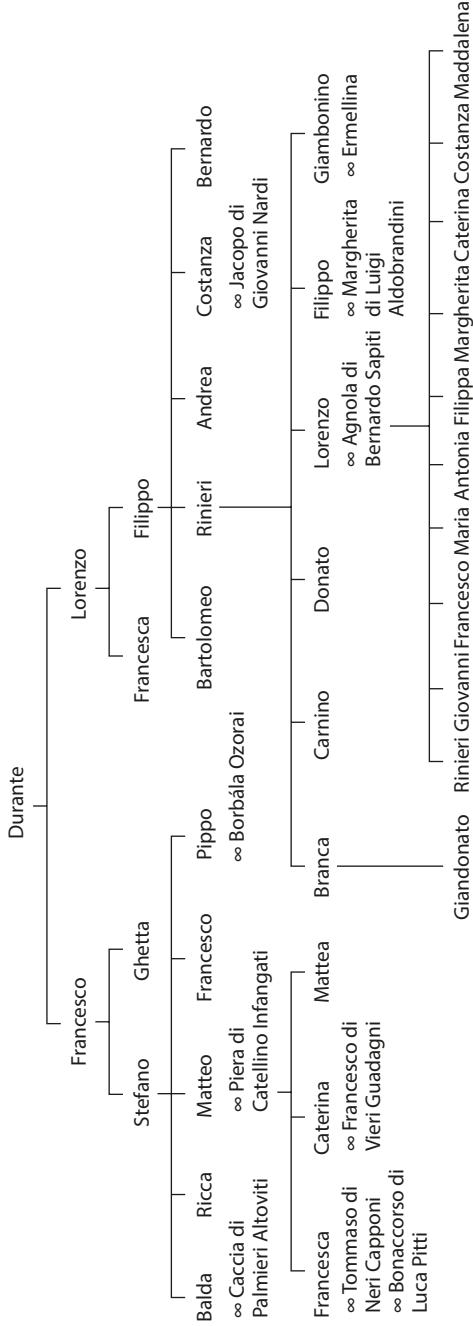
inventions and innovations, and their spread.<sup>6</sup> Contrary to mass migrations, geographical movements of merchants and skilled artisans across borders was conditioned not only by economic circumstances as pull factors, but also by family and friendship ties. Today's migratory tendencies show a rather inverse picture. Elite migration of highly trained professionals, academics, and businessmen is probably generated more by macro- and microeconomic conditions than by those network patterns that would include kinship or friendship ties. Economic mass migrations of unskilled and skilled workers, on the other hand, which do not imply strong political push factors, might be organized by family and friendship networks. A typical example is provided by the labor migration between the eastern and western parts of the European Union.

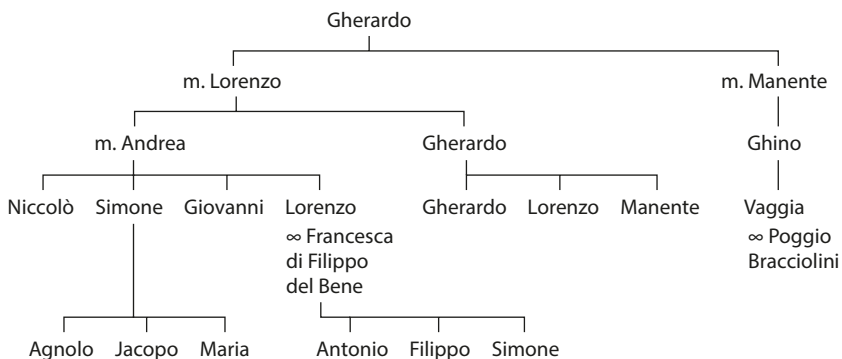
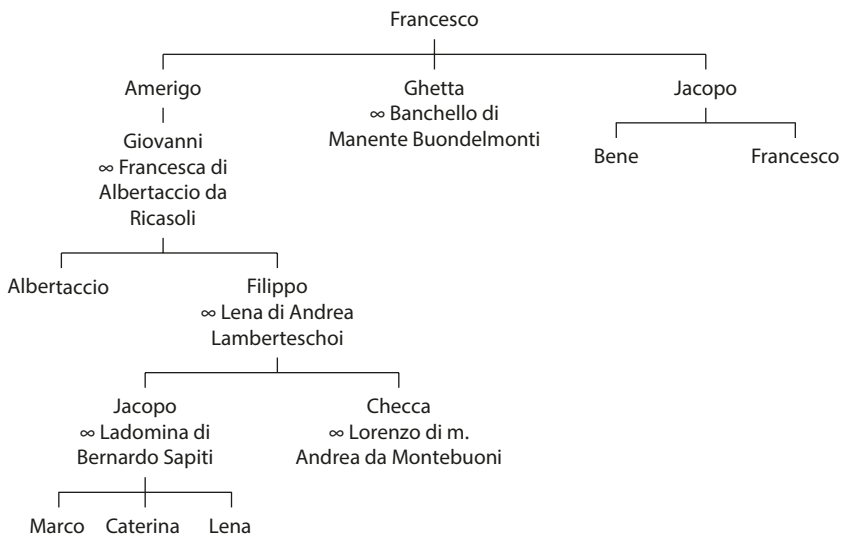
The narrative of current political and economic events and the unequal power positions of the eastern European countries compared to their western counterparts, fundamentally bias our perception of the relations that existed between the two parts of the continent in the early Renaissance period. By looking beyond the paradigm of centre and peripheries, we may challenge not only our vision of Europe at the time, but also our approach toward social outsiders and the movement of people across borders in present-day society.

6 For the dynamics of socially embedded inventions in Renaissance Florence, see: Padgett, 'Transposition and Refunctionality'. For the view of migrants as potential knowledge carriers see: Williams, Baláz, *International Migration and Knowledge*.

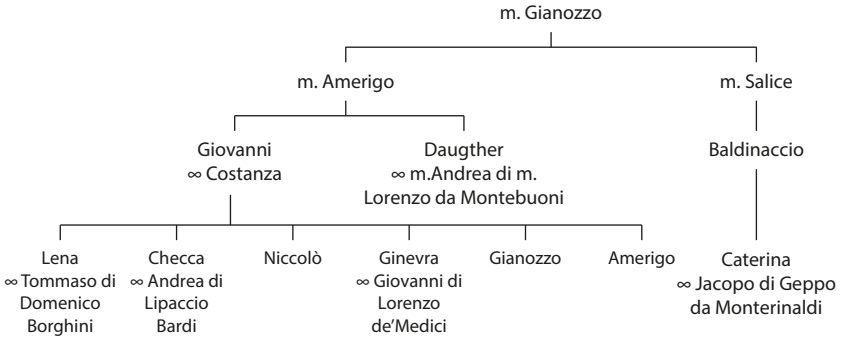
# Appendix

Figure 7 The Scolari Family

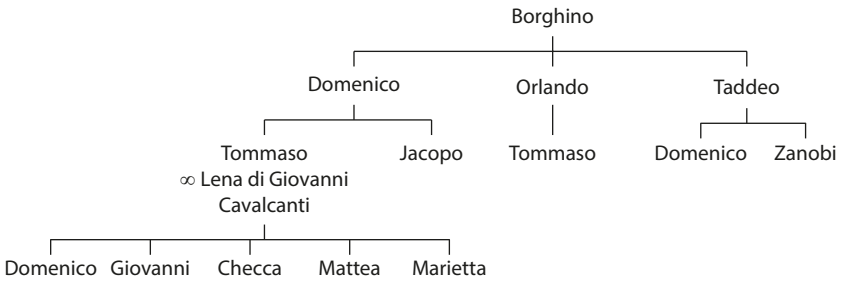


**Figure 8 The Da Montebuoni Family****Figure 9 The Del Bene Family**

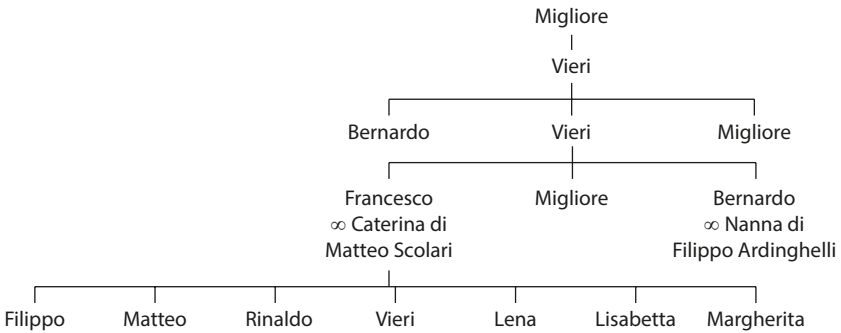
**Figure 10 The Cavalcanti Family**



**Figure 11 The Borghini Family**

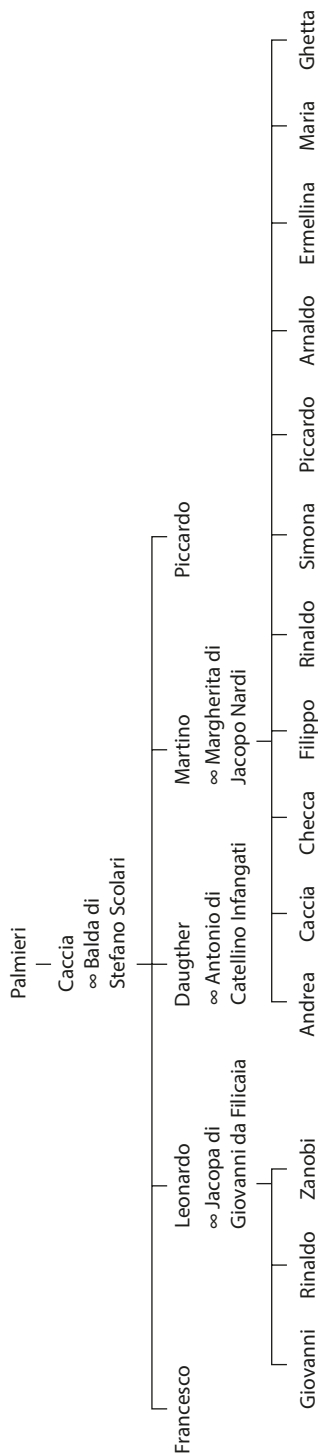


**Figure 12 The Guadagni Family**

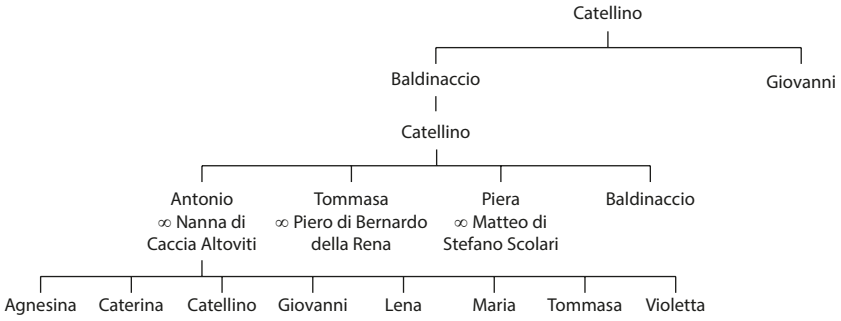




**Figure 13 The Altoviti Family**



**Figure 14 The Infangati Family**



**Figure 15 The Della Rena Family**

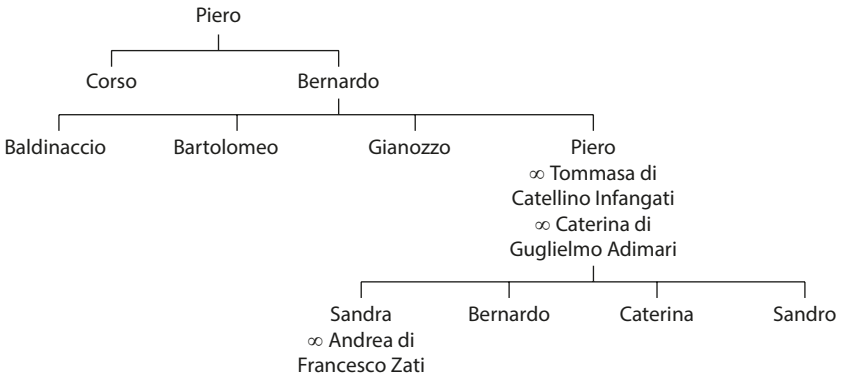


Table 1 Lineages in the 1433 Catasto

Lineage	Number of Households <sup>1</sup>	Gonfalons <sup>2</sup>	Bocche <sup>3</sup>	Sustanze (Florins, Soldi) <sup>4</sup>	Catasto (Florins, Soldi, Denari) <sup>5</sup>	Composto <sup>6</sup>	Miserabile <sup>7</sup>
Scolari	2	43 (1), 34 (1)	3	10929.32	13.17.14	0	0
Buondelmonti/ Da Montebuoni	19	31 (9), 43 (3), 12 (2), 14 (1), 21 (1)	105	6896.57 <sup>8</sup>	6.76.13	8	1
Del Bene	8	31 (5), 42 (2), 33 (1), 14 (1)	28	2629.12 <sup>9</sup>	15.63.26	2	0
Cavalcanti	24	21 (9), 31 (5), 13 (3), 41 (2), 12 (1), 23 (1), 33 (1)	75	20015.228 <sup>10</sup>	31.121.56	11	0
Borghini	1	22 (1)	7	2883.5	2.18	0	0
Guicciardini	8	12 (7), 43 (1)	29	33865.58	46.59.33	1	0
Albizzi	22	43 (20), 13 (1), 24 (1)	143	59882.202 <sup>11</sup>	78.117 <sup>12</sup>	7	0
Guadagni	4	43 (4)	26	18503.35	7.29.11	2	0
Altoviti	17	31 (16), 23 (1)	76 <sup>13</sup>	1312.4 <sup>14</sup>	35.69.52 <sup>15</sup>	6	0
Infangati	3	43 (2), 13 (1)	16	3782.27	1.1.3. <sup>16</sup>	0	0
Della Rena	3	43 (3)	13	4099.19	3.31.12	1	0
Bardi	60	11 (47), 43 (2), 44 (2), 22 (2), 24 (2), 31 (1), 42 (1), 13 (1), 41 (1), 31 (1)	266 <sup>17</sup>	56943.505 <sup>18</sup>	88.357 <sup>19</sup>	21	1
Melanesi	4	34 (2), 42 (1), 41 (1)	12	6165.30 <sup>20</sup>	16.1.3 <sup>21</sup>	0	1
Falucci	2	41 (2)	12	1176.22	0	1 <sup>22</sup>	0
Corsi	8	23 (4), 22 (2), 41 (1), 34 (1)	35	15280.73	26.29	4	0
Lamberteschi	3	21 (2), 34 (1)	20	42311.38	160.21	1	0
Cardini	2	13 (1), 42 (1)	10	1229.8 <sup>23</sup>	0	1 <sup>24</sup>	0
Capponi	15	12 (9), 14 (4), 13 (1), 22 (1)	74	34732.126 <sup>25</sup>	59.99	3	1
Fronte	4	23 (2), 21 (1), 33 (1)	5	2570.29	0.16	3	0
Strozzi	42	33 (26), 34 (10), 32 (4), 13 (2)	214	150701.389	308.244 <sup>26</sup>	7	0
Peruzzi	24	23 (24)	116	66302.262	124.112 <sup>27</sup>	6	0

- 1 The total number of active households which submitted a declaration in 1433. Households of widows and heirs are not considered.
- 2 Gonfalons inhabited by a lineage. The number in parenthesis equals to the number of households registered in a particular gonfalon.
- 3 The total number of family members declared.
- 4 The total assets of the households.
- 5 The total amount of tax (*catasto*) paid by the households, excluding the *composto*.
- 6 Number of households paying the stipulated tax (*composto*).
- 7 Number of households which did not possess any taxable assets, therefore listed as "poor" (*miserabile*).
- 8 Partial data; the data is missing for nine households.
- 9 Partial data; the data is missing for five households.
- 10 Partial data; the data is missing for one household.
- 11 Partial data; the data is missing for five households.
- 12 Partial data; the data is missing for one household.
- 13 Partial data; the data is missing for one household.
- 14 Partial data; the data is missing for sixteen households.
- 15 Partial data; the data is missing for one household.
- 16 Partial data; the data is missing for two households.
- 17 Partial data; the data is missing for two households.
- 18 Partial data; the data is missing for five households.
- 19 Partial data; the data is missing for two households.
- 20 Partial data; the data is missing for one household.
- 21 Partial data; the data is missing for two households.
- 22 Partial data; the data is missing for one household.
- 23 Partial data; the data is missing for one household.
- 24 Partial data; the data is missing for one household.
- 25 Partial data; the data is missing for one household.
- 26 Partial data; the data is missing for five households.
- 27 Partial data; the data is missing for three households.

Table 2 Households in the 1433 Catasto

Household <sup>1</sup>	Gonfalon	Parish	Street	Bocche	Sustanze <sup>2</sup> Florins, Soldi	Catasto <sup>3</sup> (Florins, Soldi, Denari)	Composto <sup>4</sup> (Florins, Soldi, Denari)
Filippo di Rinieri Scolari <sup>5</sup>	34, 43			2	9787.18	9.9.8.	0
Simone di messer Andrea da Montebuoni <sup>6</sup>	31	Santo Stefano al Ponte		21	Missing data	1.13.5	0
Jacopo di Filippo del Bene <sup>7</sup>	31	San Biagio a Petruolo		4	Missing data	5.19.4	0
Gianozzo di Giovanni Cavalcanti <sup>8</sup>	21	San Romolo		2	1.11.	1185.8	0
Domenico di Tommaso Borghini <sup>9</sup>	22			7	2883.5	2.18.0	0
Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini <sup>10</sup>	12			7	4779.16	1.19.4.	0
Rinaldo di messer Maso degli Albizzi <sup>11</sup>	43			22	12802.4	17.15.11.	0
Francesco di Vieri Guadagni <sup>12</sup>	43	San Procolo		9	5742.1	1.14.10	0
Bernardo di Vieri Guadagni <sup>13</sup>	43			7	6565.18	6.15.1	0
Migliore di Vieri Guadagni <sup>14</sup>				7	5968.6	0	0.16.0
Martino di Caccia Altoviti <sup>15</sup>	31			10	Missing data	0	10.0.0
Antonio di Catellino Infangati <sup>16</sup>	43			10	1487.3.	Missing data	0
Baldinaccio di Catellino Infangati <sup>17</sup>	43	San Piero Maggiore		2	67.0.	Missing data	0
Bernardo di Piero della Rena <sup>18</sup>	43		Borgo degli Albizzi	3	1557.2.	2.19.6	0
Migiotto di Bardo de' Bardì <sup>19</sup>	11			9	2426.11	2.9.10	0
Tommaso di Piero Melanesi <sup>20</sup>	34			4	218.15	0	0.10.0
Simone di Lapo Corsi <sup>21</sup>	22			4	1869.9	0.8.0	0
Tommaso di Lapo Corsi <sup>22</sup>	22						
Andrea di Tommaso Lamberteschi <sup>23</sup>	21		Piazza Santo Stefano	10	3339.11	5.6.10	0
Heirs of Filippo di Simone Capponi <sup>24</sup>	12			1	377.0	0.9.4.	0
Antonio di Fronte di Piero Fronte <sup>25</sup>	21	San Pietro Scheraggio		1	919.15	0.16.4	0
Pinaccio di Bonaccorso Strozzi <sup>26</sup>	33			5	1511.14	0	0.5.0
Ridolfo di Bonifazio Peruzzi <sup>27</sup>	23			12	17683.19	42.3.0	0

Quarter of S. Spirito: 11 = Scala, 12 = Nicchio, 13 = Ferza, 14 = Drago

Quarter of S. Croce: 21 = Carro, 22 = Bue, 23 = Leon Nero, 24 = Ruote

Quarter of S. Maria Novella: 31 = Vipera, 32 = Unicorn, 33 = Leon Rosso, 34 = Leon Bianco

Quarter of S. Giovanni: 41 = Leon D'Oro, 42 = Drago, 43 = Chiavi, 44 = Vaio

- 1 The households headed by the protagonists of the subchapters. The households of widows and female heirs are not considered.
- 2 The total assets of the households.
- 3 The total amount of tax (catasto) paid by the households, excluding the *composto*.
- 4 The number of households paying the stipulated tax (*composto*).
- 5 ASE, Catasto 496. fol. 180v. Portata: Catasto 466. fols. 425r-428v.
- 6 ASE, Catasto 455. fols. 478r. corrections 500r. Giovanni di messer Andrea da Montebuoni was not included into the declaration.
- 7 Joint declaration with his cousins, Amerigo and Baldassare di messer Albertaccio del Bene. Portata: ASF, Catasto 455. fols. 3r-4v.
- 8 ASE, Catasto 491. fol. 141r. Portata: Catasto 445. fols. 296r-297r.
- 9 ASE, Catasto 491bis. fol. 150v.
- 10 ASE, Catasto 488. fol. 318v.
- 11 ASE, Catasto 499. fol. 655r. Portata: Catasto 479. fols. 508r-516r.
- 12 ASE, Catasto 499. fol. 290v. Portata: Catasto 478. fols. 771r-773v.
- 13 ASE, Catasto 499. fol. 141r. Portata: Catasto 480. fols. 293r-299r.
- 14 ASE, Catasto 499. fol. 507r.
- 15 ASE, Catasto 455. fol. 318r. Portata: Catasto 455. fols. 318r-319r.
- 16 ASE, Catasto 499. fol. 22r. Portata: Catasto 478. fols. 137r-v.
- 17 ASE, Catasto 499. fol. 174v. Portata: Catasto 478. fol. 463r.
- 18 ASE, Catasto 499. fol. 193v. Portata: Catasto 480. fols. 306r-307r.
- 19 ASE, Catasto 487. fol. 312r.
- 20 ASE, Catasto 496. fol. 499v. Portata: Catasto 467. fol. 512r.
- 21 ASE, Catasto 491bis. fol. 472r. Portata: Catasto 447. fols. 528r-529r.
- 22 There are no campioni. Portata: Catasto 447. fols. 581r-587v.
- 23 ASE, Catasto 491. fol. 27v. Portata: Catasto 445. fols. 78r-82r.
- 24 ASE, Catasto 488. fol. 348v. Portata: Catasto 434. fols. 379r.
- 25 ASE, Catasto 491. fol. 10v. Portate: Catasto 445. 29v-30r.
- 26 ASE, Catasto 495. fol. 435r.
- 27 ASE, Catasto 492. fol. 439r.

**Table 3 Speakers at the Secret Councils**

Family Name	Name	Number of speeches	Spoke on behalf of the Colleges	Other magistrates	Date of first speech	Date of last speech	Magnates
Scolari	N	0	N	N	0	0	Y
Da Montebuoni	Messer Andrea di messer Lorenzo	10	N	Y	17/07/1397	02/02/1415	N
	Lorenzo di messer Andrea	1	N	Y	19/09/1432	19/09/1432	N
Del Bene	Filippo di Giovanni	3	N	Y	17/08/1426	30/09/1426	N
Cavalcanti	N	0	N	N	0	0	Y
Borghini	Tommaso di Domenico	17	Y	Y	12/02/1409	18/12/1428	N
Guicciardini	Piero di messer Luigi	56	Y	Y	17/02/1413	20/08/1434	N
Albizzi	Rinaldo di messer Maso	226	Y	Y	12/09/1407	20/08/1434	N
Guadagni	Vieri di Vieri	146	Y	Y	05/02/1397	22/05/1426	N
Altoviti	N	0	N	N	0	0	N
Infangati	N	0	N	N	0	0	Y
Della Rena	Piero di Bernardo	10	Y	Y	02/04/1409	21/01/1431	N
Bardi	N	0	N	N	0	0	Y
Melanesi	N	0	N	N	0	0	N
Falucci	N	0	N	N	0	0	N
Corsi	Simone di Lapo	1	N	Y	22/06/1427	22/06/1427	N
	Tommaso di Lapo	10	N	Y	10/04/1420	10/12/1433	N
Lamberteschi	N	0	N	N	0	0	N
Cardini	N	0	N	N	0	0	N
Capponi	N	0	N	N	0	0	N
Fronte	Antonio di Piero	32	Y	Y	16/06/1410	13/08/1426	N
Strozzi	N	0	N	N	0	0	N
Peruzzi	Ridolfo di Bonifazio	177	Y	Y	26/04/1401	31/08/1434	N

- 1 The total number of speeches registered with the family name of the lineage.
- 2 Speeches delivered in the name of the Colleges.
- 3 Speeches delivered in the name of other city offices.
- 4 He spoke at the secret councils even after Cosimo de' Medici's return to Florence.





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Del Bene

Dieci di Balìa

Diplomatico

Estimo

Ginori Conti

Pitti

Rinuccini

Guadagni

Libri Fabarum (LF)

Magistrato dei Pupilli avanti il Principato

Manoscritti

Mediceo avanti il Principato (MAP)

Mercanzia

Miscellanea Repubblicana

Monte Comune o delle Graticole (Monte)

Notarile Antecosimiano (NA)

Giovanni Pacini

Michele di Jacopo da Rabatta

Francesco di ser Francesco Guardi

Agnolo di Piero di Tommaso da Terranova

Cristofano d'Agnolo di Colai della Terrina

Jacopo di ser Tommaso  
Niccolò di Francesco di Niccolò da Carmignano  
ser Filippo di Cristofano  
Francesco di Ottaviano di Antonio da Arezzo  
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